



## **British Horse Council Meeting Notes – 11 December 2020**

Chairman Tim Brigstocke welcomed the attendees and set out housekeeping protocols

All were content with meeting notes from previous meeting

Other than already listed on the agenda, there were no notifications of AoB

### **1. British Horse Council Update - David Mountford**

Update regarding vet referral prior to physio treatment – RCVS has issued new guidance. Physical therapies do not need veterinary referral if the horse is not suffering from injury or disease, for maintenance no referral is required.

In 2020, most sectors have had challenges, some have done well and some better than ever. Resilience has clearly been shown. there were more veterinary pre purchase exams in August and September than in any previous year on record. Concern for economic repercussions of Covid-19 as well as the impacts of leaving the EU. The BHC submitted a Post Transition Priorities document to Government which has been well received and this has resulted in a follow up meeting with the Animal Health & Welfare Board for England. We have continued to meet with Defra weekly on Covid-19 and EU Exit matters to ensure that we regularly share information on developments and challenges. BHC Board meetings have involved attendance from Devolved Authority CVOs and Defra as well as having held a meeting with Lord Gardiner on 6 October.

Animal Health Trust – David thanked those organisations which had made financial pledges following the last meeting. Unfortunately, raising sufficient funds by this means to enable AHT to continue was not possible. Since then, a stakeholder group has been set up comprising of key funders and others, to look at the most promising way forward. The group employed a project leader, Stephen Atkin, who coordinated invitations to tender for provision of key laboratory and other services. There has also been a scientific review of the future of disease surveillance chaired by David Rendle. That panel has produced a report which is currently being finalised with a series of recommendations to be incorporated into future plans. It is hoped that outcome will be having a national infectious diseases unit led by Richard Newton and supported by the TB sector as well as the broader equine community, paying what it should to ensure a fit and health national herd. It is hoped that key areas of research which are carried out at AHT can be continued at one or more centres across the UK.

### **2. Government and Devolved Authority updates**

- a. **Scotland. Separate reports uploaded from Mike Anderson** and Helene Mauchlen (BHS Scotland)
  - b. **Wales. Update from Tom Henderson.** All equines in Wales must be microchipped by Feb 12th 2021. Letters to all equine keepers in Wales sent in November to notify of the deadline. Animal Welfare Committee has produced a report of the risks to animal welfare as a result of Covid controls and this is published <https://gov.wales/animal-welfare-horses>
  - c. **Northern Ireland. Update from Shane Collins.** Apologies provided from Robert Huey, CVO. Following the Deloitte report of Northern Ireland equine industry, an interim equine forum with members from across the sector has been formed with primary focus on Covid-19 and EU Exit, building in recommendations from the report. Continuing to prepare for the end of the transition period and Northern Ireland Protocol. Q&As to be found <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/brexit-transition-qas-movement-animals>. The circuit breaker ends today and online guidance will be updated. Defra reports good engagement with equine sector having resulted in improved guidance of the drafting. There has been progress on work recommended in the Deloitte report such as equine assisted therapy and access to off road riding. Regarding data on the equine population, Northern Ireland is considering its future ID requirements with other administrations with particular emphasis on EU Animal Health Law, because this will directly apply in NI, with that legislation featuring in annex 2 of NI Protocol.
  - d. **England. Update from Simon Waterfield.** New guidance for tier systems on Gov website and thanks to BHC for their ongoing input. Thanks to those who had engaged with and shared the recent microchipping communications. Defra is looking at equine ID post transition and looking forward to discussing future wider implications. Recently updated export and import pages (with detail regarding residency periods and blood testing requirements) feature on GOV website and are updated as required with press notices and digital comms plans, a number of webinars have also been held which can be re-watched on the Gov website. Transporter and vehicle authorisations are particularly complicated and transporters should look on Gov.UK for detailed updates as required. Further ahead, looking to a FTA with EU, Gov do not expect broad changes if there is a FTA, checks will remain the same but the detail of application could change. Important that people moving horses register with EHCO for exports <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/export-horses-and-ponies-special-rules> and IPAFSS <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/import-horses-and-ponies-from-1-january-2021> for imports. Thanked BHC and its members for the assistance provided to Defra and hopes for a more positive 2021.
- 3. Post transition – slides from Jan Rogers uploaded separately on the BHC website**

International Sports Horse Confederation (ISHC) Task Force has been in discussion these matters in detail and everyone is in close communication regarding updates.

**4. EU Animal Health Law. Update from Jade Treneary, Defra**

This is a risk based and flexible framework regulation which applies in the EU 21 April 2021. No legal obligation for UK to implement it but we will have to make some technical and legislative changes to enable ongoing trade with EU, such as modifying reportable and notifiable disease listing. UK is looking to implement changes before 21 April through engagement with Devolved Authorities. Devolved Authorities regard the extent to which they will diverge differently and these discussions are yet to be concluded. The EU Animal Health Law team is currently consulting with industry and vets to draw up notes for guidance for the new suite of export health certificates for use post April 2021, and the certificates are now published on the Commission website. Some of the changes we will have to accommodate are that provisions for temporary admissions are no longer available

which affects breeding horses, and changes to animal health requirements for equines such as removal of testing requirements for EVA. These certificates are different from the ones which will apply for all movements after 1 January 2021 as generated on EHCO and will apply from 21 April. Defra intends to carry out a review of existing animal health regulations and disease control measures and these might form a part of the structure of our legislation. All to share questions and concerns with the Defra team.

- 5. Equine Health & Welfare Pathway. Update from David Mountford – scene setting slides regarding the proposed outline to be considered are uploaded in a separate slideshow (awaited)**
- 6. Digital Stable – separate slides uploaded from Stewart Everett (awaited)**
- 7. Equestrian Trade – separate report uploaded from Claire Williams**
- 8. Equestrian Sport – separate report uploaded from Iain Graham (awaited)**
- 9. Leisure & Recreational – separate slides uploaded from James Hick**
- 10. Racing & TB Industry – separate report uploaded from Claire Sheppard**
- 11. Welfare – separate slides uploaded from Roly Owers**
- 12. Research – separate reports uploaded from Annie Dodd & Jan Rogers**
- 13. National Equine Forum - separate information provided by Georgina Crossman**
- 14. AoB – information uploaded regarding the impact of Brexit on breed societies (webinar with Q&A)**
- 15. Date of next meeting June 2021. The contact list will be advised of the date in due course**