

**Briefing Note of the 61<sup>st</sup> Horse Sport Ireland Board Meeting held on  
Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2015 @ 10am in HSI Offices**

**Minutes of the 60<sup>th</sup> Horse Sport Ireland Board Meeting held on Tuesday  
18<sup>th</sup> November 2014 and Matters Arising**

The Chairman welcomed two new members as Showjumping Ireland (SJI) nominees to the Board, Sally Anne Tobin, who replaces Taylor Vard and Charles Hanley, who replaces Liam Murphy.

The Chairman noted that Anne Cahill has also retired from the Board of Dressage Ireland and from the Board of Horse Sport Ireland.

The Chairman acknowledged the work done by Taylor, Liam and Anne, without volunteer effort the HSI could not function and he suggested inviting all past HSI Board members who retired during the year 2015 to a lunch after the last board meeting of the year on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015. This was agreed.

The Chairman requested that a note of thanks be sent to Anne Cahill, Taylor Vard and Liam Murphy.

**Matters Arising**

The CEO advised that a letter had been sent to Tattersalls outlining that the HSI Board were supportive of the event and hoped to be in a position to provide funding at a similar level to 2014.

The CEO also advised that the Director of Finance, Mark Bolger and the Finance Committee Chairman, James Kennedy met with the RDS to discuss the contract regarding the CSIO5\* in Dublin. Some further clarifications were being sought from the FEI.

The Minutes of the 60<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, subject to the above amendment were proposed by Gerry McCloskey and seconded by Harold McGahern.

**Board Correspondence**

The CEO advised that correspondence has been received from the Irish Sports Council (ISC) confirming the core and high performance grants for 2015. The core grant had remained the same as 2014 while the High Performance allocation increased by 10%.

A letter confirming that Horse Sport Ireland will be the conduit for High Performance funding to Pentathlon Ireland was also included.

**Chief Executive Officer Report**

**Intercity Challenge - Irish Greyhound Board**

Discussions are continuing with the Irish Greyhound Board regarding the running of Show Jumping competitions in a number of greyhound stadia. Following discussions with Show

Jumping Ireland's National Competitions committee, the outline plan is to run four shows on each of the four Friday evenings of June 2015 in Cork, Limerick, Galway and Shelbourne Park in Dublin.

#### High Performance Manager – Pony Eventing

The Board was asked to note that the High Performance Manager for Pony Eventing, Olivia Holohan, has tendered her resignation in providing services to the company. An advertisement has been placed for a replacement. Interviews take place on Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> January next.

#### Staff Departures

Peter Harvey, who was responsible for certain aspects of IT in Horse Sport Ireland is retiring on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. Peter has spent over 40 years working in the Horse Sector for the Department of Agriculture, Bord na gCapall, The Irish Horse Board and Horse Sport Ireland. He advised that HSI intended to hold a function to mark Peter's contribution to the sector over such a prolonged period.

Ilona Blunden, who services the Sport Sub-Board and produces the HSI Breeder Magazine and the Annual Report, amongst other duties, is taking a year's unpaid leave of absence from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2015.

#### Director of International Marketing

Following on from the discussion at the last Board meeting, a Marketing Consultative meeting took place on December 18<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was chaired by the Chairman of the HSI Finance Committee, James Kennedy. The group was supportive of moving ahead to recruit an individual to lead the Marketing Department of Horse Sport Ireland. The CEO enclosed a job description for the new role which will be entitled 'Director of International Marketing'. Following a tender process, HAYS Recruitment Specialists have been engaged to manage the process. An advertisement for the role will appear in the *Irish Field* on January 31<sup>st</sup> and subsequently in other outlets as suggested by HAYS.

This position is funded from the €600K allocation in 2015 by the Minister for Agriculture.

#### Pentathlon Ireland

As outlined earlier, The Irish Sports Council (ISC) has decided that the High Performance allocation for the sport of Modern Pentathlon should go through Horse Sport Ireland. This amounts to €180,000, previously only the core grant allocation (€20,000) had gone through Horse Sport Ireland. This will mean that Horse Sport Ireland will have to account to the ISC for the expenditure of the funds. In order to give some oversight, HSI intends to establish a Pentathlon High Performance Committee based on the structures we have in place for other disciplines. Brendan Walsh has been nominated by the HSI Chairman to Chair the Committee. Pentathlon Ireland will be represented by Siobhan Mc Cartan. Pentathlon's High Performance Manager will sit on the committee, along with one HSI Nominee. Barbara Micks was nominated to represent HSI.

## **Finance Report**

The Director of Finance presented an early indication of the 2014 draft accounts to the Board.

### **61.5 : Breeding Sub-Board Report**

The Breeding Inspections Working Group completed their deliberations and furnished a report in December 2014. A number of recommendations from the report were accepted by the Breeding Sub-Board for the 2015 inspections.

Applications are being accepted up to 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015 for the stallion inspections. The inspections are scheduled for 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> March 2015. Applicants this year are being afforded the opportunity to complete the veterinary aspect of the inspection at four designated clinics on specific vetting days.

The Director of Breeding also advised that the mare inspections will be advertised shortly and applications will be accepted up to the closing date of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The dates for the mare inspections are 20<sup>th</sup> April 2015 in Top Flight Equestrian Centre, Kilkenny and 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015 in Galway Equestrian Centre.

The Director of Breeding advised that HSI has advertised for new applicants to join the ISH inspection panel. These candidates will undergo a familiarisation programme at McKee Barracks on 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> January and current inspectors will also be invited.

The Director of Breeding also advised that HSI will be holding an ID Inspector Training and Recalibration course for the ID Inspection panels in 2015.

### **Sport Sub-Board Report Update**

The CEO advised that the next Sport Sub-Board was due to take place on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2105. The CEO requested that the HSI Board examine the draft Road Safety Authority (RSA) booklet on Horse safety on public roads and revert with any comments. The Chairman said that a good Code of Practice was needed regarding horse safety on roads. It is anticipated that the Road Safety Authority booklet will be launched shortly.

Charles Powell advised that the horse pairs carriage driving class at the Royal Windsor international show has been removed from the schedule. Charles Powell requested that the Board of HSI send a letter to Windsor expressing disappointment at this decision.

### **Strategic Plan Update**

The Chairman advised that the draft Strategic Plan document is currently with Minister Coveney. The Minister is expected to revert shortly with comments and to formally launch the plan in the coming weeks.

### **Additional HSI Funding**

The CEO circulated a document setting out a proposed allocation of the €600K in extra funding for 2015 provided by the Minister for Agriculture. Board member Harold McGahern absented himself for this item due to his involvement in the FEHL.

After some discussion the following breakdown was agreed.

Title	Explanation		€
International Marketing Division	Recruit Director of Marketing, admin support, direct spend.		200,000
Intercity Challenge	3/4 legs in Cork, Limerick, Galway and Dublin.		100,000
National Performance Foal Championship	5 IHB regions run with ISA to be agreed by BSB.		30,000
Show Jumping classes	-€15,000 IBC. -€15,000 Pilot Mare Championship run by SJI agreed with BSB.		30,000
Eventing classes	-€20,000 FEHL -€15,000 Pilot Mare Championship run by EI agreed with BSB.		35,000
Innovative/classes/events consistent with the Strategic Plan	Publicly advertised. Objective criteria to be set by the Finance Committee in consultation with BSB Sponsorship SG.		100,000 (maximum subject to board approval on March 3 <sup>rd</sup> )
Contingency	Budget not yet finalised for Intercity Challenge or Marketing Division.		105,000

### **FEI General Assembly Report**

Harold McGahern gave a report on the FEI General Assembly held in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

He advised that HRH Princess Haya has been replaced as FEI President by Igmarr De Vos from the Belgium Equestrian Federation.

The General Assembly had been informed that the position of equestrian sport within the Olympic movement was not secure and that this was something that the entire equestrian community needed to concern itself with.

The meeting was advised that Irish nominee's Dr. Antonia Lehane and Brian Dunn had been elected to the FEI Medical and Endurance Committee's respectively.

### **Draft HSI Meetings Calendar**

The CEO went through draft dates for all Board and Sub-Board meetings in 2015. 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015 was proposed and agreed for the next HSI Board meeting.

### **Sarah McNicholas, CEO, Irish Equine Centre – Presentation**

Sarah Mc Nicholas the CEO of the Irish Equine Centre gave a presentation to the Board about the work of the centre.

Ms. Mc Nicholas outlined that the Cawley/Walsh reported recommended that the sport horse sector should contribute €200,000 to the Irish Equine Sector but acknowledged that this had not been agreed with Horse Sport Ireland.

Various members of the Board explained that they could not see how the sector would come up with such funding and said they were unaware of the Cawley/Walsh recommendation. Many cited the low levels of state funding given to the sport horse sector by the Government. Members also queried why dope testing in the thoroughbred sector was not carried out by the Centre.

Ms. Mc Nicholas accepted that there were low awareness levels amongst the Sport Horse sector of the work of the Equine sector and that this needed to be addressed.

The Chairman thanked Ms. McNicholas for her presentation and acknowledged the important work done by the centre. He acknowledged the importance of the Equine Centre to provide both a service to the industry and protect it in the advent of a crisis. He emphasised that HSI should be supportive of the Centre but said it was difficult to see how any substantial funding could be provided in the short term.

The Chairman suggested that the Breeding Sub-Board should visit the Centre for a tour of the facilities and that HSI should assist the Centre in promoting its work amongst the Sport Horse community. He wondered whether creating an awareness of the Centre and the services on offer might generate additional revenues in terms of annual, or bi-annual, health screening of horses and ponies, increasing the number of stakeholders performing routine worm counts etc.

### **AOB**

#### **FEI Financial Charges**

The CEO advised that some producers of horses had complained to Horse Sport Ireland about being charged excessive fees by the FEI for the application of producer prefixes to horse's names. These were now being classed as commercial prefixes. HSI had written to the FEI seeking clarification on the matter. There were mixed views around the board table as many members felt that breeder prefixes were being undermined by producer prefixes.

**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.***