



The Burrow
4 Badgers Sett
Kemsing
Kent TN15 6FN
Tel. 0845 643 2116
email@britishcarriagedriving.co.uk

www.britishcarriagedriving.co.uk

British Carriagedriving Council Minutes by Firefly

Meeting by Conference Call

Wednesday 21st January 2026 at 7pm

Attendees – Andrew Counsell (Chairman), Patti Atkinson, Malcolm Brown, Sara Clinghan, Rod Holdsworth, Jane Lamb, Jamie March, Dan Naprous. Apologies were received from Callum Dougan. Graeme MacArther (Club Liaison) was in attendance.

Office Operations

- Rachel Caughey has joined the team as the second part time Office Administrator.
- The new office team is currently very busy with year-end subscriptions and reviewing processes and systems
- The BC office is exploring better email solutions potentially linked to website hosting to improve ongoing communication
- Office open hours are under review and new trial hours will be announcement by end of February.
- Sarah highlighted positive member feedback on improved communication tone, with the office being approachable and supportive

Event Entry Systems and My Clubhouse Integration

- The council agreed to allow two National events to use their own entry systems this year while continuing to promote and improve the My Clubhouse platform for wider adoption by 2027.
- Patti confirmed start fees must be paid early alongside entries to verify correct class eligibility.
- Graeme and Jamie acknowledged logistical challenges in fully integrating club and national entries but supported progressing MyClubhouse usage, emphasising the need for education and system improvements
- Council agreed to pilot and test My Clubhouse with some clubs in 2026 to build confidence for wider rollout in 2027
- User login issues and system glitches continue but are recognised as part of the learning curve and system cleanup

Financial Overview and Legacy Funding

- Draft December management accounts show positive income trends inline with forecast and some provisional figures require finalisation for the statutory accounts
- 2 Legacy fund applications for training grants were received. One from Manx Harness Club and the other from Southern Carriage Driving Club . Both were unanimously approved
- Clarity was sought on training grant eligibility, confirming it applies to officials transferring up levels and to Affiliated Clubs who could apply once per year
- Council agreed to review training grant policies and improve communication to ensure awareness and proper usage.

Equipment and Resource Management

- The council unanimously approved renewing British Carriage Driving's national equipment stock with cones and balls funded from legacy reserves at a cost of £780.
 - The equipment is to be used for national Events and is also available to club to borrow.
 - Malcolm Brown maintains the register of BC equipment.

Governance, Council Composition, and Communications

- Justin Cowels attended to be introduced as the new Chairman of the Safety Committee. Council welcomed Justin and expressed their thanks to Keith Atkinson for taking the position for the past two years.
- Council agreed to proactively identify and recruit members with specific skills to fill gaps and support major projects, including fundraising and sponsorship
- The council confirmed continued use of WhatsApp for quick decision-making and communication, with plans to formalise protocols and integrate it into council articles in the future.
 - Members agreed WhatsApp reduces meeting times and allows asynchronous input, with formal ratification of decisions maintained during meetings
- The updated rulebook is near finalisation, with a comprehensive list of changes on page seven and an introductory statement acknowledging minor errors and inviting corrections.
 - The rulebook will be published online for download, with printing options to be explored based on last year's print volume and cost estimates.
 - Communication plans include emailing clubs the list of amendments to allow rulebook updates in advance of formal publication.
- Discussions clarified body protector standards, confirming no mandatory level for 2026 but recommending users invest in the best possible protection; clear communication will be issued via website and club calls.
- The 200 Club lottery is relaunched with tickets priced at £25, four draws per year, and increased prize money including a £200 first prize and £50 second prize for the first draw.
 - Funds raised will support purchasing equipment and scoring system dongles; sign-ups are via My Clubhouse, with media campaigns planned to maximize participation

Affiliated Clubs and Rule Enforcement

- Discussions emphasised the principle that all clubs must follow the same affiliation rules, or else forfeit affiliated status.
 - Graham emphasised that the affiliated clubs meeting is informal and allowing clubs to attend provides valuable input despite their unpaid status.
 - The consensus was to maintain current rules where unpaid clubs are not affiliated but allow continued informal engagement, with Rod and Sarah managing communications and club relations.
 - Future rule changes to formalise payment deadlines and consequences may be drafted for 2027 to close loopholes and prevent recurrence

Media, Communications, and Growth Initiatives

- The media team is advancing well, with new video content and website developments expected by late February to improve public perception and engagement

- Callum has been working on media production, including videos for the website, with a tentative go-live date by end of February 2026.
- Recent media outputs are positively received for being professional, cautious, and clear, supporting the council's objective to improve communication and grow the sport.
- The council reaffirmed the ongoing objective to grow carriage driving, emphasising the importance of clear communication and engagement strategies to attract new participants.
- The council agreed to prioritise scoring system discussions on the next agenda, recognising that existing systems are complex and scorer availability is declining, risking shortages in 2027.
 - Existing systems include the FEI-based Leonard system and Mike Watt's system; a more user-friendly, unified national scoring platform is desired to support the ten national competitions and club events
 - Jamie noted a prior comparative document on scoring systems exists and suggested circulating it for review.

Anti-Doping and Athlete Testing

- A member raised a question regarding compliance with FEI's updated banned substances list for athletes, which would impact driver testing
 - Council members agreed that policing human drug testing in this context is impractical and unnecessary, especially given the infrequency of horse drug testing nationally.
 - The consensus was to exclude FEI human anti-doping rules from BC regulations for now, focusing resources elsewhere.
 - The BEF follows FEI's protocols, but BC has discretion not to implement them at the national amateur level.

Action items

Sarah and Rachel

- Follow up with Ashfields regarding legacy funding and obstacle sharing confirmation
- Continue managing affiliation forms follow-up, start fee collection, and email system upgrade investigation
- Collaborate with Matthew to enhance 'My Clubhouse' capabilities and user education; promote increased use for 2027 events
- Distribute invitation and link for January 29 club forum as broadly as possible to treasurers and club contacts
- Liaise with Malcolm to prepare documentation for BC cone equipment loan process and legacy funding request form

Patti

- Forward updated rulebook section regarding body protector standards to Sarah for website communication

Rod

- Provide final December management accounts and continue financial updates
- Add Special Development fund integration work to BC planner.

Council

- Review and finalise rulebook; send changes/amendments list to clubs upon Derek's confirmation.
- Monitor Club's affiliation payment status; maintain current rules enforcing non-affiliation without payment and insurance exclusion; defer formal policy changes to 2027.

Callum and Sarah

- Coordinate media/video production rollout and 200 Club communications launch

Andrew

- Add scoring system and sport growth discussion items to next meeting agenda

Club liaison (Graeme MacArthur)

- Manage affiliated club attendance concerns and act as primary contact for complaints

Signed _____
Andrew Counsell: Chairman British Carriagedriving

Date _____



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British Carriagedriving Council Minutes

Meeting by Conference Call

Wednesday 18th February 2026 @ 7pm

1	<p>Meeting Format: Online Minute Taker: Sarah McLaughlin</p> <p>1. Attendance</p> <p>Present: Patti Atkinson (PA) Andrew Counsell (AC) Sara Clinghan Callum Dougan (CD) Jane Lamb (JL) Jamie March</p> <p>In Attendance: Rachel Caughey Graeme McArthur (Affiliated Club Liaison)</p> <p>Apologies/Arrivals: Rod Holdsworth joined at 19:28 Dan Naprous joined at 19:56</p>	
2	<p>Conflicts of interest</p> <p>No new conflicts of interest were noted. Conflicts with individual agenda items will be noted during the meeting.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by AC, seconded by JL, and approved as a true and accurate record.</p>	
4	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>4.1 Allerton Own Entry System</p> <p>It was agreed that the 2026 Allerton event may use its own entry system for entries and start fees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allerton will provide a list of entries after the closing date. • The office will confirm class eligibility. • BC is reviewing My Clubhouse with a view to improving usability. • Communication will be sent to clubs this year to support education and ensure the system is user-friendly. <p>4.2 Scoring Systems</p> <p>Council discussed the need for a simple, consistent scoring system that all organisers and scorers can use going forward.</p>	

	<p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several systems are currently in use. • The MW system is considered user-friendly and integrates easily with websites. • The Linear system produces live scoring but is less straightforward to link. • It is unclear which systems clubs are currently using. • The priority is recruiting and retaining scorers; they should be able to use systems they are comfortable with. <p>Action: Engage with club and national scorers (via an online meeting) to gather feedback on current systems and preferences.</p> <p>A key initiative is to grow the number of trained scorers. It is important that clubs do not feel a system is being imposed on them. This will be mentioned at the next clubs' meeting.</p>	
5	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>5.1 Gateway at Championships</p> <p>The Gateway class has been raised at club meetings and by organisers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A survey has been issued (29 responses to date). • The survey remains open until early March. • Council previously decided not to run Gateway at the 2026 Championships. • Survey results will be analysed before a potential change to the original decision is made. • Future championship organisers will be consulted <p>5.2 Member Body Vet Representative</p> <p>Rosie was proposed. No objections were received.</p> <p>5.3 Try Driving Request</p> <p>Giselle Locketts application approved – process from last year to be followed.</p> <p>A reminder will be sent to clubs regarding Try Driving opportunities.</p> <p>5.4 New Club – Glebe Estate</p> <p>Council agreed to the affiliation of Glebe Estate.</p> <p>All required paperwork must be confirmed as complete. Office to follow up and ensure all in place.</p> <p>5.5 Cover Charge Proposal – Suggestion given to Council by a Club Chair</p> <p>The idea of introducing a cover charge was discussed. Historically some events have charged differing amounts depending on the number of nights stayed.</p> <p>Concerns were raised that members may not be comfortable with additional costs. BC is not able to support mandatory additional charges; however, events may adjust their pricing structures if they wish. AC is willing to discuss further. Clubs may consider more innovative pricing approaches.</p> <p>5.6 Malcolm's Resignation</p> <p>Malcolm's resignation was formally accepted. Council acknowledged Malcolm's valuable contribution to BC Council and looked forward to working with him on club and national activities in the future.</p> <p>5.7 Use of BC Logo</p>	

	A communication was received regarding permission to use the BC Logo by affiliated clubs and that it was agreed that use of logo by affiliated clubs is perfectly acceptable in order to promote their affiliation to BC.	
6	<p>Decisions by email/Whats App</p> <p>1. None this month</p>	
7	<p>Club Treasurers Forum</p> <p>Meeting held Tuesday 17 February.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 clubs represented. • Constructive discussion with a range of topics covered. • A number of potential changes and ideas were identified and working party will develop further into changes for 2027. <p>Once completed, minutes will be circulated to clubs and Council. Some ideas require further information gathering and progression.</p>	
8	<p>Finance</p> <p>January 2026 accounts were not yet available.</p> <p>The final management accounts position for 12 months to December 2025 is similar to that shared at the previous meeting. Statutory accounts will be prepared and sent to the new auditors.</p> <p>No changes are planned to the current forecast or budget for 2026.</p>	
9	<p>Legacy Funding</p> <p>1. No applications received</p>	
10	<p>2026 Rule Book</p> <p>Discussion focused on wording regarding cameras on hats and whether interpretation is sufficiently clear.</p> <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification required from the Rules Committee and Safety Committee. • Question raised regarding what supporting data informed the decision (FEI uses POJs to make decisions). • Debate over whether to publish as-is or delay. • Agreement reached to delay publication until clarification is obtained. • Once approved, the Rule Book will go to print regardless of minor errors. • The Rule Book cannot yet be placed on the website. • It will be emailed to all members once finalised. <p>The “changes list” generated significant queries this year; this approach may be reconsidered next year.</p> <p>The 2027 Rule Book timeline: draft to be ready by December 2026.</p> <p>Council acknowledged this year’s Rule Book was a substantial piece of work and the Rules Committee were again thanked for their time and effort in its production.</p>	
11	<p>Growth of Sport – Member benefits</p> <p>Standing agenda item.</p> <p>Discussion included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving communication about existing benefits (seminars, expert access, newsletters). • Considering what additional benefits could be offered. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from the last clubs' meeting regarding sport growth. <p>Further discussion required at the next meeting.</p>	
12	<p>Health & Safety</p> <p>1. Report from Justin Cowles</p> <p>Our first committee meeting provided a great opportunity to meet members and gain a better understanding of their values and aspirations for the group. During the meeting, I have asked members to feedback on current aims and objectives which was agreed that these could be strengthened to reflect a more proactive safety culture and better align with external expectations.</p> <p>My initial focus will be on building positive relationships across the clubs by attending meetings, offering practical advice where needed, and maintaining regular communication with Council to encourage collaboration on safety matters.</p> <p>As part of our ongoing commitment to meeting insurance requirements, Safety Officer training remains essential. Two sessions have already taken place, but we recognise that not everyone was able to attend. A further session is now being planned to ensure all members have the opportunity to complete the required training.</p>	
13	<p>Affiliated Clubs Meeting</p> <p>Last meeting held 9 February. Notes of the meeting were supplied.</p>	
14	<p>Media Update</p> <p>CD demonstrated the new website layout and sections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently in testing phase prior to launch. Significant work underway. Policies and procedures being aligned with BEF standards (RC assisting). As BC contributes approximately £7,000 per year to BEF, it was agreed that available support should be fully utilised. 	
15	<p>BC Office Update</p> <p>15.1 Email Usage Move towards using centralised email@ addresses for office work.</p> <p>15.2 IT Systems Issues reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delays in sending/receiving emails. Systems not synchronising. Operational inefficiencies resulting. Suggestion to move to Microsoft Office. Concerns raised regarding hosting systems: Separate hosting recommended to reduce risk if one system fails. Suggestion that Alice host the website. Recent website hack highlighted vulnerabilities; it took 24 hours to reach Krystal support. RH to discuss cost implications with RC. <p>Decision to be made with regards to IT systems on WhatsApp prior to the next meeting.</p>	
16	<p>Anti Doping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human anti-doping is included within the rules. FEI human anti-doping is conducted at most shows. Members have raised concerns. Funding remains a concern. <p>The anti-doping presentation was recorded and may be shared on YouTube. The office will contact BEF for clarification on processes and further information.</p>	
17	<p>AOCB</p>	

<p>17.1 BEF Animations</p> <p>Consider including BEF safe sport animations on the website. BEF to be informed.</p> <p>17.2 Conference</p> <p>A second room is required. A face-to-face Council meeting will again be held this year.</p>	
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Signed Andrew Counsell

Date 2/3/2026

Andrew Counsell: Chairman British Carriagedriving



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British Carriagedriving Council Minutes

Meeting by Conference Call

Wednesday 18th March 2026 @ 7pm

Format: Online

Minute Taker: Sarah McLaughlin

1. Attendance

Present:

Patti Atkinson
Andrew Counsell
Sara Clinghan
Rod Holdsworth
Jamie March
Dan Naprous

In Attendance:

Graeme McArthur (Affiliated Club Liaison)

Apologies:

Jane Lamb
Callum Dougan
Rachel Caughey

2. Conflicts of Interest

No new conflicts of interest were declared. Any conflicts relating to specific agenda items will be recorded as they arise.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by AC, seconded by SC, and approved as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Gateway Survey Results

Survey results were circulated to Council members in advance of the meeting.

Summary of Results:

- 54 responses received
- Of 17 eligible respondents, only 6 attended
- Key barriers identified: distance, travel costs, and transport/logistics
- Mixed views on attendance at the 2026 Championships
- 77% would attend if the location were more central; 22% would not

The 2027 National Championships are planned for Frickley, a more central location. Feedback from clubs indicates strong interest in Championships participation.

Key discussion points included:

- National events help introduce competitors to higher levels and provide aspirational goals
- Concerns regarding willingness to travel more than three hours for a one-day event
- Some members view lower levels as developmental, with Novice considered the minimum level for national competition
- The majority of Gateway drivers are based in the Midlands and southern regions
- Windsor typically attracts approximately 20 entries
- Consideration was given to creating alternative progression opportunities outside of a championship structure

Decision:

A vote was held on running a Gateway Championships in 2026:

- In favour: 2
- Against: 4

Outcome:

A majority vote not to run a Gateway Championships in 2026, with the position to be reviewed for 2027.

5. Correspondence

5.1 Vaccinations – Clubs

Information from British Equestrian was reviewed. Members also shared findings from independent research.

- The “gold standard” vaccination interval is six months
- However, documentation supports that a 12-month interval provides sufficient cover

Decision:

It was unanimously agreed to amend the National Rules for 2026 and remove Para 1.3.5 in Annex 11, Vaccinations. The Rules Committee will be informed.

6. Decisions by Email/WhatsApp

- The WhatsApp protocol format was considered effective, though overly detailed
- A one-page summary format was recommended for consistency across documents

Event Schedules Approved:

- Sandringham
 - Hopetoun
 - Shanes Castle
 - Windsor
 - Seacliff
 - Allerton
-

7. Council

- A Director (or Directors) is being sought to lead sponsorship
- Supporting documentation will be developed outlining sponsorship opportunities
- An email will be circulated to members inviting interest

Discussion highlighted that sponsorship is not solely financial but also important for raising the profile of carriage driving.

- Consideration was also given to the appointment of additional or replacement Directors
-

8. Club Treasurers Forum

- A working group meeting is scheduled for 7th April
 - The group will review suggestions raised at the previous meeting
 - Recommendations will be presented to Council for consideration
-

9. Finance

- February financial reports were circulated prior to the meeting
- Affiliation income is currently below budget
- This will be reviewed at the monthly finance meeting

Key points:

- A full-year forecast is to be prepared
 - Increased expenditure due to office transition and system upgrades
 - Website costs remain within budget
 - A six-month support package has been implemented and is considered a worthwhile investment
 - Future extension of support may be considered
 - Office staff are close to obtaining full access to the Virgin account and debit card
-

10. Legacy Funding

No new applications have been received.

11. 2026 Rule Book

An additional 30 large-print copies have been ordered and received.

12. Growth of the Sport

Growth remains a key strategic priority.

Key discussion points:

- Clubs play a critical role as the foundation of the sport
- Greater guidance may be needed to support clubs in promotion and recruitment
- Progression from club membership to British Carriagedriving membership typically takes 2–5 years
- Financial sustainability and funding remain key considerations
- Recent improvements (office and website) provide a strong platform for growth

Additional actions:

- Extract key contributions from RH and JM into a separate document
- Create a dedicated "Growth of the Sport" resource folder
- Consider developing support packages for new and struggling clubs (e.g. office and social media support)
- Graeme McArthur to reflect on how best to coordinate club support initiatives and report back at the next meeting

13. Health & Safety

The next meeting is scheduled for 24th April.

14. Affiliated Clubs Meeting

- Minutes were circulated to Council
- Scoring systems were discussed

Actions:

- Office to contact clubs to gather information on scoring systems used
 - Clubs to provide details of individuals responsible for scoring
 - A working group will be established
 - A Teams meeting will be arranged for scorers
-

15. Media Update

A website demonstration evening is scheduled for Monday with the website planned to go live on Wednesday 25th March.

16. BC Office Update

- Office hours were discussed
 - Council members to provide feedback
 - Further discussion to take place at the office meeting on Monday
-

17. Governance

- Privacy Notice retention period set at six years (approved unanimously)
 - Data protection matters noted
-

18. Any Other Business (AOB)

- A proposal was made to co-opt additional members to Council.
- A number of individuals were suggested and discussed.
- This will be brought back to the next Council meeting after further consideration.

Discussion highlighted the importance of ensuring individuals have sufficient capacity and that appointments support the strategic aim of growing the sport.

Sign-Off

Signed: *Andrew Counsell*

Date: 24/03/2026

Andrew Counsell

Chairman, British Carriagedriving



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British Carriagedriving Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

Held via Conference Call
Wednesday 15 April 2026 at 19:00

Format: Online

Minute Taker: Sarah McLaughlin

1. Attendance

Present:

Andrew Counsell (Chair)
Sara Clinghan
Rod Holdsworth
Jamie March
Jane Lamb
Callum Dougan

In Attendance:

Graeme McArthur (Affiliated Club Liaison)
Rachel Caughey

Apologies:

Patti Atkinson
Dan Naprous

The Chair formally welcomed attendees and expressed thanks to Alice for her work on the website. The Council acknowledged the significant scale of the project and commended her professionalism and contribution.

2. Conflicts of Interest

No new conflicts of interest were declared. Any conflicts relating to specific agenda items will be recorded as they arise.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by AC, seconded by SC, and approved as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters Arising

No matters arising were noted.

5. Correspondence

5.1 Email from Paul Hart

Council considered a proposal from Paul Hart to host the 2026 Gateway Championships.

It was noted that Council had previously agreed not to run the Gateway Championships. Members expressed concern that accepting the proposal could undermine that decision.

Council agreed to respond to Mr Hart thanking him for the offer, confirming that the Championships will not be held, but offering support should he wish to organise Gateway-style events independently during the year.

An email from Patti Atkinson received prior to the meeting expressed support for Mr Hart's proposal.

6. Decisions by Email / WhatsApp

- **H2 Selection Panel:** Sara Clinghan, Dan Naprous, and Zoe Morgan — unanimously approved.
 - **Royal Windsor Entries Selection Panel:** Dan Naprous, Karen Bassett, Peter Bennett, and Robert Wilkinson — unanimously approved.
-

7. Council Structure and Roles

AC presented proposals regarding the expansion of Director roles within Council (maximum of 14 Directors), with responsibility for leading key committees.

The objective is to:

- Strengthen leadership across priority areas
- Distribute workload more effectively
- Formalise responsibilities through defined roles

Discussion points included:

- Recognition that several key functions are already being delivered effectively by individuals outside Council
- Concern that requiring all leads to sit on Council may increase workload unnecessarily
- Agreement that some areas (e.g. Health & Safety) function well independently, reporting into Council
- A view that certain strategic roles should be represented at Council level

Two priority areas were identified:

- Sponsorship
- Volunteers

RH supported formalising these as Director roles.

CD highlighted ongoing challenges in recruiting stewards and emphasised the importance of strengthening volunteer structures. It was agreed that the volunteer working group should be relaunched, and that MP should be invited to attend a future Council meeting.

Actions:

- Sarah McLaughlin to circulate presentation slides
 - Directors to review proposals and provide feedback
 - Item to be revisited at the next meeting
-

8. Finance

8.1 Club Treasurers Forum

The most recent meeting (7 April) was productive, with several recommendations arising. Subject to Council and club support, proposals may be incorporated into 2027 affiliation costs. Further updates will follow.

8.2 Royal Windsor Programme Advertising

Council agreed that advertising costs are not justified by the return on investment and confirmed the decision not to participate again this year.

8.3 Monthly Management Accounts

- March income: £7,000
- Year-to-date: £64,000 (compared to £65,000 at same point last year)
- Affiliation income slightly below budget
- Staff costs reduced compared to previous year due to restructuring
- Insurance costs stable; renewal due 1 July
- Website costings on budget

Council requested membership statistics comparison at the next meeting and ongoing monitoring of trends.

9. Legacy Funding

No new applications were received.

10. Courses and Clinics

Upcoming activities include:

- Insurance Webinar (rescheduled): 27 April
- CD & TD Training: 18–19 April
- Stewards Marathon (Zoom): 22 April
- Health & Safety Meeting: 24 April

Positive feedback was received regarding the recent dressage clinic in Scotland. The format was considered effective and may help attract additional judges from British Dressage into the sport. JM to follow up.

11. Sponsorship

Council discussed the urgent need to strengthen sponsorship.

Key points:

- The financial landscape of the sport has changed significantly
- Existing sponsorship is limited and often localised
- Structured sponsorship packages have been developed but require further implementation
- Long-term partnerships should be prioritised

A **Director of Sponsorship** role will be established, supported by a working group.

Discussion highlighted the importance of:

- Clearly defined sponsorship packages

- Targeted funding for specific initiatives
- Demonstrating value to sponsors
- Aligning sponsorship with growth of participation

Actions:

- Circulate sponsorship role description
 - Issue recruitment communications via email, social media, and external networks
 - AC and CD to coordinate with the office (deadline: end of month)
 - Meetings to be arranged with current sponsors
 - AC to follow up with new sponsor enquiry
-

12. Growth of the Sport

GM reported on discussions with affiliated clubs.

It was recognised that clubs are central to the sport but are primarily focused on retaining existing members rather than recruitment.

Council agreed to develop two targeted surveys:

1. Supporting retention of existing members
2. Attracting new participants

These surveys will provide data to inform future strategy.

13. Health & Safety

Next meeting scheduled for 11 May.

14. Safeguarding

A report from SA was circulated.

CD requested safeguarding training for all Event Organisers.

Action:

- SM to follow up with SA
-

15. Affiliated Clubs Meeting

Minutes from the meeting held on 30 April were circulated.

16. Media Update

CD confirmed a reduced capacity role due to personal commitments but will continue to lead the Media Committee.

Updates included:

- Website project successfully launched
- Membership feedback being incorporated

- Analytics tracking in place
- Governance documentation to be reviewed annually
- Social media supported by the media group

Concerns were raised regarding communication and accountability in relation to branding decisions. It was agreed that clearer responsibility and consultation processes are required going forward.

17. BC Office Update

(No substantive update recorded)

18. Governance

AC will review and update the strategic plan and associated governance documents.

19. Any Other Business

- Proposal to establish a **Youth BC Committee** to be discussed at the next meeting
-

20. Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 21:19.

Sign-Off

Signed: Andrew Counsell
Date: 20/05/2026

Andrew Counsell
Chairman, British Carriagedriving Council



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British Carriagedriving Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

Held via Conference Call
Monday 26 May 2026 at 7:00pm
Format: Online
Minute Taker: Sarah McLaughlin

1. Attendance

Present:

- Andrew Counsell (Chair)
- Sara Clinghan
- Rod Holdsworth
- Patti Atkinson

In Attendance:

- Graeme McArthur (Affiliated Club Liaison)
- Rachel Caughey

Apologies:

- Callum Dougan
- Jamie March
- Jane Lamb
- Dan Naprous

Council expressed its sincere thanks to Callum and Mark for organising a fantastic event at Hopetoun.

2. Conflicts of Interest

No new conflicts of interest were declared. Any conflicts relating to specific agenda items will be recorded as they arise.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by AC, seconded by SC, and approved as a true and accurate record.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Equine Flu

Council expressed its thanks to the office staff for their work in relation to Equine Flu measures. The BEF has provided extensive information, and clubs have been proactive in implementing procedures.

The online resources available have been very good. British Carriagedriving has also provided considerable information, along with policies and procedures. Council is confident that, provided procedures continue to be followed, no events will need to be cancelled at this stage.

5. Correspondence

5.1 Email Received – VSE Weights of Drivers

Work is progressing on suitable guidelines for the VSE & SE classes for the ratio of turnout to pony weight. This is felt to be vital for answering any potential perception issues about the capability of the equines to compete in their classes without welfare concerns. Turnout weight to include all persons on the carriage, the carriage and harness. Initial findings seem to be in the 1.25 to 1.5 to 1 – 1 being the equines weight. Information, once finalised, will be shared to members.

It was noted that there is currently no formal weight ratio for any class. AC is working with the Welfare Committee and others to finalise guidelines.

5.2 Email Received – VSE Class Representative

Not discussed.

5.3 Email Received from Mike Watts Regarding Scoring Systems

AC spoke with MW and apologised for any misunderstanding arising from last month's minutes. It was clarified that no negative criticism of his scoring system had been intended.

A questionnaire is now ready to be circulated to clubs. MW is keen to work with British Carriagedriving to develop a scoring system that works effectively. Once responses have been received, further discussions can take place.

MW is happy to provide training and will be invited to the next Council meeting, as well as the clubs meeting once questionnaire feedback has been reviewed.

It was also noted that “Live Jumping” is another scoring application currently in use. MW’s system is already being used in the USA.

5.4 Email Received from Rules Committee Regarding Children on Carriages

Discussions at the clubs meeting raised concerns regarding a child getting onto a carriage at the end of the marathon phase. The Safety Officer at the event prevented this from happening.

Articles 942.7 and 949 have been reworded and revised. As this was considered a safety issue, Council felt it should be addressed before next season.

Concern was expressed that some clubs may over-interpret the rules and prohibit children from riding on carriages altogether. A suggestion was made that children should only be permitted where they are able to get on and off the carriage independently and sit safely without assistance. This proposal was referred to the Rules Committee but rejected on the grounds that it could be considered discriminatory.

Following further discussion, it was agreed that the final line of the wording should be amended. PA will respond to the Rules Committee, which is due to meet in early June.

6. Decisions by Email / WhatsApp

6.1 Schedules

Schedules for Allerton and Brechin were approved via WhatsApp.

6.2 Scoring Questionnaire

Approved.

6.3 FEI Steward Nominations

Nicola Corby and Leigh Kenworthy were approved to be put forward as FEI Stewards, with seven votes received in favour.

SM to update MP to progress the process.

7. Council

7.1 Competitions Director

7.2 Letter to Members

A letter and job descriptions now need to be circulated to members. The office and Competitions Director will promote this to members and invite expressions of interest.

Further conversations will take place to ensure requirements are fully understood. The office will action this process, with appointments to be voted on at the AGM in November but some personnel may be co-opted to Council prior to that date.

Council discussed the key director roles currently being sought. RC will draft a letter and circulate it to Council. The information will be distributed to all clubs and British Carriagedriving members.

8. Finance

8.1 Club Treasurers Forum

The next meeting will take place on 16 June. Minutes from the previous Treasurers Forum will be circulated to clubs in advance.

Council approved the recommendations made by the Treasurers Forum. In line with the recommendations from the Club Treasurers Forum working party, future affiliation fee increases would be linked to CPI inflation, with confirmation communicated to clubs by 1 September each year, subject to exceptional insurance cost increases.

9. Finance

9.1 Monthly Management Accounts

Membership fees are only slightly below the equivalent position last year, with further memberships expected throughout the remainder of the year.

Start fees will continue to come in over the course of the season. Passport and registration income is higher than last year.

Staff costs remain on budget following the office reorganisation, although there has been a one-off cost associated with the IT upgrade.

Overall, figures remain on track with the budget, and savings resulting from the reorganisation are now becoming evident.

10. Legacy Funding

10.1 Funding applications

An application has been received from a club for substantial funding, further information has been requested before a decision can be reached.

An application for a Club Training Grant of £200 was approved.

11. Sponsorship

Discussed under Item 7.

12. Strategic Plan

British Carriagedriving needs to update its Strategic Plan. Council members are to review strategic planning documents circulated from other disciplines.

AC will meet with RC and CS to review the documents further.

13. Growth of the Sport

Ideas for growth will continue to be circulated and developed. Previously discussed surveys also need to be distributed.

GM will work with the office to progress this.

14. Environmental Sustainability

No matters raised.

15. Health & Safety

A report was received from JC.

Since the last report, the committee has held its first formal meeting, which was considered very successful. It was unanimously agreed that the committee's new objectives better reflect the modern focus of health and safety within both the wider industry and the organisation itself. This will provide greater clarity in both strategic direction and operational aims.

JC also reported a productive meeting with the insurance representatives, which provided greater understanding of how certain risks are perceived and identified areas for future work.

Positive feedback had also been received from Catherine regarding the committee's plans and direction.

In relation to training, 15 attendees participated in the most recent session, with excellent engagement throughout. This also highlighted some of the practical challenges clubs face in managing safety requirements.

Actions agreed by the committee include further research into:

- Hat cameras
- Body protectors
- Website presence and resources
- Administration and management of Safety Officers

JC has now been added to the regular clubs meetings, which will provide valuable insight into club-level challenges while improving accessibility and support from the committee.

JC also requested the opportunity to present reports to Council in person each quarter to allow direct discussion and feedback.

16. Safeguarding

Nothing to report.

17. Affiliated Clubs Meeting

GM expressed concern regarding declining Council attendance at club meetings and would welcome greater participation. Council noted this feedback.

Discussion also took place regarding whether monthly meetings remain necessary. GM confirmed that the meetings are well attended and continue to work effectively, although additional attendance would always be welcomed.

RH confirmed that meeting links will be circulated to all Council members.

18. Media Update

CD not present.

19. BC Office Update

National entry numbers were reported as follows:

- Ashfields – 40
- Hopetoun – 30
- Windsor – 27

- Cricklads – 25
 - Chepstow FEI – 37
-

20. Governance

20.1 Self-Assessment Form Received from BEF

The self-assessment form must be completed and returned to the BEF by Thursday. RC completed the assessment to the best of her knowledge and requested Council approval prior to submission.

Council unanimously approved the submission. It was noted that some information is currently missing from existing policies, and CS may be able to assist with this.

21. Any Other Competent Business

No additional business was raised.

The meeting closed at 8:54pm.

Sign-Off

Signed: Andrew Counsell

Date: 01/06/2026

Andrew Counsell
Chairman, British Carriagedriving Council