

Notes from Cheltenham Bookmaker Liaison Committee Meeting

Tuesday 23rd January 2018

Attendees:

David Mackinnon – Group Head of Operations, SW Region – The Jockey Club
Steve Clare – Consultant
Dickon White – Group Betting Director – The Jockey Club
Andy Collins – Betting Ring Manager, AGT
Tim Moore – Chief Executive, AGT
Andy Pinnington - Bookmaker
Paul White - Bookmaker
Mark Jeal - Bookmaker
Nick Daisley - Bookmaker
Dale Such - Bookmaker
Barry Johnson - Bookmaker
Robin Grossmith – Bookmaker

Apologies:

Graham Thorpe – Bookmaker

Welcome & Introductions

BLC's introduced to further develop relationships between racecourses and bookmakers. Notes would be circulated to attendees, and then published on AGT website. The meetings would welcome open discussions and it was proposed that bookmakers would come with individual views and opinions, and not be hampered by association ties.

Current Trading Update – Cheltenham only

Bookmaker numbers in Tattersalls down significantly in 2017. Cheltenham aware, and looking to find ways to improve access, etc. into Tattersalls ring. There would be an additional entrance into ring, near to Sales Arena, at 2018 Festival. Good feedback regarding the Lower Tattersalls enclosure from 2017 Festival. New Years' Day was disappointing, bookmakers stated that it may be down to price, although historic data shows that the attendance is always affected when it is not a Bank Holiday on January 2nd, as in 2018.

2018 Festival Planning & Update

Cheltenham confirmed that no alcoholic drinks would be allowed into any betting ring at 2018 Festival. Best Mate capacity would be increased by 1k in 2018. There would also be an extension to the Best Mate Pavilion that would offer additional customer facilities. The seated stand in the Best Mate will also move to provide better viewing. Security checks would be similar in 2018 to 2017. No luggage/baggage could be left on site, however, good storage of equipment, etc. available both on and off-site, this would include RDT storage. ICE banking service once again available – racecourse encouraged bookmakers to use. Car parking in place and available to all bookmakers (AGT ID required for car park staff). Cheltenham still keen to have bookmakers ready to trade at gates opening, therefore pitch in times will be continually reviewed (no changes for 2018) but additional consideration will be given to this and discussed at the next BLC meeting.

Bookmaker Numbers & Rings

No changes to be made for 2018 Festival to numbers or layouts. Best Mate was discussed and the lack of pitches at the rear of the grandstand. It was agreed that it was good practice to review

previous examples of bookmakers being warned by the racecourse about future activity. The key would be for bookmakers not to take “advantage” of their locations and customers.

AOB

Pitch Renting

This is not allowed at any course, and needs to be removed from racecourses, it contravenes the licence terms, and continues to be reviewed by AGT.

DBB Prices

Racecourse agreed to review the DBB prices where on-the-day prices were being used, despite the majority of badges being sold at a cheaper rate.

Each Way Betting Terms

Discussions around the standard EW terms that bookmakers needed to bet to, as per Special Conditions E. A bookmaker had made a proposal to change these terms by offering an additional place but a lower fraction i.e. 1/5 and not 1/4. Was there an appetite amongst bookmakers? It was agreed that further analysis/debate was required.

Next BLC meeting would take place after final fixture of the season, possibly May/June. Racecourse to propose date.