

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
of the All Party Parliamentary Group for the Horse
held in Committee Room 21, House of Commons, London SW1
on Monday, 11 July 2011 at 4 p.m.**

Present:

Baroness Mallalieu (Chairman)
Mrs Jeanette Allen (Horse Trust)
Lord Gardiner of Kimble
Mr James Gray MP
Dr Harry Greenway (BHS)
Lord Higgins
rigadier Paul Jepson
Daniel Kawczynski MP
Mr Ben Mayes (BEVA)
Mr Will Lambe (BHA)
Mr Keith Meldrum (WHW)
Prof Tim Morris (BHA)
Mrs Caroline Nokes MP
Mr Roly Owers (WHW)

Mrs Maggie Still (BEF)
Lord Stoddart of Swindon
Baroness Trumpington (Part)
Ms Sophie Tyldesley (HoC)
Dr Phil Wadey (BHS)
Mr Mark Weston (BHS)
Mr John Williams (HoC)
Mr Roger Williams MP
Mr James Yeates (RSPCA)

Apologies: (Shown on last page)

In Attendance:

Mrs Annemarie Westwood (Minutes)

The Chairman opened the meeting and then handed the chair to Dr Harry Greenway to conduct the AGM.

Annual General Meeting

Mrs Annemarie Westwood confirmed that Baroness Mallalieu, Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger, Mr Tony Cunningham and Mr Roger Williams had agreed to stand again for election. Baroness Masham of Ilton had agreed to stand as Treasurer. The following officers were elected unanimously:

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| Chairman | Baroness Mallalieu | Labour |
| Vice-Chairmen | Mr Ian Liddell-Grainger MP Mr Tony Cunningham MP | Conservative Labour |
| Secretary | Mr Roger Williams MP | LibDem |
| Treasurer | Baroness Masham of Ilton | Crossbench |

Baroness Mallalieu took over the chair.

Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th March 2011

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated and were signed as a true record of the meeting. All matters arising were on the agenda.

HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Race

At the previous meeting Baroness Trumpington had asked this Group to liaise with the All Party Racing Group to arrange a Jubilee Race as a gift from Parliament to HM The Queen. The Chairman said that since that meeting all parliamentarians had been asked to contribute towards a small stained glass window as a gift, and this would have some bearing on how much any collection would raise for a race. The Chairman asked whether those present would be prepared to make a contribution, and she had asked the Chairman of the All Party Racing Group, Laurence Robertson, to canvass his members. She had had a meeting with Charles Barnett, Chairman of Ascot, who had agreed in principle to making the Hardwick Stakes a Jubilee Race. Her Majesty would be at the meeting to present the prize. The trophies for the main races were owned and held by Ascot, with owners being presented with mementos. It would be possible for the owner of the Jubilee Race to be presented with a lasting memento which could cost less than £1,000.

Baroness Trumpington said Her Majesty would gain a great deal of pleasure from a gift connected with racing and thanked members of the Group for considering this.

It was agreed that all members of the Group should be canvassed to ascertain their response.

ACTION: CHAIRMAN

Access to our Forests

Following the last meeting, when the previous Minister, Mr Jim Paice MP, had addressed members of the Group, the independent panel had been announced. The Chairman had written to the Minister and spoken to the Chairman of the Panel and to one of the members. Mr Mark Weston, of The British Horse Society was dealing with the matter and addressed the meeting.

The BHS had made representation in respect of the constitution of the panel as there was no representative from the equestrian industry. The Chief Executive of the Ramblers was the only representative of user groups, and would take forward representations from other users. A number of visits had taken place around the country with further visits in the Autumn. The initial call for evidence would end on 31 July 2011, and the BHS would be submitting a response in respect of equestrian access issues to the effect that access for equestrians should be the same as for other users, and equestrians should not be required to pay for permits. If the forests were sold, permissive access might be lost for ever. The best way this could be preserved was through a section 16 dedication made by the Forestry Commission to preserve permissive access. The initial report from the Independent Panel was due in October.

Individuals could respond to the consultation direct to the Panel by 31 July. The BHS would be submitting advice on their website to help people respond. Press releases had already been issued. Mrs Caroline Nokes MP suggested the subject should be raised on Facebook and other online forums.

Mr Roger Williams pointed out that in some small private woodlands, there was no formal agreement for people to ride, but it was allowed by some landowners.

Hoof Olympic Legacy Project

Some members of the Group had attended the Olympic Test Event at Greenwich, and the Chairman confirmed that Mr Tim Hadaway, Equestrian Manager for LOCOG, would be attending the next meeting on 5 December to talk about the Olympics.

Mrs Maggie Still, Head of Regional Development of the British Equestrian Federation ("BEF") made a presentation about the Olympic Legacy project. (A copy of her slides are attached to these minutes.)

There was not going to be a lasting site from the Olympics, so a legacy in the form of getting more people riding was being looked at. Tim Hadaway had started to fight for this in London some years ago, and the Hoof Project had been running for some years. The aim was to role it out across the country so that anyone that wanted to get involved with riding could do so. The Project was funded by Sport England, so it was very much an English project.

The Sport England target was to get 1 million more people taking part in sport by 2013, and the equestrian target was to get 43,000 people riding at least once a week. The majority of riders didn't want to compete.

There was going to be a marketing campaign with an online portal developing local equestrian networks. Regional networks were being set up by the BEF in partnership with other bodies including equestrian businesses. It had been started off by a small team, but they will be looking for volunteers to chair the local groups. They were not looking to set up a new organisation. Hoof was a campaign and the BEF were trying to pull together all the relevant organisations already working in this field.

Brigadier Paul Jepson asked how Hoof would be different from the National Riding Festival ("NRF") which had run for a number of years but not been very successful. Mrs Still said the NRF had had been a number of the issues, but the welfare of horses had been the fundamental concern.

Mrs Still said that market research showed there were people who wanted to ride and were financially able to do so, but they wanted to ride out in the open in company. The local networks would address this.

Baroness Mallalieu asked whether there were plans to build upon riding for deprived children provided by charities. The successful Ebony Horse Club in London was funded and there were plans to use this model in other parts of the country.

Lord Higgins said the link with the Olympics was rather tenuous and asked if there was any lasting equestrian legacy in Greenwich. There would not be an Olympic stadium, but there were plans for a permanent equestrian centre.

Mrs Jeanette Allen pointed out that the biggest problem will be to go from "growing" the number of riders to "sustaining" the numbers, as so many people stopped riding in their twenties. Talented riders with lots of expectations needed to be given the resources to continue. A regional foundation programme had been running for two years and 160 people had benefited on the programme which was a stepping stone to the World Class Programme.

Sentencing Council

The Chairman said the Group had been asked to produce evidence for the need to change sentencing guidelines so Courts consider disqualification. She asked that all charities, particularly the RSPCA, could play a part in putting together the evidence. Mr Roly Owers would report back at the next meeting.

ACTION: RSPCA / ROLY OWERS

Animal Health & Welfare Board Appointment

Mr Ben Mayes said the industry welcomed the conclusion of the Radcliffe Commission and the Government's swift response. There would be 15 members of the Board and seven

appointees. There was no guarantee that the horse industry would have a representative, but they had been told that one person would have a horse interest. Rules of engagement needed to be developed along with terms of reference so the horse industry would know how to communicate with the Board. The selection process was underway and interviews were being carried out in September.

Equine Scientific Research Funding

Mrs Jeanette Allen reported that equine scientific research funding had traditionally been funded by the Horse Trust and the Betting Levy Board and some smaller funders. The Levy Board funding was running at a lower level and there were fears for its future, though they were still funding existing projects.

There was more money coming from the broader bio-medical field where there was a potential for equine research to cross over into the broader human side. The Wellcome Fund were funding more vets to undertake research, but it was important that there was funding in the future for them to continue their research. Equine specific funding was diminishing.

Prof Tim Morris said it was a very serious position and Wellcome funding had to be transferable from horse to human, but the funding was very limited. The Levy Board were due to meet and had indicated that their income had dropped £100m to £50m, and research was one of the things which would suffer. A sale of the Tote was being considered and there was a campaign for part of the Tote legacy to be used towards the welfare of the horse.

Whip Enquiry

A Whip Enquiry was being carried out by the British Horseracing Authority ("BHA") to ascertain why and how the whip was needed. A number of factors were being considered such as betting integrity, the international position and the possible impact on other equestrian sports such as eventing. Research and clinical examination of horses over the last few years had shown it was not a welfare problem. If it was, it would not be used in racing or in other equestrian sports. It was an emotive subject, but the enquiry would be based on objective facts. Anyone could make comments to the Enquiry, and the findings would be published in September / October.

The Chairman asked whether the recommendations were purely related to welfare or about the rules themselves. Professor Morris confirmed the policy framework would be set and then the rules would follow and the penalties for infringement would follow from there. The policy had to be well-founded.

A recent news item on the use of whips had stated that the policy was set in conjunction with the RSPCA, and a YouGov attitude survey was being carried out. If the rules were going to be changed, it was important that the results of polling were considered. It was also important to explode the myth that the whip was needed for safety.

Mr James Yeates of the RSPCA said there was much discussion on the issue within the RSPCA currently, and to a certain extent the RSPCA's position would depend on the robustness of the Enquiry and how it was carried out. Professor Morris would be contacting the RSPCA for clarification on certain points.

Racing had a non-statutory regulator, the British Horseracing Authority, and they took their responsibility very seriously. Professor Morris would report back at the next meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

This would take place on Monday, 5th December at 4 pm, when Mr Tim Hadaway of LOCOG would be attending to talk about the Olympics.

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The meeting ended at 5.05 pm.



Apologies

Tony Cunningham MP
Michael Dugher MP
Dai Havard MP
Simon Hughes MP
Jessica Lee MP

Ian Liddell-Grainger MP
Baroness Masham of Ilton
Keith Taylor - BEF
Nadhim Zahawi MP