

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE BRITISH EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
HELD ON TUESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2022  
AT EQUESTRIAN HOUSE, LECTURE THEATRE  
AND VIA TEAMS**

Chair: Malcolm Wharton CBE (MW)  
Mark Jeffreys (MJ)  
Alison Wallace (AW)  
Lise-Lotte Olsen (LO)  
Alison Rankin Frost (ARF)  
Roly Owers (RO)  
Quintin Cornforth (QC)  
Therese Miller (TM)  
Jane Domhill (JD)

Virtual: John Troiano (JT)  
Naomi Howgate (NH)

In Attendance:	<p>Jim Eyre (JE) Lynne Bailey (LB) Helen Nicholls (HN) Mandana Mehran Pour (MMP) Steve Jordan (SJ) Chris Smith (CS) Jess Cook (JC) Lucy Jones (LJ)</p>	<p>Chief Executive Head of Integrity Performance Director Head of Participation Finance Manager (<i>Item 95/22</i>) Chair, BEF Council Former Board Director/Observer PA to the Chair and CEO (Minutes)</p>
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Apologies: Claire Williams (CW)

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<b>88/22</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>  The Chair welcomed everyone to the Board meeting, confirming apologies from CW. MW also welcomed JD and NH to their first Board meeting and thanked JC for attending this meeting as an observer to support on the ED&I reporting.	
<b>89/22</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest, Gifts and Hospitality</b>  There were no declarations for this meeting.	
<b>90/22</b>	<b>2022 Operational Plan Reporting</b>  The Board's attention was drawn to the changes made to the Operational Plan, highlighted in red from HN and to LB's updates to the document.	

	<p>JE advised that the plan would be reviewed early in 2023. He added that UK Sport (UKS) had declined the request reprofile funds to recruit a commercial officer, which will put pressure on the BEF's ability to grow commercially and meet the long-term co-funding aims of UKS. This will need to be revisited in 2023.</p> <p>LB advised that the 2023 BEF Rule Book will be published early in 2023.</p> <p>There were no comments from the Board on the operational plan.</p>	<p>JE</p> <p>LB</p>
<p>91/22</p>	<p><b>Strategic Objective: Performance</b></p> <p>HN advised the Board that a series of four meetings had been held to review the athletes on the programme across each discipline. Following these meetings, 42 athletes were selected for the World Class Programme (WCP) for 2023 and nominated to UKS, who have subsequently approved those nominations.</p> <p>HN advised that the letters were being sent to the athletes to confirm their places on the WCP and to those who were deselected. The latter have had discussions with the staff prior to the letters being sent and support is provided. HN advised that a couple of spaces remain for athlete selection to enable athletes who have shown requisite potential over the next six months to be selected onto the WCP.</p> <p>HN stated that Paris planning was going well, with BEF in a good position compared to other sports. The accommodation for the Olympic teams has been confirmed and the deposit paid. HN and Sophie Thomas will be travelling to Paris in March to visit potential accommodation for the Paralympics (in the process of being built), as the Olympic accommodation was too large and not accessible for the Paras.</p> <p>In response to queries from the Board around deselection of athletes, HN advised that equestrian sport was unusual for the longevity of athlete careers. Being deselected now did not mean that an athlete may not be selected again in the future and support is provided to athletes throughout the process and for the three months following deselection. Further support can be provided outside the UKS funding if needed in specific cases. HN added that there was little turnover of athletes within the three programme levels (P1, P2 and P3) and that the programme was stable going into Paris 2024, with some good new athletes also being selected.</p> <p>HN advised that conversations with owners with horses on the programme had been taking place to keep those owners engaged. Given the competitiveness of places on the WCP, some owners may choose to move horses to athletes of other nations in order to have a chance to be selected for a team.</p> <p>On the European Championships coming up in 2023, HN stated that these were being held in different locations at different times for the disciplines,</p>	

	<p>which was increasing costs. Hotels have been reserved for the teams and work was progressing on transportation.</p> <p>The Board discussed the selection of athletes for the championship teams. HN stated that she was working on a simplified selection process template for the disciplines to make the process easier. She added that she was also working with the selectors to determine the goals for the championships, i.e. whether the team would be selected to gain experience, or with the aim to medal.</p> <p>It was agreed that the discussions on selection appeal costs with the ODs be joined up with the discussions on other costs (BEF Council Working Group).</p> <p>MW advised the Board that the hospitality at Paris 2024 was being run solely by an American company and the costs for hospitality spaces was very high, which will impact on entertaining owners. Whilst there was concern from some Board Members around the need to provide hospitality for owners at Championship events, HN advised that this was about relationship management. Owners input millions to support riders and the programme, therefore the WCP look to support them. Other nations will be providing high level hospitality and therefore BEF need to do the same for their owners.</p> <p>JE assured the Board that all options will be considered to ensure that funding is used appropriately. Further, the Board were advised that the WCP had asked UKS as to whether the money invested into the programme would be considered as co-funding, as it is the only sport to have such high levels of private investment. Conversations were ongoing with UKS.</p>	<p>JE</p>
<p>92/22</p>	<p><b>Strategic Objective: Participation</b></p> <p><u>AKD Research</u></p> <p>MMP presented a summary of the research process to the Board, advising that around 200 people had been spoken to in order to understand the ‘lived experiences.’ 600 individuals had also completed the survey.</p> <p>Nine themes arose from the research findings including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of diversity (lack of visible diversity as well);</li> <li>• Lack of awareness – 80% people did not know where to find the nearest riding centre.</li> </ul> <p>Those that partook in the experience days as part of the research stage enjoyed the opportunity with some choosing to continue. The latent demand for equestrian activity is present, but the lack of awareness and the affordability issue needs to be addressed.</p> <p>Another area to address would be pathways and how these can be made more open into the sport, as well as developmental pathways to higher levels in the sport. Clear guidance should be available to all to make equestrian more accessible and diverse.</p>	

	<p>It was agreed that it was important to hold conversations around the difficult issues arising from the AKD research and to ensure that outward communications on the matters raised were clear and addressed the issues, particularly around bullying, micro aggression and racism. Education would be key but it was recognised that this would not be an insignificant piece of work.</p> <p>MMP advised the Board that it would take at least 10 years for a cultural change to be seen. Smaller projects with the Member Bodies will be the start of the process, e.g. the work being done around urban riding centres and alongside The Pony Club.</p> <p>Key Dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The full report would be provided to the Board for initial review ahead of wider circulation (aiming for mid-December)</li> <li>• The Board would be asked to provide their thoughts on how this would be presented to bring the equestrian sector on the journey</li> <li>• AKD to present to the Board at the Board Away Day in January</li> <li>• Presentation to the Member Bodies would be done after the Board.</li> </ul> <p>The Board agreed that more time was required to be spent on discussing ED&amp;I. Following the AKD presentation at the Away Day, a full day on ED&amp;I would be arranged for further discussion on this topic. The Board agreed that BEF as an organisation needed to be confident in what it hoped to achieve prior to going wider to the Member Bodies. Planning around this complex issue would be important, as would conversations with the Member Bodies to provide BEF support.</p> <p><u>Participation Objectives</u></p> <p>MMP advised that consultation had been done with the Member Bodies on the Participation objectives and KPIs. She added that this was a period of change with a new team, providing an opportunity to look at the wider view of equestrianism and to use an insight working group to develop KPIs for BEF and the Member Bodies. A potential audit of the sector would be discussed by the PDMG.</p>	
93/22	<p><b>Strategic Objective – Governance Compliance</b></p> <p><u>DIAP and ED&amp;I</u></p> <p>LB provided a governance update to the Board, advising that both she and MMP feel that the DIAP is vitally important and that the inclusion work needs to be done to address diversity within the BEF.</p> <p>It was noted that it would be a difficult process just to manage internally to address recruitment and retention. It would also be key to gain consensus from the Member Bodies and determine the long-term goals and challenges. It was agreed that the Board needed to fully support this process.</p>	

	<p>The Board discussed board-level recruitment and noted that it was easier to attract more diverse candidates for external recruitment (e.g. INEDs) than for internal (Elected and Nominated Directors), as the pool of diverse candidates within the Member Bodies for the latter categories was limited. This could only be addressed in the long-term.</p> <p>A suggestion of utilising board observers or co-opting someone onto the Board for specific matters was mooted as a positive way to increase diversity on the board. LB asked the Board to reflect on what they would like to do to bring about change.</p> <p>AW suggested using employee networking groups and steering groups to bring in stakeholders and diversify conversations – to use the networking groups as a resource. AW and LB to discuss this further outside of the meeting.</p> <p>JC stated that the EEG had been set up to address this, but the group had moved into a different direction.</p> <p>MMP stated that another option would be to establish an Advisory Board populated with people with lived experiences and that this had been done successfully in other NGBs. This idea was supported by ARF, who suggested it could sit as a ‘shadow council’ with wider diversity. Training could also be done with the BEF Council to understand the cultural barriers to entry into equestrianism. It was agreed by all that diversity of thought was important.</p> <p>The Board agreed that the first steps were to address diversity in the BEF Board and staff, noting that the BEF were strong in terms of gender diversity, but not ethnically diverse. It was also noted that more disabled people needed to be brought onto the Board to address the lack of diversity in this area.</p> <p>JC stated that the language in the equality plan needed to be reviewed – e.g. ‘disabled’ instead of ‘impairments.’</p> <p>It was agreed that the Board would have a meeting solely focussed on ED&amp;I and LB’s papers would be revisited to continue the conversation.</p> <p><u>Cascading Good Governance</u></p> <p>LB advised work was being undertaken with CS on the Rulebook and consideration was being given as to what should be included on standards for ED&amp;I and safeguarding. Policies included as a condition of compliance would need to be easy to trickle down into the smaller Member Bodies.</p> <p>TM stated that consistency in Rulebooks needed to be addressed, with the BEF Rulebook providing a template model for the overarching areas across the Member Bodies.</p> <p>The Board endorsed the direction of travel outlined by LB and suggested that a Governance Working Group may be a worthwhile consideration.</p>	<p>AW/LB</p>
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	<p><u>BDO Audit</u></p> <p>LB advised that the BDO report had finally been received following the audit completed in 2021/early 2022. LB stated that there were a number of inaccuracies in the report and, because of the time taken, some of the information was now out of date. LB advised that she and JE were formulating a response to challenge some of the findings. The final BDO report (when completed) will be provided to the Board to discuss the recommendations therein.</p>	
94/22	<p><b>CEO Report on operational matters</b></p> <p>The CEO report was taken as read. The following items were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FEI passport fees have been raised by 8%, agreed with the FEI Member Bodies.</li> <li>• The Environmental Sustainability partner had been selected following a successful interview process and would be announced by the end of the year. Horse Sport Ireland were confirmed to join BEF in the project. In response to queries from the Board, JE confirmed that the tender included the covering of research into all aspects of environmental impact to establish a baseline for our sector. All Member Bodies would be involved in the research in addition to the BEF and some stakeholders from the wider sector. A stakeholder plan was being developed.</li> <li>• The Board discussed the FEI Ethics and Welfare Commission, noting with concern that whilst the work was positive, the messaging was not quite right and did not seem to put the horse first.</li> <li>• The Board asked how much influence BEF had with FEI. JE commented that BEF utilise the GBR representatives on FEI Committees and meet with them twice yearly for an International Influence meeting, however, added that it potentially provided more insight on FEI matters, than influence.</li> <li>• The Board offered congratulations to the BEF on being awarded ‘The Golden Glove Award’ from the Worshipful Company of Glovers. This award was granted in recognition of the contribution equestrian has made to the glovers’ trade.</li> <li>• It was asked is Aachen were engaging with owners for the 2023 event at which Great Britain was a partner country. JE advised that the Organisers were engaging at all levels and the event was looking very positive.</li> <li>• JE brought to the attention of the Board the good work being done via the Together Fund (grants provided by Sport England and administered by the Participation Team) to support the ongoing recovery of the sector. It was noted that not all of the projects in receipt of the funding were associated with Member Bodies. BEF have also applied for a further £50-60k to enable more grants to be distributed.</li> <li>• On riding centres, MMP advised that an audit of around 500-700 centres would be undertaken to understand why they are not affiliated to any of the representative Member Bodies.</li> </ul> <p><u>World Class Programme Finance Summary</u></p>	

	<p>HN presented to the Board a finance summary for the WCP, to provide greater Board understanding and oversight of this area. This will be a standing document going forward.</p> <p>MW congratulated JE on and excellent report.</p>	
<p><b>95/22</b></p>	<p><b>Financial Reporting and Approval of the 2023 Budget</b></p> <p><i>(SJ joined the meeting for this item only)</i></p> <p>LO advised there were no further matters to raise from the last Audit Committee meeting, separate to those issues already discussed. LO added that the spreadsheet provided by MMP summarising the Sport England funding breakdown had been very useful in providing oversight for the Audit Committee and potentially something similar could be done for the WCP. LO advised that the Audit Committee would meet four times in 2023, to review the financial update for each quarter.</p> <p>JE led the Board through the management accounts, advising that there was a potential surplus for the end of the year of £57k, however, this was likely to be nearer £15-20k once the end of year accounts were finalised.</p> <p>It was noted that the Sport England underspend was committed for use prior to 31 March and that the growing Participation team were successfully building relationships with the Member Bodies, but it would take time for projects to be developed.</p> <p>SJ advised that Sport England prefer to provide the funding each quarter up front, regardless of how quickly BEF intend to use those funds. Of the funding provided in the current cycle, £100k has now been spent and any underspend can be carried forward for use by 2025.</p> <p>It was noted that funds could not simply be given to the Member Bodies – Sport England require that funds be allocated to projects and progress of those projects then measured.</p> <p><u>2023 Budget</u></p> <p>JE confirmed that the Council had approved the increase of Member Subscriptions by 5% for 2023 and this was reflected in the budget.</p> <p>SJ advised that BHS had been slow to provide the premises costs for 2023. Without these figures, it was proving challenging to confirm the budget. JE to chase via James Hick.</p> <p>It was noted that the aim was to reach a breakeven budget for 2023.</p> <p>One area for potential savings that could be utilised was to get rid of the furniture from the old office currently held in storage. It had been kept in the event BEF moved offices when the break clause was due in July 2023, but JE</p>	

	<p>expressed that it was likely BEF would remain at Equestrian House. There was a general agreement to dispose of the furniture.</p> <p>It was agreed that the budget would be updated with the premises costs once confirmed.</p> <p>It was also noted that the costs of face to face meetings would need to be managed to ensure that these did not exceed budget in 2023.</p> <p><u>Risk Register</u></p> <p>JE took the Board through the register, noting the updates highlighted for the Board’s information. Particular attention was paid to the Member Subscriptions and inflation rates. TM advised that BE were putting together a plan to address their immediate issues (budgetary). It was noted that it was right to keep the risks of financial instability of a member Body in focus.</p> <p>He stated that a new item had been added to the register – Environmental Sustainability.</p> <p>A further item had been added on FEI calendar fees for 2023/24. A deposit scheme was being introduced by the FEI for future events on the schedule, which would probably not be well received by organisers. It was essential to ensure that BEF was not at risk from the organisers not paying these invoices.</p> <p>JE advised that BDO had provided some feedback on the register, which would be addressed in due course.</p>	
96/22	<p><b>Report on standing agenda items (where applicable)</b></p> <p><u>Health and Safety</u> Nothing to report.</p> <p><u>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</u> Covered under Participation</p> <p><u>Safeguarding Report</u> LB advised the Board that the number of cases reported had increased significantly, with the majority being lower level concerns. LB added that the MOUs for safeguarding were in place with the Member Bodies, defining the roles of the BEF and MB representatives to determine how concerns were addressed.</p> <p>The Board raised the question as to whether reporting on the closure of cases could be provided to the Board to provide oversight. LB stated she would look into this.</p> <p>TM flagged that the CDAT minutes provided with the Board pack showed that the group was concerned that coaches were properly trained and that training was kept updated. LO stated that the Member Bodies were not doing enough to encourage coaches to update their training. LB to look into this.</p>	

	<p>LB updated the Board on the ‘Safe with Horses’ campaign, advising that video content could be produced and added to a microsite, with FAQs and tips for children and adults. The aim would be for the material to be accessible and easy to digest. The initial scoping had been completed and design work was in progress. It was intended for this to be rolled out in April 2023.</p> <p>TM noted that the Comms output co-ordinating safeguarding messaging across the Member Bodies had been good, especially in the NSPCC week and LB advised that this would continue through the Anti-bullying week.</p> <p>LB did raise one area of concern with regard to the reporting of low level issues – additional resource may be required to manage the volume. This would need to be reviewed in due course, particularly as an uplift in cases was expected when the campaign is rolled out.</p> <p>It was agreed that Equine Welfare needed to be added to the standing items.</p>	
<b>97/22</b>	<p><b>Review of minutes from the Board Meeting held 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022</b></p> <p>The Board approved the previous minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
<b>98/22</b>	<p><b>Review of the actions arising from previous meetings</b></p> <p><b>Item 2 – Capacity Survey:</b> Meetings are being held with the Participation team and Member Bodies as to how to take forward.</p> <p><b>Item 5 – Resourcing of horses:</b> Retraining of Racehorses had presented at the recent Council meeting.</p> <p><b>Item</b></p>	
<b>99/22</b>	<p><b>Written Resolutions for matters approved since the last meeting</b></p> <p>The resolutions were noted.</p>	
<b>100/22</b>	<p><b>Matters for Approval</b></p> <p><u>EWEAG Terms of Reference</u> It was suggested that the language could be softened, but it was noted that the EWEAG was fundamentally an advisory group to the Board. The Terms of Reference were approved.</p> <p><u>Register of Interests Policy and Form</u> LB advised that the form had been reviewed following feedback from the BDO Governance audit. BDO had also advised that BEF needed to be more proactive and it was agreed that updates to the register needed to be done.</p> <p>TM suggested that LB push back to BDO on some of the areas they suggest interests should be noted, as it should only contain areas where there would be potential conflicts.</p>	

	The Policy and Form were approved.	
<b>101/22</b>	<p><b>Matters for Information – Minutes from Working Groups and Committees</b></p> <p>The minutes for the various Committees and Working Groups were taken as read.</p> <p><u>Nominations and Remuneration Committee</u>  AW asked how the notice of the 1 January 2023 salary rise and autumn payment had been received by the staff. JE advised that the feedback was very positive and the staff grateful for the Board’s consideration. JE added that the staff action group that had previously met to provide staff input into this matter would potentially meet again to gather further thoughts.</p> <p>AW advised that she would be keen for the working group to continue meeting to provide staff feedback to the Board.</p> <p><u>Sub-Committees and Working Groups</u>  JE advised that it was intended to undertake an audit of all of the working groups currently running, in order to ensure that they are fit for purpose.</p>	JE
<b>102/22</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><u>Board Away Day</u>  The Board were provided with an updated draft itinerary for the away day in January 2023.</p> <p>TM raised the issue of unaffiliated competitions and asked whether the approach from across the larger Member Bodies could be discussed at the away day.</p> <p>JT asked that in the first session to set the context for the away day if a ‘state of the union’ update could be provided to highlight what had gone well and what had not from the strategy 2020 – 2024.</p> <p><u>World Championships Hosting Ambitions</u></p> <p>JE advised that there was little appetite from the ODs to commit to hosting any championship events in UK in 2028. However, Burghley have expressed interest in hosting the European Championships in 2026. JE stated that he had engaged with UK Sport to look at potential support for the event as part of the Major Events Programme – the submission to UKS would need to be done in January to meet the necessary timelines for consideration. The FEI submission deadline would not be until April potentially.</p> <p>The pros and cons of the bid were discussed and the potential risks from Brexit around the inability to attract sufficient riders from abroad were raised. It was noted that Burghley would potentially lose their 5* fixture for that year. It was noted that British Eventing were keen to support the bid at this stage – their input into the process would be vital.</p>	MW/JE

	<p><u>Wording in Eventing Policy</u></p> <p>A query was raised on the use of 'disobedience' in then Eventing Selection Policy, with concerns that it was not the right language to be used and should be reconsidered for the future. It was noted that the Pony Club also use the same wording currently.</p>	
103/22	<p><b>Dates of BEF Meetings in 2023:</b></p> <p><b>Board Meetings will commence at 1030 hrs unless otherwise directed as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board Away Day – 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023, Ardencote</li> </ul> <p><b>BEF Council Meetings will commence at 1030 hrs unless otherwise directed on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBC</li> </ul>	
104/22	<p><b>Board Closed Session</b></p> <p>JE joined the Board for a closed session – all other attendees left the meeting.</p>	

Chair

*Malcolm White*