

**FARRIERS REGISTRATION COUNCIL**

**DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT THE FARRIERS REGISTRATION COUNCIL, 14 SWAN COURT,**

**FORDER WAY, CYGNET PARK, HAMPTON, PETERBOROUGH PE7 8GX**

**INQUIRY RE:**

**MR HARVEY LYMER DIPWCF**

**1. THE CHARGE**

1.1 *“That being registered under the Farriers (Registration) Act 1975 (as amended) (“the Act”), you:*

1. *On 13 February 2025, while a horse named Blue, owned by Mrs JP, was being tended to by another person, you used unnecessary force towards Blue by:*
  - a) *striking Blue to his face with your hand twice; and/or*
  - b) *twisting and/or pulling Blue’s ear with your hand.*

*And that in relation to the facts alleged above, whether individually or in any combination, you are guilty of serious misconduct in a professional respect.”*

**Preliminary matters**

1.2 Ms Nicole Curtis appeared on behalf of the Farriers Registration Council (“FRC”). Mr Jonathan Buckle appeared on behalf of Mr Lymer, who was also present.

**Consideration for part of the hearing to be held in private**

1.3 At the outset of the hearing, Mr Buckle made an application that part of the hearing be heard in private where mention is made of matters relating to Mr Lymer’s personal and family life. Ms Curtis supported the application.

1.4 The Committee considered the matter with care and accepted the advice of the Legal Assessor, who referred to Rule 11 of the Farriers Registration Council Disciplinary Committee (Procedure) Rules 1976 (“the Rules”). In accordance with Rule 11 hearings before the Committee ordinarily take place in public so that the public are aware of the functions being carried out by the Regulator. However, Rule 11(3) does allow for the hearing, or part of the hearing, to be heard in private where it is in the interests of justice to do so. The interests of justice include compliance with Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which protects an individual’s right to respect for their private and family life. Accordingly, the Committee agreed that, if and when any reference were made to Mr Lymer’s health or family matters, the public would be excluded in order to protect his private life and any reference to such matters in this determination will be marked private.

**Admissions**

1.5 Mr Lymer formally admitted all the Charges and the Committee, therefore, found them proved in their entirety, on the basis of his admissions, as supported by the unequivocal video evidence.

## Background

- 1.6 Ms JP owned a rescue horse named Blue, acquired in 2003. At the time of the incident Blue was 22 years old. Blue was kept at [Redacted] Yard (“the Yard”) in the West Midlands. Many of the people who used the Yard relied on My Lymer to shoe and trim their horses’ feet and Ms P was not aware of any concerns about Mr Lymer, having spoken to other owners. She said she had also met him on a couple of occasions when he had been at the Yard to see other clients and also, she said, when he trimmed Blue in October 2024, together with another horse owned by Ms P.
- 1.7 Ms P said Blue’s feet were usually trimmed every three to four months, so this was next due around February 2025. Ms P learned that Mr Lymer was due to be at the Yard on 13 February 2025 and so arranged for him to trim Blue while he was there. Ms P was not able to be at the Yard on that day due to work commitments but, as Mr Lymer had trimmed Blue’s feet before (and many other horses at the Yard), Ms P said she did not have any concerns that there might be an issue if she were not present. Ms P was aware that the owner of the Yard was also not present because she had been called away on an emergency.
- 1.8 The day after, on 14 February 2025, Ms P went to the Yard to see Blue. On seeing Blue she said, *“Blue was not his usual self and he was not allowing me to put his head collar on. I also noticed that Blue seemed to be sensitive when I touched his face over the next few days. By sensitive, I meant that he reacted to indicate that he did not want me to touch his face.”*
- 1.9 Ms P said that it was standard procedure for the owner of the Yard to review the CCTV footage of the Yard from time-to-time. The owner informed Ms P that she had observed on the CCTV footage Mr Lymer hitting Blue on 13 February 2025. Ms P was provided with a copy of the footage. Ms P described what she saw on the footage as follows:
- “In this footage I can see Mr Lymer holding Blue by his head. Mr Lymer is wearing a blue hooded top, a baseball cap, grey trousers and chaps. There is another person in the video behind Mr Lymer. He is wearing a light grey hooded top, dark trousers and chaps. I understand this man is an apprentice. I do not know this other man’s name. Mr Lymer appears to be holding Blue’s reins with his left hand while the other man in the light grey top works on Blue’s feet. Shortly after the video starts, Mr Lymer punches Blue twice on the side of his face using his right hand. I can also see Mr Lymer pull hard at Blue’s left ear in an aggressive manner. When he pulls on Blue’s ear, he appears to twist the ear as well.”*
- 1.10 After she watched the footage, Ms P contacted Mr Lymer via a message platform to ask him why she was watching footage of him hitting Blue. She said Mr Lymer replied with words to the effect of ‘*can we sort this out between ourselves*’. She replied no, saying that Mr Lymer had no excuse for hitting Blue or any horse. Ms P said that she was very angry at the time of these messages. In her formal complaint to the FRC, Ms P said she was horrified when she watched the video. She said Blue was a rescue horse and she had *“devoted many years of supporting him back to a happy and stable living environment ...”* She added, *“to observe Harvey Lymer, who is in such a trusted position as a Farrier, carrying out such a horrific act on such a vulnerable, gentle horse is an act of abuse which I find unbearable.”*
- 1.11 The Committee was provided with the video footage and the Committee Members were able to confirm that the description given by Ms P reflected what was seen on the video, although it was not clear if the hitting was with a closed fist or an open hand (Mr Lymer was later to say in evidence that it was with an open hand).
- 1.12 In a letter to the FRC, dated 14 April 2025, from the solicitors representing Mr Lymer, it was said *“Our client strongly denies that he acted in any way that constituted animal abuse, criminality, or misconduct. He is a registered farrier of longstanding good reputation who conducts himself in accordance with the 2024 Code of Professional Conduct for Registered Farriers. He is well aware of*

*his duty, under paragraph 12(a), to treat horses humanely and with welfare as the primary consideration.”*

1.13 The letter went on to say that on the day in question Ms P was not present and nor was the Yard owner. The solicitor said that no information was provided to Mr Lymer in advance about the horse’s temperament or background. Crucially, it was said, Mr Lymer was not informed that the horse was a sensitive rescue animal, or that it had previously demonstrated behavioural difficulties during farriery.

1.14 The solicitor went on to say:

*“It is noted that, in circumstances where a horse is known to be reactive or challenging to shoe or trim, particularly as a rescue, it is incumbent upon the owner to either be present or arrange for someone familiar with the horse to assist. Section 13(g) of the Code is clear: “Farriers must not attend to trim or shoe a horse in the absence of the client, or other person responsible for that animal, without prior arrangement.” This raises an important question: why did Ms. P, with knowledge of the horse’s behavioural issues, consent and arrange for Mr Lymer to attend to trim the Horse knowing that no one would be present?”*

1.15 Mr Lymer denied having knowingly worked on Blue before, saying he believed this was the first time.

1.16 The solicitor went on to explain what happened, stating:

*“On the day in question, our client was assisting a colleague who was trimming the horse’s feet. The front feet were trimmed without issue, but the horse became increasingly difficult and agitated when his hind feet were being trimmed, threatening to kick out. The horse’s feet were very overdue to be trimmed and in poor condition, showing signs of cracking that posed a potential risk of infection and future lameness. As the horse began kicking out aggressively, the situation became dangerous for both the farriers and the horse, especially as there was no one available who knows the horse to assist. Our client was however mindful that leaving the horse’s hooves in their current condition could amount to a welfare concern. Our client’s decision to proceed with treatment was driven by the horse’s welfare, not convenience. His professional judgement, as permitted under paragraph 13(i) of the Code, required him to balance his own welfare and the wishes of the client.”*

1.17 Mr Lymer subsequently provided a witness statement for these proceedings, dated 23 February 2026. He described what happened on 13 February 2025 (albeit wrongly referred to as 19 February 2025) as follows:

*“On 19 February 2025, I was at [Redacted] Yard in Enville assisting a colleague who was trimming a horse’s feet.*

*The front feet were completed without issue. However, when the hind feet were attempted, the horse became increasingly agitated and began kicking out aggressively.*

*The horse’s hooves were severely overgrown and showed signs of cracking and seedy toe (white line disease), which posed a risk of infection and potential lameness if left untreated.*

*As attempts were made to lift and trim the hind feet, the horse kicked out repeatedly, narrowly missing both myself and my colleague on several occasions. The situation became increasingly dangerous.*

*I attempted to reassure the horse through calm verbal communication, scratching and patting.*

*Attempts were also made to distract and settle the horse with feed, hay and licks, but these measures were unsuccessful.*

*There was no person present who was familiar with the horse to assist in handling it.*

*I intervened as I could see my colleague struggling to complete the hoof care safely.*

*In a brief window of approximately 30 seconds, actions were taken by me in an attempt to regain control of the situation and enable the hoof care to be completed. These actions are visible in the video footage.*

*I accept that my actions on that occasion were inappropriate and fell below the standards expected of a registered farrier.*

*My intention at the time was to ensure the safety of those present and to complete necessary hoof care which, in my judgement, was important for the horse's welfare. However, I recognise that my actions were not the correct or appropriate way to manage the situation.*

*Following the incident, the horse settled and the hoof care was completed. I praised the horse afterwards."*

- 1.18 Mr Lymer went on to say that at the time of the incident he was feeling under pressure. He was concerned about the welfare of the horse given the condition of its hooves and he was concerned for the safety of his colleague.

## **PRIVATE**

- 1.19 [redacted]

## **PUBLIC**

- 1.20 Mr Lymer went on to say that he had reflected considerably about this incident. He said he deeply regretted his actions, which were out of character and inconsistent with the professional standards he has maintained throughout his 11 years as a qualified Farrier. He offered his *"sincere apology to the horse's owner, to the Committee, and to the profession."* He added, *"I recognise that my conduct has the potential to undermine public confidence in the profession and the regulatory body."*
- 1.21 If faced with a similar situation again, Mr Lymer said that he would insist upon the presence of someone familiar with the horse; decline to proceed and rearrange the appointment; seek veterinary assistance where appropriate; or refuse to carry out the work if it could not be done safely and appropriately. Mr Lymer added that since the incident, he has undertaken additional training in horse behaviour to ensure he is better equipped to manage challenging situations appropriately in future. He said he has learned that if a situation escalates beyond safe and appropriate handling, he must step away rather than attempt to resolve it under pressure.
- 1.22 Mr Lymer gave details about his family situation and how he is the sole breadwinner and thus any period of suspension or removal from the Register would have a direct financial impact on him and his family.
- 1.23 Mr Lymer provided a significant number of character references from long-standing clients, fellow Farriers and veterinary professionals. His clients described his professionalism, expertise and caring approach and his particular skill and patience when dealing with challenging horses that can be difficult to shoe. Reference was made to the obvious pride Mr Lymer takes in his work and how he treats every horse as an individual and in a relaxed way. To quote one stable owner, *"I have only ever seen Harvey be extremely professional and compassionate around my horses and I completely trust him around them; he does an amazing job with our Thoroughbreds who aren't always the easiest. I am more than happy to provide any further information should it be needed to support Harvey. Good farriers are worth their weight in gold and Harvey is one of those good ones who doesn't just do a job, he genuinely wants to provide the best possible care for the horses he is responsible for."*
- 1.24 Mr Lymer also works as the Team Farrier for the British Young Riders Endurance Team and one of his current clients is a retired FEI (Fédération Équestre Internationale) Endurance Judge. She provided a reference in which she described Mr Lymer as a *"fantastic addition to the Team"*, having been recommended as someone who was extremely caring and knowledgeable of horse care and farriery.

She has never had any concerns about the way in which Mr Lymer treats her horses and said that even when they have had issues with older horses that struggle to stay still, Mr Lymer has “*never lost his cool*”. Consequently, she was shocked to hear of what happened in this case, since she had never known Mr Lymer to exhibit any such behaviour when looking after her horses.

- 1.25 Another stable owner who has been involved with horses the majority of her life said of Mr Lymer, “*I have used a number of fairers over this period of time and i can honestly say that Mr Harvey Lymer is by far the best fairer i have encountered, he has been providing exceptional hoof care for all of my personal horses and those of my liverys for the last decade, i would never have any intention of replacing him due to the exceptional standard of his work, i would, and have recommended him to a number of people over the years and would always recommend him without hesitation. He is a very knowledgeable, skilled, professional and patient fairer and is always at hand to help whenever or wherever needed, i have personally experienced this in general and also in emergencies situations alike.*” (sic)
- 1.26 Veterinary Surgeons with whom Mr Lymer has worked alongside were equally praiseworthy, describing his professionalism, warmth and empathy. One Vet said of him, “*His professional yet warm friendliness naturally seemed to foster long-term trust with the Horses and the clients, and they trusted him implicitly and are in my witness very relaxed with Harvey as the Farrier. Harvey has appeared to me to show a profound Dedication to Animal Welfare and above all, his work is driven by a profound and evident love for Horses and other animals. This isn't just a career for him it appears to me to be his way of Life. This "patient-first" philosophy ensures that animal welfare is always the priority, and it is a quality that I have seen as a colleague and his clients that I know of, deeply admire.*” In summary, that Vet said, “*Harvey Lymer is a reliable, hardworking, and exceptionally kind and compassionate Farrier who would be an asset to any Horse/Client fortunate enough to have him as their Farrier, and I fully recommend him as a professional Farrier without reservation.*”
- 1.27 Mr Lymer also provided a Certificate from The Horse Trust for his recent attendance on ‘The Redwings and Horse Trust Online CPD (Continuing Professional Development) for Farriers: Equine Welfare and Legislation’ and was awarded 4 credits.

## **2. DECISION OF THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE ON THE FACTS**

- 2.1 Rule 6 only requires the Committee to deliberate and decide any facts that are not admitted. Since all the facts were admitted, as indicated above, it was not necessary for the Committee to decide any of the facts. Accordingly, the Committee found all the Charges proved.

## **3. SUBMISSIONS OF THE PARTIES ON SERIOUS MISCONDUCT IN A PROFESSIONAL RESPECT**

- 3.1 Ms Curtis submitted that Mr Lymer was guilty of serious misconduct in a professional respect. She drew the Committee’s attention to the Code and in particular the guiding principle that Registered Farriers are expected to:

*“make horse welfare their first consideration, with due regard to a safe working environment, and to fulfil their professional responsibilities by upholding the following guiding principles:*

- *ensure that all horses under your care are treated humanely and with respect*
- *uphold the good reputation of the Farriery profession”*

- 3.2 Ms Curtis also referred to the declaration made by farriers on graduating, which is stated to apply to all farriers and includes a solemn declaration that “...*my constant endeavour will be to ensure the welfare of horses committed to my care.*”
- 3.3 In addition, Ms Curtis referred to paragraphs 12(a) and 16(c) of the Code, which state that:
- 12 (a) Farriers must treat all horses humanely, with respect, and with welfare as the primary consideration.*
- 16 (c) Farriers must not engage in any activity or behaviour that would be likely to bring the profession into disrepute...*
- 3.4 Ms Curtis invited the Committee to consider the risk of injury to an animal as an aggravating factor and also the fact that the conduct was repeated in that there were two blows and also a twisting/pulling of the ear.
- 3.5 In a letter to the Council, dated 23 February 2026, those representing Mr Lymer stated he accepted his actions were inappropriate and that they amounted to misconduct in a professional respect. The representative went on to say that Mr Lymer expressed genuine remorse for his conduct and acknowledged that his actions did not meet the professional standards required of him as a registered Farrier.
- 3.6 The letter went on to say, “*However, the actions occurred in the context of a rapidly escalating and potentially dangerous situation, where the horse was kicking aggressively and there were concerns regarding both safety and the horse’s hoof condition. These matters are not advanced as an excuse but will be relied upon by way of explanation and mitigation.*”
- 3.7 Mr Lymer told the Committee that he accepted his behaviour crossed the threshold for serious misconduct in a professional respect.

#### **4. DECISION OF THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE ON SERIOUS MISCONDUCT IN A PROFESSIONAL RESPECT**

- 4.1 The Committee accepted the advice of the Legal Assessor who referred to the principles to be applied when considering serious misconduct in a professional respect. The Committee took into account Mr Lymer’s candid acceptance that his behaviour amounted to serious misconduct in a professional respect, but nevertheless came to its own independent decision on this matter.
- 4.2 As a Registered Farrier, Mr Lymer was duty bound to abide by the Guiding Principles set out in the relevant provisions in the Codes of, and Guide to, Professional Conduct.
- 4.3 The Committee found the following parts of the Code to have been breached in this case:
- *12 (a) Farriers must treat all horses humanely, with respect, and with welfare as the primary consideration.*
  - *16 (a) Farriers must promote responsible horse management.*
  - *16 (c) Farriers must not engage in any activity or behaviour that would be likely to bring the profession into disrepute...*
  - *16 (e) Farriers must not exhibit behaviour that is at variance with the core values of a Registered Farrier ...*

- 4.4 The Committee also considered what action a Farrier should take when dealing with a difficult horse. Paragraph 24 of the Code provides guidance, that was not followed in this case, such as not continuing to work with an animal if it is felt that the present temperament of the horse is unfavourable to a successful outcome and/or the health and safety of the farriers or others, including the horse, may be compromised by proceeding.
- 4.5 The Committee considered there to be the following aggravating factors present in this case:
- risk of injury to an animal, albeit low;
  - breach of client trust in that there would be an expectation from the client that their horse would be treated well and without the use of unnecessary force;
  - risk of undermining public confidence in the farriery profession.
- 4.6 The Committee considered there to be the following mitigating factors specific to the actual conduct:
- the circumstances of the incident, including the welfare of an animal;
  - single and isolated incident;
  - decision taken without the opportunity for full reflection;
  - the absence of the horse owner or anyone else at the Yard to assist with Blue.
- 4.7 The Committee was also mindful that Blue had not been trimmed for over four months and was overdue a trimming. Three of the four feet had been done and it was important for the last hoof to have been completed. However, the action taken by Mr Lymer was not necessary and was not the appropriate way to have dealt with matters, as he readily admits.
- 4.8 Mr Lymer admitted, and the Committee found proved, that during the course of the appointment on 13 February 2025, he used unnecessary force by deliberately striking Blue's head with his hand on two occasions and that he twisted or pulled Blue's ear. Such behaviour was directly contrary to the guiding principle that Farriers are expected to ensure that all horses under their care are treated humanely and with respect, as echoed in Code 12(a), which emphasises that the welfare of horses is the primary consideration. It is also a clear breach of, in particular, Code 16(c), namely Farriers must not engage in any activity or behaviour that would be likely to bring the profession into disrepute. The Committee was satisfied that Mr Lymer's conduct in striking Blue and twisting or pulling his ear was conduct that fell far below the standard expected of a Registered Farrier and amounted to serious misconduct in a professional respect.

## **5. DECISION OF THE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE AS TO SANCTION**

- 5.1 The Legal Assessor reminded the Committee of the Indicative Sanctions Guidance and of the need for proportionality when considering sanction. The purpose of any sanction was not to punish but to arrive at a proportionate outcome to the case, having regard to the Committee's responsibility to protect animal welfare and to promote and maintain proper standards of conduct for Registered Farriers.
- 5.2 Mr Lymer gave evidence under affirmation at the sanction stage. He confirmed that the contents of his statement were true and acknowledged that the date of the incident referred to as 19 February 2025 may be wrong. He did not dispute that it was in fact 13 February 2025, as reported by the complainant. He told the Committee that before the clip seen on the video, he and his colleague had been working with Blue for between 20 and 30 minutes and had completed the trimming of three hooves, with just the one remaining. He said Blue was trying to strike out and he was concerned because the trimming was very overdue. Trimming should be done every 6-8 weeks, he said, whereas

Blue had not been trimmed for four months. This meant his hooves needed much more trimming than should be the case and it took that much longer. Mr Lymer referred to the signs of fungal infection and the issues that can arise when hooves are left untrimmed for too long, which would have resulted in Blue being in discomfort at the time of the trimming. Mr Lymer said he was trying to *“make it safer for my colleague and to get the job finished and that was why the incident happened.”*

- 5.3 Mr Lymer told the Committee that before hitting Blue, he had tried a number of ways to comfort him. Blue had been tied up, but he untied him and held his reins instead, to try and give some reassurance. He had also given him hay and licks to comfort him, but Blue continued to thrash and kick out, even before having his foot picked up. Mr Lymer described how Blue had kicked out narrowly missing his colleague the moment before he hit him. He said how he hit Blue with an open hand, not a fist, followed by the twisting of Blue’s ear. He had not thought about it or processed it at the time, it was not anger, he said, but rather *“frustration and maybe a bit of retaliation”* due to Blue kicking out at them. He said this was no excuse and his behaviour was unacceptable. Thereafter, they were then able to finish the last foot, although none of this was shown on the CCTV, which was just a very short clip. Mr Lymer said he had been unaware that there was CCTV at the Yard.
- 5.4 Mr Lymer spoke of personal pressures at the time that resulted in him being particularly tired, but made it plain he was not providing an excuse, but rather an explanation for his out-of-character behaviour. He said how much he regretted his conduct that day and said it was something he had never done before and would never do again. He had attended a course that provided insight into legislation and difficult situations that might be encountered with horses and the appropriate behaviour in such circumstances. He said he would now take a step back, remove himself from the situation and, if necessary, get another professional involved such as a Veterinary Surgeon, who could sedate the horse, if needed. He referred to a recent incident where he had done just that.
- 5.5 Mr Lymer was asked why his account had changed from the initial response provided on his behalf by his solicitors, when he did not accept his behaviour amounted to misconduct, to that within his statement where he accepted his behaviour was wrong. He said that he had reflected on the matter and having done so accepted that he had used unnecessary force on Blue.
- 5.6 It is apparent that Mr Lymer has many very happy clients (he provided 39 testimonials) who hold him in the highest regard. In particular, they refer to his kindness and compassion when dealing with challenging horses and none have any concerns about the way in which he has behaved with their horses, indeed quite the opposite. In the face of such praise the Committee was prepared to accept that Mr Lymer’s behaviour on this occasion was out of character and could be treated as an isolated incident in an otherwise unblemished career as a Farrier.
- 5.7 The Committee first considered the aggravating and mitigating factors present in this case.
- 5.8 The Committee found there to be the following aggravating factors:
- risk of injury to an animal, albeit low;
  - breach of client trust in that there would be an expectation from the client that their horse would be treated well and without the use of unnecessary force;
  - risk of undermining public confidence in the farriery profession.
- 5.9 The Committee found there to be the following mitigating factors:
- the circumstances of the incident, including concern for the welfare of an animal;
  - decision taken without the opportunity for full reflection;
  - the absence of the horse owner or anyone else at the Yard to assist with Blue;

- a challenging situation, with a horse overdue a trimming, which thus took longer;
- Blue had just kicked out at the apprentice and Mr Lymer was concerned for his colleague's welfare;
- three of the four hooves had been trimmed and the fourth was completed without further incident;
- previous good character and no repeat of the behaviour in the year since;
- an isolated incident in an otherwise long and unblemished career;
- admissions at the hearing to the matters alleged and that his behaviour amounted to serious misconduct in a professional respect;
- significant demonstration of insight, taking full responsibility for his actions;
- proactive steps taken to prevent a recurrence, including attendance on a relevant course and counselling;
- genuine remorse and apologies to Blue's owner, the profession, his family and the FRC;
- some personal stressful circumstances that may have influenced his behaviour at the time;
- a significant number of very positive testimonials making clear this behaviour was out of character.

5.10 The Committee noted that the footage of the incident provided was a short snapshot of just 33 seconds and began at the moment when the blows were struck. Accordingly, whilst it showed the crucial moments, the Committee was not able to see how Blue was behaving immediately before the strikes, or in the 20 or 30 minutes before the incident, or indeed the time after when the last hoof was completed, which may have provided more in the way of context. It was Mr Lymer's evidence that immediately prior to the hits, Blue had kicked out and Mr Lymer had been concerned for his colleague's safety. It would have been helpful to have had more of the CCTV footage to show the whole incident: however, the Committee accepted Mr Lymer's account, having found him to be a frank and honest witness and there being no evidence to the contrary.

5.11 The Committee also noted that Blue was well overdue trimming. Mr Lymer said that trimming should be done every six to eight weeks, whereas this interval had been four months: the result being that there was much more hoof to be trimmed on a horse that was old and no doubt stiff. The Committee accepted that this was a contributory factor.

5.12 Having seen and heard from Mr Lymer, the Committee considered he gave honest, contrite and meaningful evidence. He made no attempt to avoid responsibility for his behaviour and did not seek to blame others. He was clearly deeply remorseful for his actions and genuinely sorry for the distress he recognised he must have caused Blue and Blue's owner. He admitted acting out of frustration and candidly also accepted his behaviour may have been to some extent retaliatory, following Blue kicking out. The Committee accepted that this behaviour was out of character, there had been no previous such incidents and nothing in the year since. Mr Lymer had demonstrated good insight and taken relevant online training, and counselling and was able to describe coping strategies that would help prevent a recurrence of such behaviour. In all the circumstances the Committee considered the risk of such behaviour being repeated to be very low.

5.13 The Committee considered each sanction in ascending order.

5.14 The Committee considered the case was too serious to take no further action, as Mr Lymer's action involved striking a horse, which is directly contrary to the guiding principle that Farriers are expected to

ensure that all horses under their care are treated humanely and with respect, It was fortuitous that the behaviour was captured on CCTV, since otherwise it would almost certainly never have come to light. The behaviour occurred in the presence of a more junior member of the profession and, whilst not Mr Lymer's apprentice, he ought nevertheless to have been setting a good example. To take no action would not send the clear message to members of the profession that such behaviour is not to be tolerated, nor would it satisfy the public interest.

5.15 The Committee did not consider any purpose would be served by postponing sanction.

5.16 The Committee next considered whether the case could be addressed by means of a reprimand and/or warning. The Council's sanctions guidance states:

*"Where the Disciplinary Committee is minded to issue a reprimand or warning as to future conduct, it will consider whether a reprimand or warning provides adequate protection to animals, the reputation of the profession and the wider public interest, bearing in mind that a reprimand or warning has no direct effect on the right to practise. A reprimand might be appropriate if the serious professional misconduct is at the lower end of the spectrum of gravity for such cases and, for example, there is no risk to animals or to the profession's reputation or to the wider public interest that requires registration to be restricted."*

5.17 The guidance goes on to say:

- *A reprimand or warning may be appropriate where:*
- *the misconduct is at the lower end of the spectrum of seriousness and;*
- *there is no future risk to animals or the public, and;*
- *there is evidence of insight.*

5.18 Although the misconduct in this case was undoubtedly serious, it had to be viewed in context and it was the context that meant the Committee could view this misconduct as not being at the higher end of the spectrum of seriousness. That is in no way to downplay or excuse the behaviour, but the Committee has to act proportionally, taking into account the context and extensive mitigation referred to above. This in no way excused Mr Lymer's behaviour and, importantly, he did not seek to excuse his behaviour, accepting that it was unacceptable.

5.19 However, Mr Lymer has demonstrated significant and genuine insight and remorse into his misconduct and the Committee was satisfied he would be unlikely to behave in this way in the future. He has given evidence about how he would act differently now, by stepping away, getting assistance and not resorting to violence. This demonstrated both insight and a commendable level of maturity. He had also been on an appropriate, targeted course and was able to say what action he would now take, and has taken, in similar situations. Many clients and witnesses speak very highly of Mr Lymer's professionalism, care and dedication as a Farrier and the absolute trust they place in him to care for their animals, notwithstanding the issues raised by this case. Everything said by the authors of the testimonials pointed toward this being very much out of character behaviour by Mr Lymer and the Committee was satisfied this was not a case where there were any deep-seated attitudinal problems.

5.20 In all these circumstances the Panel considered the public interest could be served by a reprimand. Such a sanction would send the clear message to the Profession and the public that this sort of behaviour is wholly unacceptable, not to be tolerated and must not be repeated.

5.21 However, before making a decision, the Committee first considered the next sanction, that of suspension. There was no doubting that the misconduct in this case is serious, as stated above; however, the Committee did consider a lesser sanction to be appropriate. In addition, the Committee has already found there to be significant evidence of insight. The Committee therefore concluded that a period of suspension would be unduly punitive in this case and thus disproportionate. It is fair to say,

however, that Mr Lymer came close to having his registration suspended and had it not been for the context, the extensive mitigation and most importantly his insight and remorse, that would most likely have been the outcome for a Farrier who had deliberately struck a horse.

- 5.22 The Committee thus decided that a reprimand is the appropriate and proportionate sanction in this matter. There was nothing else before the Committee to suggest that Mr Lymer was anything other than a very competent, hard-working Farrier. He behaved very badly on one day resulting in an appearance before his regulatory body, a finding of serious misconduct in a professional respect and a reprimand, thereby learning a salutary lesson. He has demonstrated remorse, shown good insight and the risk of repetition is low. In such circumstances the Committee considered it would be disproportionate to order a more severe sanction that would prevent Mr Lymer from working as a Farrier.
- 5.23 The Committee decided that because the risk of repetition was low, it was not necessary to include a warning in this case.
- 5.24 The Order of this Committee is, therefore, that Mr Lymer be reprimanded.
- 5.25 Mr Lymer should be in no doubt that any finding of serious misconduct in a professional respect by his regulatory body is a serious matter and he should not take this reprimand lightly. Members of the profession must be in no doubt that this kind of behaviour is completely unacceptable, whatever the circumstances.
- 5.26 That concludes this case.

## **Disciplinary Committee**

**17 March 2026**