

BE Stakeholder Group Meeting Summary Notes

13th January 2021, 3.00pm, Microsoft Teams

Participants

Jude Matthews (JM) – BE CEO
Linda Allan (LA) – EHOA Chair
Rachael Faulkner – BEOA Representative
Bruce Haskell (BH) – ERA Representative *joined at 3.35pm*
Chris Tattersall (CT) – Board Director
Helen White (HW) – ERA Grassroots Representative
Alexandra Bright (AB) – BE Executive Assistant

➤ **Minutes of the last meetings**

- 18th November 2020: approved
- 16th December 2020: **ERA Representative to email proposed changes to AB**

➤ **2021 Cashflow**

Association Representatives reported concerns over cashflow in light of the current covid-19 restrictions [and their potential effects on sport] and offered their help if required. JM gave reassurance on the financial situation and explained that a delay to membership renewals was anticipated, [which the organization could withstand], however, Association Representatives could help generally by reminding their members of the benefits of BE membership [to themselves and to the sport] and encourage renewals. JM suggested also that members could be advised to register new horses, purchase season/day tickets and make entries [when possible] in advance of ballot dates to ease the pressure on the reduced office team. ERA Representative reported that positive posts had been seen on social media in support of BE. BEOA Representative stated that Organisers would be in support of encouraging competitors to make their entries in good time and would disseminate the message using social media.

JM reported that horse season ticket sales and membership renewals so far was encouraging. JM reminded the Association Representatives that members' discount codes would expire if not used and were valid for four weeks only.

➤ **Cancellation of fixtures / planning**

JM confirmed that a communication was due to be released regarding calendar planning and event cancellations with the aim of easing concerns about high levels of balloting/decreasing opportunities for members to compete.

JM was confident that there would be some offering for members in March even if not possible to facilitate full competition; alternative formats were being investigated.

BEOA Representative was in communication with all organisers regarding fixtures planning and felt that early cancellations would allow further planning [for the calendar and for competitors].

➤ **Feedback received by Association Representatives**

1) Regional Finals and Area Championships

ERA Representative had raised questions on proposed rules with the Sport Committee and had discussed with JM. Two letters had been received complaining about the changes introduced and commenting on the implications for some riders. Observations were discussed; in particular the requirement for competitors to select and not change their route of qualification. The Sport and Risk Management Committee were in the process of finalising eligibility and qualification rules for the pilot. The pilot would be reviewed and adjusted if necessary.

2) Deployment of Officials

Association Representatives reported feedback that communication from BE could be improved regarding notification of which officials would be deployed to events, especially when communicating changes from previous years. **Action: JM.**

The reasons why (GDPR concerns) the full deployment schedule was no longer distributed to officials and organisers were explained.

➤ **Sport Committee**

JM explained that the position of Chair of the Sport Committee would be advertised soon, and it was anticipated that the new chair would have an input into setting the structure and composition of the committee. Feedback from the

Association Representatives was acknowledged. JM hoped to appoint the new Chair as soon as possible, but felt that an interim chair could be considered to enable appointment of the right person. Association Representatives were in favour of this approach.

Association Representatives asked whether the Board intended to follow this recruitment process to appoint chairs of other committees. JM answered that the Board had not identified any other committee chair vacancies to be advertised currently.

Association Representatives considered that the interval between planned Sport Committee meetings February to May was too long in the current circumstances.

JM reported that the Strategic Fixtures Review was scheduled, however, explained that as staff resource had diminished, the outcome may not be reached as soon as was hoped.

➤ **Insurance Review and scope**

JM reported that terms of reference for the review had been drafted. Representatives appointed so far were BEOA: Simon Bates and Richard Clapham, EHOA: Alex Wakeley, ERA: TBC x2. ERA Representative planned to advertise for the two roles and would ensure representation of both grassroots and professional riders. JM confirmed that the insurance cover was in place for 2021 and the review would inform the requirements for 2022.

➤ **Entries**

1) Refund Policy for 2021.

EHOA Representative reported feedback that it was not entirely satisfactory for Organisers to set individual refund policies for covid-19 event cancellations and that members would welcome some guidance from BE. BEOA Representative had discussed at length within BEOA and it was agreed that a standardised refund policy would be well received. JM would encourage organisers who run both BE and unaffiliated events to set a refund policy for their BE event either equal to or more generous than their unaffiliated event. BEOA Representative stated that she was personally in agreement with this principle, but the feedback she had received from other BEOA members was that it was a sensitive issue, and it would not be desirable to agree to such a policy. JM suggested that it may be a helpful exercise to review affiliation fees for covid-19 cancellations.

2) Balloting

EHOA Representative suggested publishing a guide to the balloting process ahead of entries opening to help members to understand the rules.

JM confirmed that contingency plans/processes were in place and would be deployed if events were oversubscribed, to avoid high balloting. ERA Representative felt that organisers should be encouraged to look holistically and take on a more collaborative approach. BEOA Representative stated that the BEOA's top priority was that members would have competitions to go to and that the fixtures processes had been simplified to enable faster decision making.

➤ **Event Covid-19 Protocols**

ERA Representative asked whether there had been any indication from DCMS that protocols would need to change. JM answered that the protocols were thought to be robust, but that assessments would need to be made depending on the restrictions in place once the current lockdown ended, for example, a national ease of restrictions scenario or a tiered system scenario etc.

➤ **Executive Continuity**

Association Representatives stated that they were all very sorry to hear the announcement of JM's resignation. JM confirmed that her notice period was six months, so she intended to guide BE through sport resumption.

CT confirmed that a process/plan for replacement had not yet been agreed, but that the Board intended to give full consideration to skills/person specification required for replacement in order to find the right applicant. The Board wished to understand the feelings of Association Representatives, but ultimately it would be a decision for the Board to make. Association Representatives appreciated the offer of consultation and understood that there were limits to their involvement in respect of business decisions. **Association Representatives to provide their collective thoughts in writing to CT.**

Association Representatives hoped that the regular meetings of this group would continue [as all found them to be useful] and suggested an overlap with executive attendance if possible, to ensure continuity.

➤ **Allocation of Board Director – Association Representative liaison**

JM reported that the Board had nominated CT as point of contact for all three Stakeholder Association groups. This was well received by Association Representatives and it was felt that consistency of messaging was positive.

➤ **Board**

Association Representatives asked when the Chair's term of office was due to finish. JM answered June 2021 and explained that the four-year term could be renewed by the Board, if the Chair wished to do a second term. Association Representatives were in support of the Chair staying in office for a second term.

As a general principle, Association Representatives suggested that when a new Director is appointed, a formalised handover with the outgoing Director should take place, so that knowledge and ideas were not lost from the Board.

➤ **Any Other Business**

1) **Process for travelling out of the UK to compete**

ERA Representative asked about plans to accommodate extra FEI competitors within the GBR calendar as it would not be so easy for those who would usually travel abroad to FEI events to do so (due to both Brexit and covid-19). JM answered that the situation would be assessed, monitored and kept under review, noting FEI calendar submission deadlines and event viability. BEOA Representative felt this was good news for GBR event viability and stated that organisers would aim to accommodate competitors who would normally travel. CT added that as everything was changing so quickly, it was very difficult to plan/predict accurately.

2) **Support of BE Decisions**

Stakeholders committed to supporting BE decisions and were prepared to challenge negativity. JM felt that there was more confidence from the membership in respect of 2021 as the covid-19 event protocols had been tested and proved in 2020; feedback had been taken and lessons learnt. **All agreed that learnings should be included in future communications.** BEOA Representative would encourage organisers to show support using their own events' social media networks in sharing posts etc.

➤ **Date of next meeting**

Once the schedule of Board Meetings had been communicated, a schedule of Stakeholder meetings could be agreed [to be held in advance of each Board meeting and to include two Representatives from each of BEOA, EHOA & ERA plus Directors].

This group to meet again **Wednesday 3rd February at 3pm.**

There being no further business, the call ended at 4.25pm.