

**Briefing Note of the 70th Horse Sport Ireland Board Meeting held
at 10am on Tuesday 12th July 2016 in HSI Offices in Naas**

Minutes of the 69th Board Meeting and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the 69th Horse Sport Ireland (HSI) Board meeting held on 17th May 2016 were approved, proposed by Charles Hanley and seconded by Jane Darragh

The Chairman welcomed new Board member Elizabeth Deane as a nominee of the Irish Horse Board.

Correspondence

Correspondence from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in relation to a new Statement of Strategy for 2017-2019 was included in the meeting pack.

Chief Executive Officer Report

Dormant Accounts

As advised at the last Board meeting, Horse Sport Ireland has put forward the RDAI project for funding under this scheme. Sport Ireland has now evaluated all applications received. The next step is that they will need to be approved by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department of Environment separately. We understand that this can take up to 12 weeks. We anticipate that it will be September/October before NGBs are notified if their applications have been successful or not.

Jumping in the City

Jumping in the City goes ahead in Shelbourne Park on Friday, August 5th. The rounds of Munster Stadium Jumping went ahead very successfully in Limerick on June 24th and in Cork on July 8th. We anticipate we should be able to run the series under the Jumping in the City brand next year.

Veterinary Course

Horse Sport Ireland hosted an FEI General Veterinary Course in Trim Castle Hotel. The course was organised by Dermot Forde the FEI National Head Veterinarian in Ireland. The Course Directors were Dr. Gerit Mathesen (GER) and Dr. Colin Roberts (GBR). The course was attended by over 40 delegates including delegates from South Africa, USA, Germany, the UK and Ireland. It was very well attended and deemed very useful by all the attendees.

Olympic/Paralympic selections

Dressage

Judy Reynolds and Vancouver K

Non-Travelling Reserve- Roland Tong and Rybrook Ambience

Eventing

Clare Abbott and Europrince (ISH)

Jonty Evans and Cooley Rorke's Drift (ISH)

Mark Kyle and Jemilla

Padraig McCarthy and Simon Porloe or Bernadette Utopia

Travelling Reserve- Camilla Speirs and Portersize Just a Jiff (ISH)

Show Jumping

Greg Broderick and MHS Going Global (ISH)

Non Travelling reserves (in alphabetical order) Bertram Allen and Molly Malone, Cian O' Connor and Good luck.

Paralympics

Helen Kearney and Rock and Roll

Non Travelling Reserve- Rosemary Gaffney and Bink

Olympic accreditations

The CEO reported that he and Triona Connors, who will act as Team Leader for the Irish team at Rio, had met with the Olympic Council of Ireland recently to address the issue of accreditations for support staff at Rio. Securing sufficient accreditations is proving to be very challenging as the OCI only have a limited number of accreditations across all sports.

High Performance Budgets

As advised at the last meeting the allocation of High Performance Funding amongst the various programmes within HSI is proving to be very challenging in 2016 due to Rio costs. The Board allocated responsibility for resolving matters to the Finance Committee. Discussions with the affiliates have now reached a conclusion and budget allocations have been made to each discipline. However, there are still challenges for the various HP committees to run their activities within the budget allocated. In any shortfall situation the Olympic Games will have to be the priority.

Connemara Pony Breeders Society (CPBS)

Elaine Hatton and I attended a meeting of the Connemara Pony Breeding Society Council in Ballinasloe on July 6th. The main topics of discussion were affiliation to Horse Sport Ireland and assistance to the Society from the HSI International Marketing Division.

Brexit

The CEO attended a meeting of Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Stakeholder consultation forum which took place on July 7th. There is major concern across the agri - sector in relation to the implications of the decision by Great Britain to exit the European Union. The full implications are still very unclear as we await the decision by the British Government to trigger Article 50 of the EU Treaty. However, exporters to the UK are experiencing a negative impact on trade arising from the decline in the value of Sterling. This stakeholder forum will meet again as deemed required by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Finance Report

Audited Accounts

The Director of Finance advised that the Finance Committee met on Friday 1st July 2016. Noel Delaney from Grant Thornton attended the meeting and presented the 2015 audited accounts. The Director of Finance advised that Horse Sport Ireland received a clean audit report and that the company was showing a surplus before tax of approximately €27,000 for 2015.

Mr. David Keane pointed out that it will be extremely difficult to build up a 10% reserve when monies are being allocated to Horse Sport Ireland to be expended on specific projects. In some cases HSI was simply a conduit for funding to other parties for example Pentathlon Ireland.

The Director of Finance agreed with this observation and noted that the reserves would largely have to be built from Horse Sport Ireland earned income unless we get approval to charge an overhead on managed grants.

Taxation

The Director of Finance advised that Ms. Sasha Kerins, Tax Partner with Grant Thornton, attended the Finance Committee on 1st July. The Committee was exploring the possibility of revisiting making an application to Revenue for a Corporation Tax exemption in respect of Horse Sport Ireland (company). Having considered the matter at the Finance Committee meeting, it was agreed that Grant Thornton be engaged to advise on the matter. Grant Thornton will prepare a letter to the Minister for Sport and the Minister for Agriculture in support of an application and a letter of application for the Exemption to the Revenue.

Grant Allocations

The HSI Finance Committee noted the 2016 grant allocations recommended by the Sub Boards in respect of :-

- International Hosting Grants (Sport Sub Board). Total amount of Grant Allocation €77,550.
- Breeding Grants (Breeding Sub Board). Total amount of Grant allocation €125,000.

The Finance Committee noted that the International Hosting and Breeding Grants had been publically advertised in seeking applications and that criteria and scoring systems had been used to make the grant awards. The Board concurred with the Finance Committee and endorsed 2016 grant allocation.

The audited accounts were approved by the Board, proposed by Gerald McCloskey and seconded by Charles Hanley.

The Finance Director also presented the Management accounts to the end of May. While some minor variances were noted against budget the figures were broadly in line with the 2016 budget.

Donations/Foundation

The Director of Finance advised the Board that as previously highlighted, the HSI Finance Committee was progressing with the establishment of a foundation type structure to facilitate donations to Irish equestrian activities. David Keane advised that such a structure could be very helpful to Dressage Ireland as they had a potential donor in the wings.

Breeding Sub-Board Report

Inspection Review

The Director of Breeding and Programmes advised the Board that a number of groups were invited to the Breeding Sub-Board meeting on the 15th June 2016 to present their views on the proposed new classification and inspection system for the ISH and ID Studbooks.

Finding a solution that is agreeable to all the ID fraternity has not been easy and has yet to be achieved. The Breeding Sub-Board will meet again on the 3rd August 2016 to further discuss the proposed classification/inspection system.

HSI Foal Championships

The Director of Breeding and Programmes advised the Board that following an application process, venues for HSI Foal Championship had been approved. The final of the Foal Championship will take place on the 19th September at Cavan Equestrian Centre.

Stallion inspections

A full list of the Stallions that were classified as Approved, Preliminary Approved, Passed Stage one in the ISH Studbook and those that were classified as Class 1 in the Irish Draught Horse Studbook was circulated.

Breeding Sub Board Grant applications

A full list of successful applicants for breeding grants was circulated. The Director of Breeding and Programmes thanked those members of the Breeding Sub-Board who had served on the evaluation committee.

Mare Show Jumping and Eventing Championship

The 2016 HSI Mare Eventing Championships will be held at Lisgarvan House on the 11th September 2016. This was the only application received to host the Championship. There are three applicants for the Show Jumping Championship this allocation has yet to be made.

ISH Studbook Young Horse Eventing Championship

The Director of Breeding and Programmes advised that applications are currently being sought from venues interested in hosting the ISH Studbook Young Horse Eventing Championship for 4, 5 and 6 year old horses.

WBFSH World Breeding Jumping Championships for Young Horses 2016

Horse Sport Ireland have announced the selection criteria for the WBFSH World Breeding Jumping Championships for Young Horses 2016 had been agreed by the Lanaken committee.

Breeding Publications

The Director of Breeding and Programmes advised that the HSI Breeders Magazine and the annual Foal Book have gone for publication and will be available for distribution at the Dublin Horse Show from 20th – 24th July.

Sport Sub-Board Report

The Director of Finance gave an update from the most recent meeting of the Sport Sub-Board as the CEO was absent from the meeting due to another engagement.

Punchestown Showcase Parade

With regard to the Punchestown Parade, the Sport Sub-Board provided positive feedback, however noted the rise in ticket prices for each Affiliate. It was agreed that a further review of the Parade would take place early next year.

AIRE

Linda Young on behalf of AIRE advised the Sport Sub-Board that from 1st June 2016, the Bachelor of Business in Equine (Level 7) students from Athlone Institute of Technology and Gurteen College are approved to instruct at AIRE approved equestrian centres.

International Hosting Grants

The full list of International hosting grants, as approved by the Sport Sub-Board, were circulated. An application and evaluation process had been carried out. The Director of Finance thanked the evaluation committee for their work. The Sub-Board approved these allocations based on the appendix.

Jack Murphy raised the issue of the cost of shipping horses to Rio for the Olympic Games. The CEO advised that while the Rio organizing Committee picked up the cost of the actual horse flights, freight and other charges were amounting to approximately €7/8k per horse. Horse Sport Ireland was also liable for the cost of flying a reserve horse for the eventing team which was a priority for the High Performance Manager. The CEO acknowledged the special extra contribution made by Eventing Ireland towards the cost of flying the reserve horse and rider to Rio.

Director of International Marketing Report

Irish Horse Gateway Website Developments

The Director of International Marketing advised that the new landing page on the web site for Irish Horse Gateway (IHG) is in progress and will include information on coaching and other activities. June 2016 traffic to the site was at a high with over 12,000 visitors (up 71% on June 2015).

The Director of International Marketing advised that the payment system for the IHG has been switched from Paypal to Stripe, which has reduced costs.

The IHG trailer will be on site for the Dublin Horse Show at the RDS from 20th – 24th July 2016. Jack Murphy enquired whether membership of the Irish Horse Board and the IHG could be combined in some way. The Director of Marketing advised that a special reduction had been offered to Irish Horse Board members as part of their membership renewal for 2016 and this could be explored further.

Korean Market Development

The Director of International Marketing advised that Professor Kim from Korea was jointly hosted by Enterprise Ireland and HSI during a brief visit to Ireland in June. It has been confirmed that he will return with a delegation of 11 students who will attend the Dublin Horse Show in the RDS. The students will also attend for four weeks riding instruction in Clonshire and attend at Millstreet and the Connemara Pony Show in Clifden, subject to transport costs.

Jumping in the City

The Director of International Marketing advised that Jumping in the City will take place Friday, 5th August 2016 in Shelbourne Park in Dublin. Sponsorship agreements have been confirmed with Devenish, the Underwriting Exchange and WestWood/Ifor Williams. TG4 will air the event in a half programme on Wednesday 17th July @ 9pm.

The Director of International Marketing advised that there is an innovated marketing campaign in place (An Post, Dublin Bus, Irish Independent). It is anticipated that some of the Marketing initiatives will help to improve awareness of the sport of show jumping as well as attracting customers to Shelbourne Park.

James Kennedy congratulated Tony Hurley, and his team, on the Jumping in the Stadium events held in Limerick and Cork Greyhound Stadia. It was agreed that Horse Sport Ireland and Show Jumping Ireland should meet soon after the 2016 event to review matters for 2017.

Tony Hurley thanked Horse Sport Ireland for financial support towards prizemoney for the event and for designating the events as qualifiers for Jumping in the City in Shelbourne Park.

Reaching New Heights Update

The CEO went through a summary of potential implementation costs for the Reaching New Heights strategy. A working document was circulated to the Board members. We have requested that the new minister, Minister Creed, convenes the strategy implementation group (which he is due to chair) to look at progressing all of the recommendations in Reaching New Heights, many of which have resource implications.

It was noted that while Reaching New Heights sets out a road map it was low on specifics in some areas. The document circulated proposed specific actions and programmes to give expression to the recommendations Reaching New Heights.

It was noted that two of the most specific and significant recommendations in Reaching New heights, the establishment of an international Marketing Division and the establishment of Equine discussion groups were already actioned.

The Board went through the document and made adjustments and additions.

The CEO advised that he had been approached by horse producer Barry O'Connor who wished to establish an industry lobby group. This could be helpful in making the case to Government for more resources. As the Governing Body for the sector, which was in receipt of Government funding, Horse Sport Ireland was not in a position to aggressively lobby and advocate in public in the same way that an industry group would be.

James Kennedy said that there were new opportunities for some affiliates and he mentioned polo and Irish Harness Racing as examples. Both could become very high profile and present the opportunity to attract new sponsors and develop revenue streams. He suggested the setting up of an external group of advisors to assist with the development of these disciplines would be useful.

FEI Young Horse Championship (Eventing) Committee

The CEO went through the proposed Terms of Reference for the World Breeding Championships for Young Horses (Eventing) Committee (The Committee).

It was also noted that Dr Tom Reed of the Warmblood Studbook of Ireland has requested a seat on The Committee. However, as the Championships were not restricted to horses registered in Irish studbooks it was not comparable to the Lanaken committee. Therefore it was agreed that it was not necessary to have any Studbook Representatives on the committee.

The document was approved as circulated.

AOB

Jane Darragh suggested that the FEI needed to do more promote their 'Two hearts' initiative.

At the conclusion of the meeting Charles Powell said that the board should formally wish all of the athletes going to the Olympics the best of luck.

ENDS/

This Briefing Note was prepared by the CEO at the request of the HSI Board; it is not an official minute of the meeting and has not been approved by the Board.