

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CROSS PARTY GROUP ON
SCOTTISH HORSERACING AND BLOODSTOCK INDUSTRIES
HELD ON TUESDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 2017 AT 5.30PM
IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT**

PRESENT

Miles Briggs MSP (MB); Neil Bibby MSP (NB); Rachael Hamilton MSP (RH); Morag Gray (MG).

In attendance:
Delly Innes (minutes)

1. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

The following MSPs were elected as office bearers for 2018:

Convener: Miles Briggs MSP

Dep. Convener: Rachael Hamilton MSP and Neil Bibby MSP

Members of the Group:

Rachael Hamilton MSP; Clare Haughey MSP; Neil Bibby MSP.

2. UPDATE FROM MORAG GRAY, TRUSTEE OF *RACING TO SCHOOL* AND CHAIR OF *RACING TOGETHER*

MG has been a Trustee of *Racing to School* since 2009. *Racing to School* engages young people at racing-related venues by delivering free outdoor learning activities for young people at racecourses, studs and trainer's yards across the country. At present, the charity works with approximately 180 primary and secondary schools and delivers over 300 events each year. *Racing Together* leads racing's community engagement work.

Both organisations are UK wide, and MG announced that the Scottish racecourses are amongst the positive regarding their charitable and community work. For example, Musselburgh Racecourse staff volunteered in a "Give & Gain Day" project, whereby they exceeded all expectations at Olive Bank, Musselburgh by creating a children's garden with water feature, mural and play area, by utilising racecourse equipment.

There are currently two large education projects in Newmarket and Liverpool, and it is hoped that this will extended to Musselburgh and its close work with Musselburgh Grammar School.

Racing Together has also participated in World Mental Health Day, and their "Sporting Memories" and "Racing Reminiscences" projects hold events for dementia sufferers and their families.

All the Scottish racecourses are involved in raising funds for charities from the NSPCC at Kelso Racecourse, to Marie Curie at Hamilton Park Racecourse.

MG added that the racing industry values the importance of Community Engagement, and the racecourses believe they have a social responsibility to their neighbours.

Racing to School is funded entirely by voluntary contributions. The Horserace Betting Levy Board provides about £190k/annum, but fundraising remains important to the small charity, and the charity is currently in discussions with the Racing Foundation re- additional resources for Scotland.

MG has found that many children who are disengaged in the classroom, can become more enthusiastic when they are faced with more practical ways of learning, as was shown by a careers day at Musselburgh Racecourse.

MB added that Community Sport Hubs can help to cut administrative costs, and that perhaps racing could link in with these hubs.

RH asked if the outdoor learning in numeracy and literacy is based on the national curriculum. MG replied that a workbook for the Scottish curriculum is being developed, as the current workbook is somewhat generalised.

Around 10,000 children are reached every year, but in 30,000 children were reached in 2017, so it is hoped to build on this growth.

NB added that one of the football clubs in his area has found that a programme encouraging children to commentate on football games has found a marked improvement on their speech and language skills, and suggested that racing could follow a similar route.

3. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 6th March 2018 at 5.30pm.