

British Horse Council
Summer Meeting – Mon 10 June 2019
Meeting Notes

Chairman's welcome – Tim Brigstocke

- Approval of previous meeting note and any matters arising – all will be covered later

British Horse Council (BHC) update – Jeanette Allen

- Elections. David Mountford became Chair for three years (to May 2022) and Jeanette Allen is Vice Chair. David's apologies for absence given for this meeting due to prior commitment.
- BHC liaison with action groups. BHC has been working with HorseWorld on their Break the Chain campaign with a focus on carefully considering the need for any further regulation unless there is improved enforcement. A tethering roundtable was held with Minister Rutley, Roly Owers, Jeanette Allen, David Bowles and the HorseWorld Team to explore the most productive way of dealing with the tethering challenges they are experiencing in their area.
- Ministerial meeting. British Horse Council met with Minister Rutley and Lord Gardiner to discuss key welfare issues and BHC shared some of its concerns with the Minister. These include: ringfencing funding for local authorities to be able to enforce (influencing through the Spending Review), having a duty to enforce rather than the power to enforce, increased sentencing limit to 5 years for animal welfare offences, getting EU passported horses on to CED, lessons learned from equine influenza, licensing of rehoming centres and sanctuaries. An equestrian familiarisation day within the Minister's constituency has been requested.
- Supporter fees collection process. This will be deferred until December 2019 where fees will be collected for 2020, once the best mechanism has been decided. As agreed in December 2018 meeting, BHC may ask for contributions for dedicated projects as and when required, this may soon include funds to build a simple website so that the extent of all our work can be made more publicly accessible.

Equestrian employment – Lucy Wilson

- Report in meeting folder

Scotland update – Helene Mauchlen

- Report in meeting folder
- ScotEquine database and ID card launched at the Highland Show
- ScotEquine and CED will be linked for data transfer
- ScotEquine for horses which are registered with 5 Scotland PIOs

Central Equine Database – Stewart Everett

- Digital Stable will now to be launched to registered individuals in batches for testing

BETA Survey highlights – Claire Williams

- Slides in meeting folder

Racing report – David Sykes/Claire Sheppard

Horse Welfare Board

- Independent Chair: Barry Johnson
Board: Tracey Crouch (Independent), David Sykes (BHA), Alison Enticknap (BHA), Simon Knapp (RCA), Caroline Davies (RCA), Charlie Liverton (ROA), James Given (NTF)
- The first meeting of the Horse Welfare Board was held in May 2019. Priorities were determined by the Board, focusing not just on racing, but from foals to post-racing careers. The current top priority is an action plan to demonstrate tangible progress in lowering the number and rate of equine fatalities at British race meetings.

Cheltenham and Aintree Festivals

- For all races at the Cheltenham Festival, and for the races over the Grand National fences at Aintree, all horses were examined (including trot-up) pre-race, and trainers were required to submit medication records for the 45 days prior to the day of the race.
- Two horses were withdrawn at each Festival following pre-race examination. Trainers were also invited to advise the BHA of any horse that they deemed to be a 'poor mover' that their veterinary surgeon had deemed suitable to race, by sending a video – several horses were not entered on the results of this process.
- These successful procedures are likely to take place at race meetings in the future.

Biosecurity and horse health

Lessons learned from Equine Influenza – Richard Newton

- Slides in meeting folder

Disease Coalition update – Roly Owers

- Equine Viral Arteritis – current outbreak has highlighted issues associated with the 1995 EVA Order that Defra have committed to reviewing once current issue resolved
- African Horse Sickness vaccine – potential development through the International Horse Sport Confederation led initiative – maintaining close contact with the FEI
- Working on behavioural insights project as updated by Liz Kelly below

Biosecurity Behavioural Insights project – Liz Kelly

- Report in meeting folder

BEF biosecurity initiative – Nick Fellows

- BEF Horse Health Steering Group established as an inclusive group representing all aspects of the equine world including BEF members plus racing, polo, hunting, vets, research and wider welfare bodies.
- Has set up sub-groups for education, policy and an emergency response group.
- Looking into setting up a central fund for disease surveillance in the case of another disease outbreak. Very conscious that the sport horse world does not currently have the resources of the racing industry and costs of testing in the sport horse community could be considerable.
- Key objective is to ensure appropriate, evidence-based and consistent messaging, drawing on information from AHT in particular, to members and non-members alike,

to raise awareness of the need for and value of vaccinations, ultimately to achieve herd immunity levels.

- Rules harmonisation is another aim but the underlying message is to start somewhere and build on the overall number being vaccinated. Will also need active enforcement at events to be effective, acknowledging unaffiliated events are a further challenge.
- Future outlook is to utilise technology such as digital passports to support monitoring (movements and vaccination status), pre-event screening / advance entries and communication in the event of disease outbreak.

Equine ID Regulations – Jan Rogers

- Equine ID Roundtable next steps. The key points emerging from the ID roundtable held in January this year are as illustrated on the day and featured below. Your views on these priorities and how they might be achieved are welcomed. This will be activity we will need to take responsibility for individually and collectively as BHC members in order to be able to make the best use of the microchipping regulation.
1. Assess and address challenges (imported horses with EU passports)
 2. Develop simple guidance
 - Owner Guidance Notes
 - Veterinary Guidance Notes
 - Competition Guidance Notes
 - Enforcement Guidance Notes
 3. Agree and disseminate Simple Clear Positive Message – Protect your Horse Forever (against theft, fraud, disease....)
 4. Encourage equestrian bodies to build compliance & vaccination into their administration
 5. Encourage owners to check their chip
 6. Simplicity is the key to uptake

Zootechnical update – Garreth Dunstall/Kieran O'Malley

- Defra have started to draw together a panel of experts to advise on equine zootech issues. We hope to formalise this working group in due course, but the group has so far been involved in advancing Defra's understanding of the impact of the zootech regulations on the sector.
- This cooperation has included receiving specific advice on general issues (for example, passport-issuing). The bulk of specific advice to date however, relates to the periodic checks and controls of UK breed societies that Defra is mandated to carry out by the EU Animal Breeding Regulation.
- Defra intends for these checks and controls to be 'light-touch' - a non-intrusive, self-certification to confirm whether breed societies are compliant with the Animal Breeding Regulation. The Working Group provided advice to Defra to ensure that the questionnaire was well-received and understood by equine breed societies, and that the supporting documentation Defra will provide will be sufficient to guide those stakeholders through the process.
- A 'pilot' (i.e. small-scale run) of this system of checks and controls has been rolled out to a select group of UK breed societies. This was well-received and allowed Defra to tweak the system of checks and controls before it was rolled-out to the wider community of UK breed societies/studbooks.

- This wider roll-out will happen in late-June 2019. It is important for Defra to ensure that UK breed societies are compliant with the EU Animal Breeding Regulation to support the application to the European Commission to have UK breed societies listed as 'third country breeding bodies' after EU Exit. This application has been made by Defra and is yet to be progressed by the Commission.

Advancing Equine Scientific Excellence (AESE) – Georgina Crossman

- Slides in meeting folder
- All to consider any key topics for research projects for AESE

EU Exit and EU Animal Health Law updates

- EU Exit and industry liaison – Pamela Thompson/Simon Waterfield
- Report in meeting folder
- EU Animal Health Law – Matt Wells

Matt Wells has joined the team that is responsible for Animal Health Regulation co-ordination, working for Tom Youngman whom he was standing in for at the meeting. For now we're still in the EU, so we're still invited to Animal Health Regulation meetings. Whether the Animal Health Regulation applies in the UK depends on EU exit negotiations. Public feedback period closed two weeks ago on registration, ID and traceability delegated act. Thanks to World Horse Welfare for their response to the consultation. There were some equine comments in the Defra response as well prepared by Tristan Crago who has now moved onto another role in Defra.

The Commission plans to do a further implementing act specifically on the technical details of equine ID. There's no draft available, there hasn't been any specific discussion. We hear that there might be Commission working groups in the Autumn and we'll keep you updated. There are a number of open/upcoming Commission public feedback periods on some further delegated acts:

- disease control (opened 18 June)
- surveillance & eradication (open, closes 3 July)
- EU movements (imminent at time of writing)
- entry into the EU (open, closes 12 July)
- Responses are encouraged from stakeholders and individuals. Defra officials will endeavour to share notice of these where possible but individuals can view these on the Commission's webpages [here](#) and also sign up for direct email alerts.

The BHC's new website will have a section for links to open consultations.

AoB

- Vets and ID checks (Andrew Davis) answered by David Mountford as follows:
For routine vaccination the responsibility lies with the owner to present the correct horse and to present the correct passport. There is a very small risk of the passport not reflecting the vaccination status but, if the wrong horse has been presented, the responsibility lies with the owner. Presenting the wrong horse for vaccination is not likely to be commonplace and there is no professional obligation on the vet to check.

- Semen import (Tullis Matson). Response provided by Defra:

Germinal products, regardless of the species they are obtained from, whether fresh or frozen, must always be notified when entering the UK from a Member State. Importers must notify the Animal and Plant Health Agency at least 24 hours before the arrival of the consignment (As set out in the March 2019 guidance – Import of Equine Genetic Material from EU Countries). This is important as the reassurance offered by the electronic transmission of the critical information direct to the UK (via TRACES) may be lost on exit from the EU. The UK must be able to obtain the relevant information to assess risks and carry out post-import checks and traceability as required.

It is essential that any vet inseminating mares can verify the provenance and health status of the donor of semen. This is even more important in the case of imported semen and this can only be done by having access to the health certificate. The legislation requires that original certificates must accompany the products to destination. In the case of fresh semen, that has a very short shelf life, this may not be practical and we would be willing to accept electronic copies of the Intra Trade Health Certificate. However, the original Health Certificate should be sent afterwards.

The expectation is that the Importer downloads the electronic version of the Health Certificate (ITAHC) from TRACES, which has the 'ORIGINAL' watermark, and then emails it to where the semen is being used for insemination so the vet can inspect it and cross-match it with the hard copy of the wet signed/stamped ITAHC that should continue to accompany the consignment to its destination. This would allow the vet to ensure that, in the case of semen that is moved from another MS, a valid certificate is available prior to using it for insemination.

- RAMP and Allied Professionals (Brian Hutton)

This is still on the table and BEVA Position Statements can be found here

<https://www.beva.org.uk/Resources-For-Vets-Practices/BEVA-Position-Statements>

Date of Next Meeting Friday 13 December 13.00 - 16.30. Rooms A&B, Nobel House