

## Chepstow Local Joint Pitch Council

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2006

### Meeting Minutes

#### Present:

Mr S Clare – Racecourse  
Mr S Lee – Racecourse  
Mr J Lovell – RBA  
Mr T Harris – NAB  
Mr W Sherwood – NJPC

#### Previous Minutes

Mr Sherwood read the minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2006, and the LJPC Consultation Document of 9<sup>th</sup> May 2006.

#### Matters Arising

There were no matters arising, save the next item.

#### Layout of the Rails and Tattersalls Bookmakers

##### (in conjunction with each other)

Mr Sherwood reminded bookmakers that this meeting had been called as the result of many bookmakers, both Rails and Tattersalls, expressing dissatisfaction with the present layout and the working practices laid out in the above Consultation Document.

History. Mr Sherwood reminded members that moving the Rails bookmakers was first mentioned at the LJPC meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2000. This first move was completed prior to the LJPC meeting held in November 2001. In April 2002, the installation of permanent Rails Joints was again discussed. In conjunction with the ongoing re-development plan, it was noted that this work may not have been carried out until 2003 or 2004. In July & August 2002, the matter was again discussed when the Members' Enclosure was extended into, what had been Tattersalls Enclosure.

An appraisal of the re-development was given in October 2002, when it was acknowledged that the Rails Joints will be installed at the final stage of the re-development work. In October 2003 an update was given when it was envisaged that the work would be completed in 2005.

However, in November 2004, members were informed that work on the re-development had been temporarily suspended. At this time Mr Sherwood informed Council that Temporary Rails Joints had been in use since 1999 and that their continued use was far from satisfactory, and suggested that it was best to have Permanent Rails Joints fitted at the present location.

To this end, on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2005, Mr Sherwood attended the Racecourse with Mr Ross Mullane (Securit) when a detailed survey was carried out, whereby purpose made Joints could be fitted. In accordance with members agreement, there was to have been a blank panel at the bottom then ten joints installed 'up the line' – which meant that the top joint would be approximately in line with the front row of Tattersalls bookmakers, (this has been acknowledged by Mr Ross Mullane – 06/06). Despite countless 'hurry up' calls, the Joints were not fitted, and on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2005, Mr Lee informed Council that the Racecourse sought to further extend the Members' Enclosure. At this time, Mr Sherwood stated that he had been informed that the Joints had been 'tailor made' to be fitted in accordance with the arrangements made in March, and added that this should not present a problem because the new intended line was parallel to that surveyed.

The Rails Joints were finally fitted in time for racing on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2006. The installation work was overseen by Mr Tony Mullane, who, on seeing the drop of the ground at the bottom of the line, for logistical reasons, took the decision to fit the Joints from the top of the line, near the gate. We can see how steeply the ground falls away after the bottom Joint. (The NJPC had been made aware that it had proved difficult to get the 'power beam dimensions' with the power at the bottom).

Mr Lee opined that the Joints could not have been put any lower, but added that the plan submitted to Securit had shown a gap at the bottom of 1.3m.

Mr Lovell stated that it would have been better to have had the Joints across the Enclosure, facing the stand – which would have been better for serving the customers.

Mr Clare added that every bookmaker 'must be flexible'. He further added that it is still the intention of the Racecourse to re-develop the Tattersalls Grandstand in the future – may be within a few years – though nothing definite.

Though realising it was not an option, Mr Harris opined that it would be best to know the Rails down and start again.

Mr Clare stated that the Racecourse had contributed some £5,000.00 to this project, and the Rails Joints must stay where they are.

Mr Sherwood added that the NJPC could/would not fund another installation. Mr Lovell added that it was within his knowledge that the first two pitched in Tattersalls have been 'crucified'.

Mr Clare enquired if the Tattersalls pitches could be moved down.

Mr Harris intervened that maybe the Tattersalls pitches could be moved forward not down. Mr Clare considered that this may be possible for some meetings – but not all. Members unanimously agreed that three meetings where this may not be possible are the two 'themed' Friday evening fixtures and Welsh National Day.

Members then made a site visit to the Ring.

On seeing the actual ground, Mr Harris proposed that the first 25 (twenty five) pitches in the front row be moved forward to where they were before anchorage points were laid (the marks can still clearly be seen). Mr Harris asked that the pitches be equidistant apart, not in pairs as now. This was also unanimously agreed.

Mr Sherwood observed that for meetings other than the Welsh National, we have 25 pitches available in the front row and 25 available in the back row, as now, plus the 6 top paddock pitches and the 6 pitches available in front of the lower stand, whereby there is a choice of 62 pitches available for a maximum Designated Number of 45 bookmakers.

Mr Clare, supported by Mr Lee, proposed, on seeing and that given the space available, the first row on Welsh National Day, be the existing front row (which should by then be an obsolete 2<sup>nd</sup> row) because of the extra demand on ground space. Members unanimously agreed that for all other meetings, including the themed evenings, bookmakers shall use the new front row and existing rear row.

Mr Harris proposed that the new No.1 pitch be in front of the present No.2 pitch which will give more space and better access behind the Rails bookmakers. This was unanimously approved.

Mr Sherwood pointed out that we must resolve what Rails Joints may be used and when.

Mr Harris proposed, having referred to the bookmaker/crowd ratios, that the first Rails pitch to be used for the 6 & 8 meetings continue to be No.3.

Mr Lovell retorted, that as Rails Representative, he must oppose this. Mr Sherwood referred the matter to the Racecourse Representatives, and both Mr Clare and Mr Lee supported Mr Harris. Issue approved.

Conclusion. The Racecourse Representative, Mr Clare, wished it to be minuted that members of the LJPC understand that it is impossible to cover every eventuality, to the satisfaction of all bookmakers. Minuted.

#### Possibility of Further Satellite Betting Area

Though referred to in the minutes of 25.2.06, Mr Harris supported by Mr Lovell opined that it would be advantageous to have bookmakers in the Premier Enclosure. Mr Clare acknowledged this and agreed there was some merit in the idea. He added that there was every chance, but not until at least September 2007. Mr Lovell stated that this could be done on a trial basis and cited Windsor as an example. Mr Sherwood stated that minutes could emphasise such a trial period. Mr Clare stated that he would check this out and report back in due course. This was noted.

#### Date of next meeting

Mr Sherwood asked that this be as soon as possible, subject to guidelines. All members requested that this be arranged on a non race day. This was noted.

#### Any other Business

OFT. Mr Sherwood stated that as far as he was aware, there had been no recent responses from the OFT.

Condition of Ring Surface. Mr Sherwood drew attention to the condition of the surfaces. Mr Clare expressed the view that resurfacing will take place at the conclusion of the redevelopment. This was noted.

Installation of further Anchorage Points. Mr Sherwood undertook to supply further anchorage points as required, including for the 6 Paddock pitches. Both Mr Sherwood and Mr Harris agreed to liaise and 'spot' all required pitches in company with a Racecourse Representative. This was noted.

Opening of Gates after Racing. Mr Harris asked if the Racecourse would open the green gates, below the enclosure, after the last race to facilitate bookmakers with the transport of equipment. Mr Lee agreed that this could be done after the last race, but not until it was safe to do so. This was noted.