

Board of Directors Meeting

Executive Summary

25 April 2024

- Finance:** Draft year-end accounts for 2023 were discussed. After accounting for IT amortisation, Designated Funds and Restricted Funds expenditure, there will be a forecast deficit of around £20,000, which is well under budget for the year. The audit is nearing completion and to date has not encountered any significant issues or areas of concern.
- Designated Funds:** The activities undertaken in Q1 utilising Designated Funds were discussed. Progress has been made in many areas, including several community initiatives in the regions for members, as well as investment in EDI, sustainability, and equine welfare projects. BD staff and volunteers have also received their initial sustainability training as part of the action plan.
- Membership:** Membership now stands at over 19,000 members and over 17,330 registered horses as of 31 March 2024. Within this membership total, we have now exceeded 4,000 Club members for the first time.
- Commercial:** There are several sponsor agreements due for renewal during 2024. This will be a key focus in coming months to negotiate further extensions with our current event partners and to seek further commercial opportunities. Initial meetings with existing sponsors and partners have been very positive.
- Marketing:** Visual guides for the new BD tests have been produced and were launched at the Winter Championships. Alternative versions will be available next month. Tickets for the National Championships will be available from late May.
- Communications:** The new BD Podcast channel has been launched, with the first published episodes including a three-part mini-series on the BD Sustainability Strategy. In addition, we are about to release a six-part series on horse care and welfare featuring Alan Davies.
- Human Resources:** Amy Greveson has commenced her role as Financial Controller. We have also welcomed Lydia Wesley as Marketing Executive and Janet Procter as Office Administrator to the team, while Nikki Birt has been promoted to the role of Development Officer for the North & West region. In May, we will be joined by Issy McCarthy in Sport Operations and Chris Phillips as Commercial Manager, bringing the team up to full complement. The Board approved a proposal for an employee development programme, as part of a government backed Apprenticeship scheme.
- IT Projects:** An update was provided to the Board on the IT development priorities. Phase one of the member communications upgrade is now complete, with phase two currently being scoped. The new content management system for the BD website should be ready for testing next month, with improved navigation and functionality. The aim is for this to go live by the end of May, ahead of the busy summer season.

9. **Winter Championships:** The first Winter Championships at Addington were very successful, with over 1,000 competitors participating. The event generated over 170,000 engagements via Facebook and 200,000 views on Instagram, with live streaming via H&C+ and live scoring available for the first time via Equipe.
10. **Sport Operations:** The implementation and roll-out of the new BD tests remains on target for 1 July 2024. An update on the key principles for the Silver Working Group was provided, including a summary of the main development priorities for the sport over coming years. Championship participation figures were presented to the Board and there was further discussion about the timetable and format for the Young Horse classes at the National Championships.
11. **International:** Planning is well underway for Paris 2024, with details given on the data and insight being gathered to aid selection decisions. Support for the U25 team at the FEI European Championships this summer was discussed and agreed.
12. **Para:** The new partnership with Virtus and SportExcel UK to signpost opportunities for individuals with intellectual impairment has been announced. A successful CPEDI was held at Addington in March, with some positive results for our riders both at home and abroad at Waregem.
13. **Training & Education:** The Principles of Dressage Seminar in March was a sell-out, with very good representation from judges, coaches, and members. Additional tickets were made available due to high demand, although we ideally need extra capacity for future events. Progress continues to be made on the new mentoring scheme, with eight mentors identified and upskilled to date. Judge assessor standardisation was successfully delivered in early April.
14. **BD Youth:** The initial Academy sessions this year have been well-received, and the non-ridden pathway for the apprenticeship programme is nearing completion. The Sport England Talent bid was discussed, including the future format and structure of the Young Professionals Programme.
15. **Regional:** A survey will be circulated to regional volunteers and members who have participated in regional activities in early May. Feedback will be provided to the Board at the June meeting.
16. **BEF:** A new BEF Chair, Fields Wicker-Miurin, has been appointed and will take up her post from 1 July 2024.
17. **FEI:** The CEO will be representing BD at the FEI Sports Forum in Lausanne, where equine welfare and sustainability are on the agenda for discussion.
18. **Governance:** The proposed date for the BD AGM is Thursday 24 October, with a venue to be confirmed.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 11 June 2024.