



**Blended Meeting of the Board of Trustees held on
Wednesday 28 April 2021 at 10:00
held by Video Conference (StarLeaf) from the Lecture Theatre at HQ**

1. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3 February 2021

- The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 3 February 2021 were proposed by the Chairman and agreed to be a true reflection of the meeting.

2. Matters Arising

- There were not any matter arising since the previous meeting.

3. Abridged Minutes of the December 2020 Board Meeting for publication

- The abridged minutes of the meeting that took place on 3 February 2021 were approved for publication on the BHS website.

4. Conflicts of Interest

- There were not any conflicts of interest declared.

5. Chief Executive's Report

- A Q1 snapshot report had been distributed to the Trustees in advance of the meeting to outline some of the highlights from the work undertaken by the Home Team during Q1, despite the UK being in different stages of lockdown in each Home Nation, including:
 - The launch of the *Horsei* App which featured in the 'Top 100 Downloaded Apps' in its first week.
 - British Riding Clubs' (BRC) Virtual Championships, 28 April – 3 May, received 1300 entries
 - Membership has continued to perform strongly, reaching 119,000 and still growing.
 - BRC membership has begun to grow again with the return to activity following a significant decline in 2020 due to the pandemic.

6. Employee Health & Safety

- A Volunteer Health & Safety audit had taken place and the outcomes would be shared with the Board and Audit Committee.
- Arrangements for managing health and safety in the policy statement are being reviewed to include information from supporting policies.

7. Event Health & Safety

- The Trustees were advised of arrangements in place for volunteers with activity resuming across the UK, including Event Health & Safety, and General Event training.

8. Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity

- There weren't any questions arising from the report that was distributed in advance of the meeting.
- Safeguarding training delivered by the NSPCC was undertaken by the Trustees in March 2021.

9. Information Security

- There weren't any questions arising from the report that was distributed in advance of the meeting.

10. Digital Transformation Update

- A report had been distributed in advance of the meeting to keep the Board of Trustees informed on progress of the Digital Strategy and management of the associated designated fund.
- It was noted that attendance of Advisory Group and Committee meetings had improved following the introduction of virtual meetings

11. Report from the Finance Committee

- The processes for year-end and the statutory accounts were reviewed
- The hard work of the Finance Department throughout 2020 with good forecasting was noted.
- The statutory accounts and draft annual report would be distributed to the Trustees in advance of the Election Board Meeting, for review prior to sign-off at the meeting.
- The management accounts were reviewed, and bottom up departmental forecasting would commence in April.
- The balance of the Hardship Fund was discussed and it was agreed that it would remain within the designated fund, and that if there were any suggestions on how it could be utilised for the welfare of riding school horses and ponies recommendations would be made to the Board.
- A firm has been engaged to undertake a review of the investment portfolios, make recommendations, and administer any actions agreed by the Finance Committee.
- A going concern exercise to consider profitability, reserves and cashflow in the twelve months following the sign-off of the statutory accounts, to ensure that the Society will be able to meet its future liabilities was undertaken and the projections were recommended to the Board of Trustees.

12. Management Accounts for the period ending 31 December 2020

- The starting point for membership at the beginning of the year was slightly higher than expected which provided a good platform for 2021.
- Membership revenue and outperformance in merchandising and fundraising has almost outweighed the impact of the free period awarded to British Riding Clubs in Q1 on 2021.
- By the end of 2020 investment values had virtually recovered following the reductions seen because of the pandemic.

13. Access Field Officer in Wales

- The Board approved a proposal to appoint an Access Field Officer in Wales unanimously.
- It was noted that the National Manager for the BHS in Wales has been very proactive in engaging with the Welsh Assembly, and it was agreed that the lobbying efforts should be supported by the Board of Trustees.

14. Approved Centre Scheme Update

- The Director of Participation presented the Approved Centres Scheme which has been updated. The scheme update was motivated by areas needing change highlighted by dialogue arising from the support given to Approved Centres throughout the pandemic. The scheme has been fundamentally changed to make it more agile and responsive to the individual requirements of centres.
- The new scheme is equally weighted between quality assurance and business support, based on feedback from riding schools, other centre types – approved and non-approved, and the general public, which strongly focused on horse care, the quality of coaching and the client experience.
- The inspection process has been reviewed to use simpler language and group requirements to make the process easier to digest. Support for centres to better integrate with other areas and departments of the BHS will be provided. The new business support and IT system will better support Centres in producing content to sell their services and market themselves more effectively via the BHS website.

15. Lockdown Learnings

- The BHS Operations Manager provided a presentation on the Lockdown Learnings project undertaken in 2020. The project commenced in June 2020 to recognise the good, and not so good, aspects of the lockdown and associated remote working. The Society has continued to build on learnings throughout the pandemic which is informing on how best to use the office and technologies adopted moving forward.

16. Trustee Elections

- It was proposed that Karen Silcock be elected unopposed to the position of Generalist Trustee with Financial Knowledge, and that Kerryn Haynes be elected unopposed as Generalist Trustee. The Board of Trustees approved the proposal unanimously.

17. Any Other Business

• Lord Gardiner's Speech at the National Equine Forum

The Chairman noted his thanks to Lord Gardiner for his speech at the National Equine Forum, within which the BHS Hardship Fund and the Society's lobbying successes were directly referenced:

"The BHS set up the Hardship Fund to help meet the cost associated with maintaining the health and wellbeing of horses and ponies. I thank the BHS for their collaboration with the Government to identify the implications that the changing Covid-19 restrictions have had on various equestrian activities"