



**Minutes of the 9TH SPORT AND RECREATION ADVISORY FORUM  
of HORSE SPORT IRELAND  
held online via MS TEAMS**

**Thursday 16th April 2026 at 4pm**

**Present:** Christopher Bogle, NIHB (CB)  
Judi Pheysey, TREC Ireland (JP) (**Chair**)  
Sue Foley, AIRE (SFo)  
Peter O'Carroll, ERE (PO)  
Shirley Finnegan - RDA Ireland (SFi)  
Austin Fitzpatrick, HAI (AF) (*Joined 16.21*)  
Ron Weisz, IQHA (RW)

**In attendance:** Paul Hayes – Sport & Recreation Manager (PH)  
Robyn Gillespie – General Administration (RG) (Minutes)

**Apologies:** Sinead Doyle, Polo Ireland (SD)  
Karen Coventry, Special Olympics Ireland (KC)

**Abbreviations:** Horse Sport Ireland (HSI); Microsoft (MS); Association of Irish Riding Establishments (AIRE); Endurance Riding Eireann (ERE); Hunting Association of Ireland (HAI); Irish Polocrosse Association (IPA); Irish Quarter Horse Association (IQHA); Irish Universities Riding Clubs Association (IURCA); Irish Harness Racing Association (IHRA); Northern Ireland Horse Board (NIHB); Irish Equine Veterinary Association (IEVA); Tourism Related Equestrian Competitions (TREC); General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI); European Equestrian Federation (EEF); Royal Dubin Society (RDS); Showjumping Ireland (SJI); Sport Ireland (SI); Outdoor Recreational Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS); Horse Source (HS); TREC Ireland (TREC) Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD); Riding for the Disabled Association Ireland (RDA Ireland); Garda Vetting (GV);

**Meeting Opening/Apologies**

At 16:06hrs JP opened the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Sport and Recreation Advisory Forum of Horse Sport Ireland, and the apologies were noted.

**SR009.1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting & Matters Arising**

The minutes of the previous meeting, the 8th Sport & Recreation Advisory Forum, held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026, were agreed, and accepted and will be DocuSigned by the Chair following the meeting.

**SR009.2 Topics for Discussion**

- JP announced the International Equestrian Conference has been cancelled until 2027.
- Special Olympics 2026 – RG to send a volunteer information email to all affiliates along with flyers which can be distributed amongst members. (SR009.1)
- RDA insurance costs were discussed, currently €85 per riding hour across 30 groups and 400 annual riding hours. Pony Club and Riding Club insurance were referenced for comparison.

- SFo noted RDA insurance reflects the higher risks involved in therapeutic riding. Market competition was acknowledged as a key factor in pricing, with SFo reporting a 30% premium reduction last year.
- Therapeutic riding insurance and coaching cover were discussed. PH will ask John Bagnall whether coach insurance can include therapeutic riding. (SR009.2)
- PH will raise the issue of insurance with Sport Ireland, Denis Duggan and Avalon Everett. (SR009.3) It was noted these insurance challenges are not unique to equestrian sport. PH will also follow up with Mike Bray regarding affiliate reports. (SR009.4)
- TREC Ireland and IQHA use Sweeney Walsh for insurance. RW mentioned insurers Accelerant and Canopus via TUE, while PH noted HSI use Willis Towers Watson and LHK.
- TREC reduced insurance costs by limiting the number of events held annually. PH suggested exploring English brokers for alternative options.

### **SR009.3 Any Other Business**

- SFi advised that the affiliation fee has increased to €350. It was noted the fee had remained at €250 since the establishment of HSI.
- Judi raised the topic of GV fees. PH explained that HSI provides a shared GV service across all HSI affiliates, allowing portability between affiliated organisations. Separate GV checks are required for organisations outside HSI. HSI GV certification is valid for four years, with the same process applying for Access NI. Anyone working in both Ireland and Northern Ireland requires both.
- PH recently delivered a webinar on GV ID verification and confirmed that ID verification must be completed internally. There are no restrictions on who can act as an ID verifier, and a public list of approved ID verifiers is available on the HSI website.
- PH advised that equine anti-doping testing will begin within the next few weeks and invited anyone interested in getting involved to make contact.
- JP confirmed that the formal launch of the Strategic Plan is being organised. Information will be circulated shortly, with physical copies of the plan to be provided. The event will take place at the Sports Campus, and affiliates will be invited with as much notice as possible once arrangements are finalised.
- PH will encourage affiliates organisations that have not yet nominated a representative for the group to do so.

PH and JP thanked the forum members for their contribution and attendance and at 17.00hrs the meeting closed.

**Date of the Next Meeting – Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2026, 4pm by MS Teams**

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judi Pheysey, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Actions to be taken from the minutes of the meeting:**

| Action  | Detail                                                                                 | Assigned to |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| SR009.1 | RG to send Special Olympic Volunteer Information email to forum members                | RG          |
| SR009.2 | PH to discuss with John Bagnall if coach insurance can include therapeutic riding.     | PH          |
| SR009.3 | PH to raise the issue of insurance with Sport Ireland, Denis Duggan and Avalon Everett | PH          |
| SR009.4 | PH to follow up with Mike Bray regarding affiliate reports.                            | PH          |