



**Minutes of the British Dressage Annual General Meeting 2022  
held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at Arena UK, Lincolnshire**

Directors present: Caroline Godfrey – Interim Chairman and Finance Director  
Simon Bates – Sport Operations Director  
Judy Harvey – International Director  
Tracy Ormrod – Para Director  
Suzanne Homewood – Business Development Director  
Claire Moir – BD Youth Director  
Harry Payne – Training Director

In attendance: Jason Brautigam – Chief Executive  
Ben Waterhouse – Chief Operating Officer

1.	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>Meeting opened at 18:02.</p> <p>After a welcome and introduction Jason Brautigam, BD Chief Executive, opened the 2022 Annual General Meeting. He stated that he took as read the notice of convening the meeting <a href="#">Notice of AGM</a>.</p> <p>Apologies received from Peter Storr, Islay Auty and Jenny Ward.</p> <p>33 members were in attendance at the meeting. A total of 16 Proxy forms were received to allow the Chairman to vote on behalf of those not present.</p>	
2.	<p>The Chief Executive announced he would now take members through the Ordinary Resolutions as set out in the Notice of the AGM.</p> <p><b>First Ordinary Resolution</b></p> <p>Jason Brautigam (CEO) then moved to the First Ordinary Resolution; to receive the Financial Statements of British Dressage for the year ended 31 December 2021 and the Directors' and Auditors' Reports thereon.</p> <p>Finance Director, Caroline Godfrey, then presented the <a href="#">2021 Accounts</a>.</p> <p>Points to note from the <a href="#">presentation</a>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2021 surplus was £188,706k – made up of a surplus in the charity of £73k and a surplus in the trading company of £116k.</li><li>• Whilst 2021 was once again disrupted by COVID lockdowns, we were able to reschedule many competitions into a truncated season and this was reflected in our income levels.</li><li>• We received a further £30,000 in furlough receipts from the government during the lockdown in quarter 1.</li><li>• We ended the year with £2.5million in reserves.</li><li>• Total income increased by 21.71%, from £3.42m in 2020 to £4.16m.</li></ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership increased by £106k (9.18%), Horse registrations increased by £123k (17.94%), Competitions and training activities increased by £531k (51.1%)</li> <li>• 2021 Income breakdown: Membership and Horse Registrations – 49.6%, competitions – 21.6%, Training and Education – 16.4%.</li> <li>• On the debit side our total expenditure increased by 19.21%, from £3.335m to £3.975m, reflecting the full resumption of competitions and training compared to limited activity in 2020.</li> <li>• BD has made a pledge to freeze member subscription prices for 2023 at current levels.</li> <li>• The financial outcome for 2021 was strong, closing with free financial reserves of £2.5 million (an increase of 7.19%), representing about eight months of defined operating costs.</li> <li>• The BD Board has committed to reinvesting reserves into the sport and is looking at allocating circa £250,000 initially to fund targeted initiatives.</li> <li>• Reserves will be placed in designated funds set aside for these specific projects, to support the sport at all levels.</li> <li>• This will include bursary funding for training and education programmes; additional support for regional activities and investment in competitions at all levels.</li> <li>• Each year any surplus reserves will be added to the designated funds.</li> </ul> <p>Mazars, our independent auditors, were willing to attend this evening, but we agreed mutually that it was not necessary, as they were happy with the detailed clean audit report contained in the Financial Statements.</p> <p>The full statutory accounts are available on-line and have now been filed at Companies House and with the Charity Commission.</p> <p>The CEO then proposed that the financial statements, together with the Directors Report and Auditors Report for the period ended 31 December 2021, be received and called for votes from the members in attendance. On a show of hands 19 votes were received in favour and none against. He stated that 16 proxy votes in favour had been received ahead of the meeting, and none against. He declared that with unanimous support in favour of this resolution, it was duly carried.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Second Ordinary Resolution</b></p> <p>CEO then moved on to the Second Ordinary Resolution, that Mazars are re-appointed as auditors of British Dressage and authorise the Board to fix their remuneration. He asked for a show of hands for and against.</p> <p>On a show of hands 19 votes were received in favour and none against. He stated that 16 proxy votes in favour had been received ahead of the meeting, and none against. He declared the resolution duly carried with unanimous support.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Special business</b></p> <p>CEO then addressed the one item of special business, a special resolution (item 3 on the notice of AGM), which is the approval and adoption of new Articles of Association of British Dressage. He stated that copies of the proposed new <a href="#">Articles of Association</a> (with a <a href="#">marked-up document for comparison purposes</a>) have been on the British Dressage website since Thursday 8 September.</p> <p>He then provided some further background to the proposed changes for clarity.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In recent years we have updated the Articles of Association to reflect best practice, in accordance with the Code of Sport Governance published by UK Sport and Sport England.</li> <li>• It is vitally important that the BD Board of Directors continues to attract high calibre individuals with the right level of knowledge, skills, and experience to represent members and ensure that the sport is governed effectively.</li> <li>• The introduction of a Nominations Committee has provided greater scrutiny over the Director nominations process, including the appointment of Extra Directors for specific areas of expertise, and members now have a binding vote for all elected Director positions, regardless of whether the candidates stand unopposed – meaning the members have the option to actively reject or choose none of the candidates put forward.</li> <li>• The changes that we are proposing to the Articles of Association this year will further strengthen governance standards by allowing for the appointment of a Deputy Chair from within the Board. This will normally be one of the Extra Directors, who can provide oversight and expertise in areas that complement the skillset and background of the appointed Chair, as well as providing additional support for the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team.</li> <li>• While we didn't need to formally amend the Articles of Association to make this change, the BD Board agreed that this was the right approach in the interests of openness and transparency. When the appointment of a Deputy Chair is confirmed by the Board, the decision would then be formally communicated via the BD website.</li> </ul> <p>He then opened the vote to the room. On a show of hands there were 19 votes in favour, and none against. 16 proxy votes in favour had been received ahead of the meeting, and none against. CEO declared the special resolution carried by unanimous decision.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Director Elections</b></p> <p>The final section of formal business was to announce the result of the director elections. CEO stated that following the sad and premature death of our Chair, Linda Whetstone, in December last year, a competitive election was held for a new Chair. Nominations were also invited for Judges Director and International Director, where both current post-holders were eligible for a second term.</p> <p>After a formal review of applications by the Nominations Committee, two candidates were put forward to the membership vote for Chair, with an electronic ballot carried out independently by Mi-Voice. In total 1,970 votes were cast, with the result as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jill Day received 1,150 votes (representing a 58.4% share)</li> <li>• Claire Moir received 820 votes (41.6%)</li> </ul> <p>The CEO formally declared that Jill Day is duly elected as Chair of British Dressage, with immediate effect of the AGM announcement.</p> <p>For the position of Judges Director, only one nomination was received, and therefore the current post-holder Peter Storr was put forward to the membership vote unopposed. In total 1,835 votes were cast, with 96.9% in favour of the appointment. Peter Storr is duly re-elected for a second term as Judges Director.</p> <p>For the position of International Director, only one nomination was received, and therefore the current post-holder Judy Harvey was put forward to the membership vote unopposed. In total 1,864 votes were cast, with 98.2% in favour of the appointment. Judy Harvey is duly re-elected for a second term as International Director.</p>	

	<p>CEO offered his congratulations to Jill, Peter and Judy and stated he looks forward to working with them.</p> <p><b><u>Extra Director Appointments</u></b></p> <p>The CEO then provided further clarity about Extra Director appointments:</p> <p>In December last year, following the sad and untimely passing of Linda Whetstone, the BD Board appointed the current Finance Director, Caroline Godfrey, as Interim Chair. Caroline has held this post for the last nine months to provide continuity at Board level and allow sufficient time to advertise for and elect a new Chair.</p> <p>In accordance with the BD Articles of Association, the Finance Director role was due to transition from a member elected to Board appointed position from this year's AGM.</p> <p>However, to avoid too many Director positions being up for member election, appointment or renewal in a single year, the BD Board has agreed to extend Caroline's tenure as Finance Director by re-appointing her in an interim capacity for a 12-month period, with effect from today.</p> <p>The Board appointed Finance Director and Business Development Director will therefore both be advertised in 2023, with the current post-holders eligible for a second term in office.</p> <p>We are also currently advertising for an extra Director with specific HR / Legal expertise. Further details are available on the BD website, with applications closing on 30 October and interviews in early November. We aim to make this appointment before the end of the year.</p> <p>This concluded the formal business of the AGM.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Presentations</b></p> <p>There followed presentations from the Chairman, CEO, COO, and a video update from each Board Director summarising the progress achieved in their portfolio over the last 12 months and update on plans for 2022. <b>A copy of the slides and videos from the presentation are available for viewing on the BD website.</b></p> <p>The Interim Chair, Caroline Godfrey, thanked the CEO, COO, BD Board and Senior Management team for their support during her time in this position, and wished Jill Day the best of luck in her tenure as Chair.</p> <p>The Chief Executive, on behalf of the Board of Directors to sincerely thank Caroline for taking on the vital role of Interim Chair at such a difficult time for British Dressage.</p> <p>On completion of the Director videos, the CEO thanked at BD Board of Directors for giving their time to British Dressage and working so tirelessly for our members and sport.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Member Questions</b></p> <p>CEO then addressed questions from members which had been submitted in advance of the meeting. A copy of the <a href="#">questions and official responses</a> are available online.</p> <p>CEO then opened the floor for member questions in the room:</p>	

**Question:** There are less than 50 people in the room, nine of which are on the Board. Less than 2,000 voted for the chair but the membership is 18,000+. Is there a chance you are somehow missing are we missing a trick with connecting with the membership. I don't know what the answer is, I'm just surprised there's so few people.

**CEO Answered:** It's slightly the nature of post-pandemic life. We have the cameras in the back of the room here and hopefully there are lots of people engaging and watching online. It's a new world now, with hybrid events now commonplace it doesn't always have to be in person

The Board and Senior Management Team felt quite strongly that we wanted to take the AGM on the road. Previously we've been at Stoneleigh at the National Championships, with roughly 100 people in attendance, but we felt it was more important to go around the country. This year we are here at the Area Festival Summer Championships, next year we may potentially be at our National Convention. We have an opportunity to take the AGM around the country to different venues around the UK to meet our members first hand.

We usually only have approximately 10% of the members voting online. We do engage with members regularly in different ways, through the magazine, newsletter, emails that are sent out or via our website. We do a lot to promote the member elections, but different people engage with our sport in different ways

With the growing membership, most riders are just happy competing, without getting directly involved in the business of the organisation or sport politics. We would love to see more people at events such as these, but we do meet our members regularly when we are out and about at competitions and championships.

CEO would be pleased to hear ideas on how we can make it more engaging or more interesting, to meet more members face to face, and we would be pleased to hear them.

**Question:** Membership has increased, numbers down the start line have increased, income is up. Can we have our regions back please?

**CEO Answered:** The change to the regions wasn't done purely for financial reasons, it was a realignment of the roles and responsibilities of the Development Officers. It will be kept under continuous review and is very dependent on the number of members, number of venues and the level of activity in each region.

We only lost two of the regions, we still have four regions in England. Scotland and Wales have always operated as a single region. The regions are all similar in terms of size, number of venues, and number of members. One of the things we are looking at is getting the sense of community back, looking at local and regional initiatives, and we will work with Regional Committees, venues and across the regions at having more localised activity.

We recognise that there does need to be more sense of belonging and community, which may help with engagement as mentioned in your previous question. Our new Chair is very keen to explore this area further.

**CEO invited Ben Waterhouse, COO to add to this:** Echoing previous comments, the decisions taken at the time were influenced by the pandemic. The role of the Development Officer has changed a lot and has been brought forward in terms of development of the sport. Looking at the role of a Development Officer now compared with what they did prior to the change, it's a much more fit for purpose role with more focus on the venues, activity, competitions, and the championships, which was the right thing to do.

We need to continue to drive engagement with all members in the regions, and there might be a slight change in how we achieve that with input from the Chair and the Board.

**CEO added:** A lot of the training that was regional is now centralised, which isn't to say we don't want to see more added value activity at local and regional levels by running camps and clinics, and I think the social element is missing the most. There has also been a huge growth in activity online. The days of meeting at a central point seem to have gone, and with digital engagement soaring, we may look at more digital activities. While you can't beat face to face interaction, a lot of that can happen in the online space now. A combination of initiatives will need to be looked at going forwards.

**Question:** It's noticeable that judge training, which is largely now online is getting quite expensive. I have booked two things at £40 for an online seminar and £60 for an in-person seminar. Are there any plans to look at the cost of the judges training?

**CEO answered:** We don't make any profit from judge training. The fees cover the cost of training, including cost of Tutor Judges and educators, providing video content, and working with our partners, Black Horse One for the online activities, all of which comes with substantial investment. We are mindful of these costs, which is why the increase in judge payments was made this year, because they hadn't changed for 10 years.

We realise that you are making a substantial investment in your training and development, and we want to make sure you get the reward for that when you become active judges. We will try to keep costs to a minimum, and we aren't looking at increasing those costs next year, as with the Membership subscriptions. There is also potential to look at bursaries to support the judge training programmes where possible.

**CEO passed the question to Charlotte Osborne, Training and Education Manager:** There has been an increase in costs, but we hope you can see the benefit in the quality of resources. That has been the key to the structural changes with the Judge Education System. The costs may have increased, but hopefully these are largely offset with the savings in the cost of transport, travel, and accommodation. We are looking at building banks of resources and on demand training, which would be free as we can repurpose training footage and gives more flexibility.

**CEO reiterated** that this is an area where no profit is made and is subsidised by British Dressage. We will continue to try to reinvest in this area.

**Question:** BD encompasses from Grass Roots to Elite, why can amateurs only go to Inter I, not higher? Also, the veteran classes, you get to PSG and can't go any higher. You put limits on amateurs.

**CEO answered:** We try to look at progressions at all levels, from going up the levels through Bronze when starting out, and then progressing on to Silver. There are plenty of opportunities available in all three sections. An important consideration must be given to horse welfare, we don't want horses and riders to be over-faced at levels if they are too inexperienced. We need to be mindful that we are not asking too much, too soon, of our equine partners.

**CEO passed the question to Lou Jones, Sport Operations Manager:** It's largely down to numbers. The reason Inter II was removed from the Area Festival was due to the low numbers coming through. Numbers this weekend have improved from last year but remain low on Inter I in the Bronze and Silver Sections.

It's a fine line, as we want to have competition, but we need to ensure sufficient numbers of people are coming through. It's an ever-evolving situation where sections fluctuate.

**Member added to Question:** That means you have to be a veteran rider at 55, you can't go any higher than PSG

**Lou Jones answered:** This is at the Associated Championships. We have changed the format this year and at the moment it looks like we have some good entries with 1,600 scores registered across two venues. It will continue to evolve. Again, it comes down to demand and if the appetite is there, it will be considered. There is the middle tour championship that we will be looking to relocate, and this will be something that would be the next step up.

**CEO added:** We want to give more opportunities to riders at small and middle tour level and this has been on the agenda for some time. It was somewhat thwarted during the pandemic, when we had to find homes for different riders and championships. Now we have had a "normal" 12 months of competition, we can review the numbers and revisit the conversation. The Middle Tour being integrated within another championship is on the Board agenda.

**Question:** Touching on the cost of living crisis and cost of training for coaches, judges and competitors, there appears to be a lack of crossover with CPD to retain status across other associations. Is there a consideration to make this more transferrable in the future? A lot of the courses cover the same ideas, but they don't transfer so the costs and time mount up.

**CEO answered:** A presentation on CPD activity is going to the Board next week. There are exciting developments being discussed on this area at the moment across the relevant committees and Board. We are looking to make significant progress in this area over the next 12 months, which includes recognised and accredited prior learning and CPD undertaken through other organisations.

**CEO passed the question to Charlotte Osborne, Training and Education Manager:** We recently presented plans to the training committee regarding the crossover and how we can make it outcome focussed for the role. Where credits are banked it will be transferrable, and this will be rolled out across all coach and official areas in BD. This is also being discussed across the wider Federation. We are working with the BEF on a mapping exercise to identify gaps across all the qualifications structures, to help coaches transition across qualifications more easily, and to simplify and clarify the routes into coaching. After the Board meeting this will be taken further to CDAT.

**Question:** On the reserves, the aim is to spend 10% of the reserves on projects. Is that over next three years?

**CEO answered:** The Board is considering this again at the meeting next week. That was the intention to commit £250,000 in designated funds next year; however, some projects may take longer over the next 2-3 years. It depends on the scope of the project. The funds will not be used to subsidise operational overheads. The projects these funds go to will be additional activity, not replacing any day-to-day work as a charity.

**CEO passed the question to Caroline Godfrey, Finance Director:** We are using designated funds, as we wouldn't otherwise have the resource to put £250K back into the sport in one go. By putting the money into designate funds, we are making a statement of intent. Any extra surplus will be added back into the designated funds.

	<p>The key thing is that we will reinvest as quickly as possible on specific projects, as it's important we use the member's money very carefully. There are six areas of reinvestment that will be discussed at Board next week.</p> <p><b>CEO added:</b> We are keen to hear member's feedback. If there are areas where you would like to see further investment, please feed that back. Nothing is off the table at the moment.</p> <p><b>Question:</b> Following on from the previously asked question about Inter II and Grand Prix being put back in, I agree that this should be put back in. There are some of us that are working towards or training at that level. If numbers aren't there, then don't put the class in, but if the numbers are there having that class would be nice.</p> <p><b>CEO answered:</b> As the sport grows, we will have to grow with it. This year the number of qualifications at Bronze were bigger than the numbers at Silver for the first time, and we need to take a close look at that and see where the opportunities need to be. We will do further analysis, and this will be taken to the Sport Operations Committee. They are primarily looking at the Silver Sections, but this can be added to the review.</p> <p>There were no further Member Questions.</p>	
7.	<p>CEO thanked everyone for their continued support of British Dressage over the past two years, which have turbulent and uncertain. Hopefully BD have reassured members that the sport is in safe hands and that there will be reinvestments back into the sport to help members and give benefits back. BD has had a very fortunate recovery period and continues to grow within the sport, and this couldn't happen without the loyal support of our members, which is never taken for granted. CEO thanked everyone for their part in making dressage the fastest growing equestrian sport in the UK.</p> <p>With there being no further business or questions, the meeting closed at 19.49pm.</p>	