

BOOKMAKER LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING – EXETER & WINCANTON RACECOURSES

FRIDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2018

IN ATTENDANCE:

Huw Williams GM Wincanton; Jack Parkinson GM Exeter; Andy Collins AGT; Bookmakers – Mike Smale, Jim Clarke, Paul Metcalf, David Phillips & Simon Carswell (each bookmaker has position/s at both racecourses); Steve Clare, JCR Betting Consultant.

APOLOGIES:

Paul Gold, Alan Bushell, Jonathan Williams & Dickon White.

MEETING NOTES

Trading -

Bookmakers all reported gradually declining levels of slippage & turnover last season at Wincanton, although this was not thought to be as a result of anything happening out of the ordinary at the racecourse but rather symptomatic of a general pattern regarding racecourse on-course betting.

This decline was evident despite a year on year increase in racegoer numbers.

Some suggestion that the midweek one enclosure policy was a possible cause, but this was not a universal view.

There was a proposal for a New Betting Area (1:1) to be created somewhere within the Member's Enclosure. Huw agreed to consider this & revert, with a view to first using such in early 2019.

At Exeter business levels were holding up well.

At both courses the bigger days were holding up well unless impacted by inclement weather.

2018 / 2019 Season

Both GMs provided an update:

Wincanton –

Fixtures as per last season except one more Sunday, and attempts are being made to secure a local customer friendly Thursday fixture again in 2019.

Huw expects to be able to offer up to four (two hurdles & two fences) longer distance races in order to attract a higher number of runners.

Similarly the racecourse has invested in significantly larger Owners & Trainers facilities to be used from the first race meeting.

The Annual Members Bar has been relocated to a larger area in the building directly behind the grandstand by the betting ring. It was thought that this would be of a help to bookmakers.

The new William Hill betting shop is now located within the Badger Bar, rather than in the old location used by Betfred.

Exeter –

Similar fixtures as last season. Jack had liaised with the Point to Point organisers to ensure no local fixture clashes.

The popular 'Students Day' will take place on a Friday fixture this season.

Enclosures will operate as per last season – no plans to introduce one enclosure.

During the break, the old Tote control room has been converted into a bar with access directly onto the betting ring. This was thought by the bookmakers to be a positive development.

As at Wincanton, there has been an investment to increase the size of O&T facilities in an attempt to increase runners.

Concern was raised about lack of anchor points for the Member's Enclosure betting positions. It was agreed by Jack that the racecourse would consider provision of suitable joint weights or a/p installation.

Other –

Bookmakers were grateful for the ease of vehicular access to betting rings at both courses for dropping off & collection of equipment.

Bookmakers were reminded that they could make suggestions to each GM for proactive use of the marketing fees to help grow popularity of betting rings.

DP agreed to provide ideas for PA messages to emphasise availability of the betting rings (subsequently received).

It was emphasised that the BRMs are a fundamental part of the raceday management team and a vital link between bookmakers & the racecourse.

There was a discussion regarding the betting operator's responsibilities concerning attempted under age betting,

Bookmakers were thanked for efforts made to keep their betting positions tidy with H&S storage risks minimised. Please continue.

A brief discussion ensued regarding use by bookmakers of the 'Price Tracker' available from both RDT & Elite. Whilst the view was that most bookmakers were against its use, it was reported that it is not widely used at either racecourse.

NEXT MEETING T.B.A.