

West Midlands and Wales Region

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD AT WARWICK RACECOURSE
ON MONDAY 6TH NOVEMBER 2017**

PRESENT: T Symonds
L Wallace for S Flook

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr R Arnold (Chief Executive)
Mr G Noad (Racing Executive)

APPOLOGIES: K Bailey, C Bailey, E Bishop, M Brisbourne, R Brotherton, H Daley, P Dando, D Dennis, R Dicken, C Dyson, D Hamer, G Harris, L Hurley, K Lee, D Loughnane, A Murphey, J O'Neill, R Phillips, D Skelton, J Spearing and M Wilesmith

1) Update from Previous Meeting

Election of Regional Representatives - Tim Vaughan has stepped down as Deputy Chairman so a replacement will be required. Nomination forms to be sent out.

2) Highlights form NTF Council and Committees

- Non Runners – R Arnold provided an update on the rules for non-runners
- Going Descriptions – L Wallace asked if Clerks are held accountable for the going descriptions they provide. R Arnold highlighted that there was ongoing work with the BHA regarding this.
- R Arnold informed the Region that the minutes of Council, Committees and Regions are now all on the website

3) Race Planning

- Hunter Chase Eligibility – highlighted the new rule changes
- Mares Programme – despite no alteration in field sizes the races are far more competitive and generating more interest at the sales
- Amateur Rider Races – suggestion that there are fewer races for amateur riders this quarter.

4) Regulation

- Wind Operations – despite opposition from trainers the new rules will be brought in. Concerns have been raised about the numbers of horses undergoing surgery.
- Racecourse Stable Hygiene – Ann Duffield has undertaken some research into the biosecurity of racecourse stables and the results will be published over the next few months.
- Rule Changes – on 1st January there will be rule changes relating to hind shoes, shockwave therapy, massage machines and the use of ice. The NTF will communicate all the rule changes in an email before Christmas.
- Stewarding – the NTF highlighted the main concerns by trainers with the proposal for professional stewarding was the need to retain independence of the stewards.

5) Racing Staff

The NTF is working on developing a new mechanism to improve the working hours and conditions for stable staff. Already a number of trainers are adopting working one weekend in three. As a result the consolidated wage outlined in the MOA is becoming outdated. Any new agreement needs to be flexible and include guarantees for weekend work. NARS raised the point at the latest round of wage negotiations that working hours is the biggest concern for staff not pay.

6) Legal Expenses Insurance

The current NTF legal expenses insurance (LEI) is not perfect but is the best option available. Concerns have been raised regarding the speed of advice for trainers and claims being merits based. The NTF will continue to improve the LEI and provide members with clarity surrounding the merits based claims.

7) Any Other business and Date of Next Meeting

Update on the changes to the BHA rule book to be communicated in a weekly email
The next meeting will be in July 2018.