

**Briefing Note of the 67th Horse Sport Ireland Board Meeting held
at 10am on Tuesday 26th January 2016 in HSI Offices in Naas**

Minutes of the 66th Board Meeting and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the 66th HSI Board meeting held on 17th November 2016 were approved by the Board, proposed by Charles Hanley and seconded by Lt. Col. Brian MacSweeney.

CEO Report

Rider disqualification

Bertram Allen was disqualified from the Grand Prix in the CSI5* in Olympia under the FEI blood rule. This received a degree of coverage in the National media but there was strong support for Bertram from amongst other riders and the general public. Most people acknowledged that there wasn't any welfare issue in this incident but the blood rule is rigid.

Richard Howley was disqualified from the Liverpool CSI4* in Liverpool from January 1st-3rd as he was found to have left the restricted area without permission.

Jumping in the City

Following a formal meeting with Irish Greyhound Board plans are at a relatively advanced stage for the Jumping in the City 2016. At this stage it is proposed to run on the following dates. This is subject to further discussion with Show Jumping Ireland and hopefully we can build on the events of last year and address some of the constructive suggestions made afterwards

The Board approved the establishment of an Organising Committee with a similar structure to 2015. The Committee would consist of The Chair of the Horse Sport Ireland Finance Committee, the Chair of the SJI, the Chair of the SJI National Competitions Committee and the HSI International Marketing Director. The Board agreed to delegate responsibility for making all necessary competition related decisions to this group as it did in 2015.

Horse Sport Ireland Foundation

Last year Horse Sport Ireland was in receipt of an anonymous donation towards the preparation of the Irish Eventing team for the Rio Olympics. It is considered that establishing a specific structure to accept and ultimately seek donations towards the Irish equestrian sector should be explored. Some initial background work has been undertaken in this in conjunction with HSI Finance Committee Chairman James Kennedy. The Board agreed that this was a worthwhile project that should be pursued in 2016.

Item 67.4: Finance Report

Draft

In the absence of Mark Bolger, James Kennedy Chairman of the Horse Sport Ireland Finance Committee presented the 2015 draft out-turn of the 2015 financial year to the Board. The figures were provisional and are unaudited.

Draft Budget 2016

James Kennedy presented 2016 draft budget to the Board. This budget had been prepared on a no activity change basis between 2015 and 2016. The draft budget was showing a small deficit. The Finance Committee Chairman stressed that activity changes would be required in order to ensure that the organisation made a small surplus of €150,000 in 2016 to help the organisation to build a modest reserve.

He sought approval from the Board to apply a charge of €10 for Garda vetting. Horse Sport Ireland was carrying out this service on behalf of all affiliates except the Irish Pony Club. The service along with related policy writing required almost a full time labour unit. The modest charge would help to alleviate the cost of providing the service. The Board were agreeable to this. Other areas for potential cost savings are also being looked at by the Finance Committee and saving plan would be put before the next Board meeting.

Risk Register

A draft risk register was presented to the Board for consideration. There was a discussion on the various risk areas highlighted. It was agreed to adopt the register but to keep it under regular review. It will be included as an agenda item for the next board meeting. During the discussion it was raised that the affiliates would all benefit from preparing a similar document relating to their activities.

The Chairman thanked James Kennedy and Mark Bolger in his absence. He noted that the Board had generally been very risk aware and had taken a prudent approach however it was important to have a formal risk register in place.

Deloitte Report

The Chairman advised that the Deloitte report commissioned by Sport Ireland had not yet been completed. A document outlining some of the issues that have been raised as part of the discussion was circulated.

VAT & Tax Handbook

James Kennedy advised the Board that Grant Thornton have agreed to draw up a comprehensive update of the VAT and other tax handbook that was last published in 2010, which will provide up-to-date information and interpretation of the prevailing tax legislation in Ireland. There would be no cost to Horse Sport Ireland arising from this.

Breeding Sub Board Report

Review of Studbook Inspections

The Director of Breeding & Programmes advised that over 140 submissions were received from breeders in relation to the Inspection Review. The Breeding Sub Board is currently reviewing all submissions, which will be the main item on their agenda at the next Breeding Sub Board meeting on 11th February 2016. The submission have revealed very polarised views particularly in relation to the Irish Draughts but it is hoped that a resolution can be found and will be available in time for the next Board meeting.

ISH Studbook Show Jumping Series

A total of 13 applications were received from venues interested in hosting a leg of the 2016 ISH Studbook Show Jumping Series. A Committee meeting will be held shortly to evaluate these applications and to review the Rules of the Series.

FEI WBFSH World Breeding Championships for Young Horses

The Warmblood Studbook of Ireland (WSI) is now a member of the WBFSH and therefore this allows horses registered with the WSI to be considered for selection at the championships. The CEO advised that this is a matter for Horse Sport Ireland as the National Federation. He will revert at the next meeting with a proposal as regards how the combinations to represent Ireland are to be selected.

Changes to the EU Legislation

The Director of Breeding & Programmes advised that the new EU legislation on equine identification came into effect on 1st January 2016.

The Director of Breeding advised the Board that she has been in contact with the NIHB regarding the EU legislation and that an issue had arisen regarding HSI issuing Identity Documents (White passports) for horses in Northern Ireland. The EU legislation requires 'horses for breeding and production' (ID only documents) to be registered with a PIO of the member state where they located.

David McCann noted that a discussion is due to take place with Veterinary Ireland regarding the implications of the new regulations. He said that a communication from Horse Sport Ireland, in the lead up to Christmas had caused annoyance to some vets. The Director of Breeding and Programmes said that she had been surprised that the Department had not advised the vets of the changes prior to her correspondence. It was noted that the period between when the EU legislation had been approved and when PIO's were expected to implement it was very narrow.

Sport Sub Board Report

The Sport Sub Board were supportive of the CEO exploring the option of an equestrian village at the Irish Ploughing Championships which will be held in Tullamore, Co. Offaly from 20th – 22nd September 2016.

Equestrian helmet standards were discussed. This was proving to be a difficult area as a result of the fact that the EU standard for helmets was no longer being applied. A number of affiliates are working together to agree to issue similar guidelines.

Director of International Marketing Report

The Board were also advised that on 1st December 2015 HSI websites were successfully moved to Big Dog Digital following an evaluation process.

The International Marketing Department hosted a tour of delegates from the Korea Equine Industrial Association (KEIA) from 5th to 14th January 2016. This delegation was led by Professor Kim and Professor Ahn (President of the KEIA).

The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between HSI and the KEIA was a highlight of the tour. This was featured in the Irish Independent dated 19th January 2016.

The Director of International Marketing advised that HSI are currently engaging with the CPBS to transport Connemara ponies to Korea.

The Director of International marketing also gave details of Horse Sport Ireland's reach on social media including comparative figures with other relevant bodies.

Appeal to the Court for Arbitration for Sport – Olympic Qualification

The CEO gave a summary of outcome regarding the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) appeal regarding the HSI & Cian O'Connor –v- the Federation Equestre International (FEI) appeal. The full reasoned judgement has not yet been received and reviewed by the Ad Hoc legal committee established by the board.

The Board placed on record their gratitude to the members of the Ad Hoc legal group for their help with the case. In particular Martin Hayden who had played a key role in presenting the case to CAS in Lausanne. Board members also commented on the support that the case had received in the media and amongst the general public. While it was disappointing that the case had been lost, it was important that the case had been taken and that every effort was made to secure an Olympic place.

HSI Strategic Plan (Working Draft)

The CEO provided a working draft document on Horse Sport Ireland's Strategic plan to the Board. Members were asked to consider it and to offer any feedback to the CEO in advance of the next meeting.

The revised draft document will be discussed at the next HSI Board meeting.

Volunteer Policy

A draft Horse Sport Ireland 'Volunteer Policy' was circulated to the Board. Members were asked to provide their observations with a view to finalising the document at the next meeting of the Board of Directors.

Item 67.12: AOB

Jack Murphy raised a concern regarding the amount of submissions and comments on social media from members of Irish Draught daughter studbooks. He said he was concerned that the views of daughter societies, who register very few foals, were being given more weight, in some quarters, than the views of Irish draught breeders in Ireland.

James Kennedy advised that he had represented Horse Sport Ireland at an awards function where Cork County Council had presented Robert Splaine with an award for his role as Team Manager when Ireland won the Aga Khan.

The date for the next HSI Board meeting was fixed for 10am in HSI offices on Thursday 10th March 2016.

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.