

Equine welfare

British Horse Council 24th June 2022

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Current welfare situation

- Meeting with Defra in early July to discuss current equine welfare dial
 - Welfare dial remains busy but steady
 - Price of horses across the board remains high and reports dealers are sourcing from abroad to avoid high UK prices
 - Some indications of an increase in number of people looking to relinquish their horses
- Key concerns looking forward
 - Cost of living increase
 - Current equestrian sector 'bubble' will burst
 - Breeding lag in an attempt to meet current market opportunity
- Will continue to monitor the situation – and welcome any relevant intelligence or information



Enforcement

- Improving enforcement remains a key priority
- The Animals (Penalty Notices) Act 2022 enacted in April of this year (England & Wales)
 - Certain provisions will only come into force by regulations made by SI (secondary legislation)
 - Defra considering which animal health and welfare legislation will fall under Act – can be extended in future
- APGAW enforcement focus
 - 9 Mar roundtables on current enforcement challenges
 - Report identifying solutions to be published shortly – particular focus on LA structure and resourcing



Sentencing

- Recognised link between enforcement and sentencing
- Lack of consistent or appropriate sentencing undermines effective enforcement
- Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Act 2021: Sentencing Council consulting on revisions and updates to:
 - Animal cruelty draft guideline
 - Failure to ensure animal welfare draft guideline
- Guidelines for England & Wales
- Consultation deadline 1 Aug 2022



Licensing

- Also closely linked to enforcement: only effective if inspectors can identify a welfare problem – otherwise a tick box exercise
- The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018
 - Local Authority Guidance updated early 2022
 - 2023: regulations due to be reviewed. Opportunity for further revisions to minimum standards, associated guidance and consider changes to legislation
- Licensing of Animal Welfare Establishments
 - England & Wales have set out intention to consult on registration & licensing of animal welfare establishments
 - NEWC to launch a survey to gather feedback from the sector in early autumn

