

# EXMOOR PONY SOCIETY

## Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020 at The Moorland Hall, Wheddon Cross

### Present

David Brewer (Chairman – DB)  
Geoff Bryant (Vice-Chairman – GB)  
Toby Hickman (Vice Chairman – TH)  
Nigel Hill (Vice-Chairman – NH)  
Sue Baker (SB)  
Vicky Lamb (VL)  
Gill Langdon (GL)  
Jenna Payne (JP)  
Clare Phillips (CP)  
Robert Taylor (RT)  
David Wallace (DW)

Ann Nicholls (President)  
Sandra Mansell (Treasurer)  
Sue McGeever (Secretary)

David Brewer opened the meeting at 11am and asked Geoff Bryant to introduce Steve Lodge from The Sole Trader Organisation (Oxygen) who was going to speak to the Trustees on the value of PR.

There are 180,000 charities plus not for profit organisations who all use some form of PR/advertising/direct mail to promote their charitable aims, raise funds and increase membership, where applicable.

Research shows that the public see an advert and don't necessarily believe it. PR is more effective, more believable, more genuine and is considered 4 times better than advertising. It is spreading the message of what the EPS does compared to other organisations involved in Exmoor ponies and/or Native Breeds. Stakeholders involved in Exmoors have an interest i.e. members, farmers and ENPA etc.

PR can promote the breed, generate sales, gain extra support from supporters, sponsors, sell more merchandise and drive people to the website.

PR is creating good news stories and the upcoming centenary is one – it is all about talking about events and achievements, up and down the country and abroad like the breeding of Exmoor ponies in the Czech Republic. It is creating awareness being conscious of what to do is there is bad press and having strategies to combat anyone who might use PR to the detriment of the Society.

Having a celebrity ambassador/public figure to champion the Society could be a positive move as would becoming involved in campaigns – rural pursuits, sustainability, managing ponies, welfare, visitors coming to Exmoor etc. and then looking to enter awards that were compatible with the activities of the Society. Awards tended to generate massive publicity.

The Society could promote the differences between the role of the Society and for example the Exmoor Pony Centre / Moorland Mousie Trust.

The President could comment when there is news around horses or, indeed, a Trustee could comment about the Exmoor pony. The Society could seek collaboration/synergy with other local charities/breed societies to turn a small voice in big country into a larger voice by bringing voices together (Native Ponies GB).

Local newspapers, magazines and parish magazines were all possible outlets and there was increasing interest in articles that could be used online with good photography and or videos.

Country magazines/horse magazines all issued forward features whilst there were also horse and rural bloggers who were looking for stories.

It was important to make good use of all social media channels and the new website should include articles, blogs and news which should be human, engaging and with great photograph. Word of mouth was important – getting people to talk about you both face to face and on social media was important.

With so much to do, it is important to cherry pick what you want to do.

The Trustees raised the issue of time and costs and daily rates had been provided to GB for a day a month though in reality, they were likely to provide more time than allocated. There would be planning to do at the outset. For example a cutting service would cost £1200 but equally effective was putting an alert on twitter, google etc.

The daily rate was approximately £600 per day and the Society needed to see a return on that investment but it was difficult to judge – it could be more hits on website, money in coffers from membership, how much merchandise is sold, how often the phone rings or how often you appear in the local press.

Success is measured in terms of the service provided and customer satisfaction.

Articles are more cost effective than adverts for example.

NH felt the Society could not sit still and do nothing whilst DW asked if Sole Trader had any case history with equine charities.

Steve Lodge advised that the company knew horses and the equestrian sector/agricultural businesses whilst GB commented that he had only put forward companies that were not working with similar charities unless there was conflict of interest. The contract was on a month on month with one month's notice on either side. PR did not happen in a couple of months and the Society would need to get behind the initiative and be proactive.

GB commented PR in general is only good when the relationship is only good and when it is working for both sides. You needed to work at it consistently, creating news stories and having a close dialogue. Once a PR company understands a charity and its aims then they can suggest market opportunities – it is a team partnership.

DB thanked Steve Lodge for coming.

DB felt it was important for the Trustees to discuss the presentation before moving on to the agenda and asked for thoughts on appointing a PR company and the cost of £540 per day for one day a month. DB advised his own view was an initial six months contract and then monthly. The questions were could the Society afford it around £7000 for a year which was a lot of money but if it increased awareness, membership etc then it was worth a try.

NH was happy to go along with an initial six months and felt their input should be phenomenal. He felt they were very professional and should provide publicity and membership.

TH felt that now was best time to do it as if the Society did not get interest coming into the centenary year then it was never going to get interest.

DB felt the Society had articles that the Society could send and since they were going to be doing the website, they would gain an understanding of the EPS through that. He also commented that not everyone felt the same about the EPS's role and some people were against the Society and it was also in competition with other native breeds whilst GB felt it was necessary to fight fire with fire.

RT felt their connection to horses would be positive and asked how Oxygen compared with other companies.

GB advised he had identified two options from short list – Porcupine £800 per day for the initial six months and then £500 per day after six months. One advantage of Oxygen was that they ran the smaller firm Sole Trader specifically for small companies who were not VAT registered.

SB felt that the Society had to try it but not call a halt too quickly and that it would be necessary to back it up with fuelling them with information and she did not expect to see evidence of a result until well into second year.

After discussion, it was agreed that the lead up to and the centenary year itself was the best time to try such an activity and it was agreed the funding would come from special projects. GB felt there was already a good chemistry forming between the Society and Sole Trader and the work on the website would enhance this. The current website team was GB, JM, JP and the Secretary.

TH proposed and JP seconded the proposal that the lead contacts would be GB/Secretary who would be able to seek assistance from others. It was noted there would need to be regular monthly contact best done face to face and their offices were 12 minutes from the Secretary's home. This was agreed with one abstention from GB.

TH proposed and SB seconded proposal that the contract should be initially for one year and this was unanimously agreed.

GB would be tasked with setting up the contract.

**Action GB/Secretary**

DB then moved onto the agenda as written.

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Fiona Dickson (FD) and Jen McLaren (JM).

It was noted that Jen McLaren had missed four meetings and GB advised that she was considering her position as a Trustee due to work changes and the limited time she now had available and was very sensitive to having let the Society down.

It was agreed that GB would speak to JM in the first instance and depending on the outcome would decide if any further action was required.

**Action GB**

### **2. Declaration of Interest/Declaration of Loyalty/Confirmation of Confidentiality**

DB reminded all Trustees of their duty to respect the confidentiality of the meeting and only disseminate information where it had been agreed to do so – this was extremely important and should be adhered to.

### **3. Notification of Any Other Business on the agenda**

The Secretary advised that she did have a number of items to bring forward but would endeavour to fit these in to agenda items as relevant.

### **4. Approval of the Minutes**

The Secretary advised that a number of amendments had been requested to the minutes of the meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019 and these were duly read out. GB proposed and TH seconded the proposal that the minutes as amended be approved as a true record and this was agreed with 2 abstentions from those who had not been present at the previous meeting. The minutes were duly signed by DB.

### **5. Review of Action Log**

The Secretary apologised for the lateness of the action log and advised it would be circulated two weeks prior to the meeting in future. The various items would be discussed under the appropriate agenda item.

**Action Secretary**

## 6. Matters Arising

**Measuring Stick** - SB was very sad that the project could not be completed in Anne Le Bas's lifetime but circumstances had dictated that it was unlikely to have the case installed prior to Easter. It would be a good story for the PR firm.

**Microchip Readers** – RT advised that he had identified a microchip reader from Animal Guard at a cost of Euros 499 which reads at a distance of 20-25cm. It was possible to purchase a printer and this would come under the agreed budget which had already been approved. Provided that RT was happy once he had used the reader, it should be purchased and the invoice sent to the Treasurer.

**Action RT/Treasurer**

**Lucy Allen** – SB agreed to report on progress at the next meeting.

**Action SB**

**Calvert Trust** – The Trustees noted the Charity Commission guidelines on working with another charity and there would be the possibility to follow up on areas of co-operation on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at Mounsey given that a link between the Calvert Trust and the EPS would increase promotion of the breed and raise awareness of the Society.

It was noted that their now mainly adult clientele required access to a horse-drawn wagon of a size not necessarily compatible with an Exmoor pony.

**Action Secretary**

## 7. Annual General Meeting

It was noted that the committee were not putting forward any rule changes at the AGM.

It was further noted that any rule changes requested by members had to arrive at the Society's offices, 42 days before the meeting.

Andy Dell (SPARKS) had accepted the invitation to speak and SB confirmed that Debbie Davy was available and would speak at the AGM.

A lunch invitation would be extended to both.

**Action Secretary to send formal invitation to DD and luncheon invitations**

It was noted that the Society's Patron would not be able to attend on this occasion.

It was agreed that travel bursaries of £25 for those residing within 25 miles and £50 for those residing outside a 25 mile radius would be offered to all stallions and colts being paraded at the Stallion Parade.

The youngstock section would include all colts under the age of four that had not been put forward for stallion inspection.

**Action Secretary**

A call for Trustees and President Elect had been published in the Winter Newsletter and on the website and facebook page. There would be three Trustee places available unless JM made the decision to stand down when the number would increase to four.

It was noted that FD, DB and NH were standing down – all were eligible for re-election.

It was noted JP had been co-opted onto committee for a year and was eligible for re-election.

One nomination had been received to date and a further two/three were expected. All nominations had to be received by 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

Two nominations for President Elect had been received and a third was expected – applications were open until three days before meeting and were voted on at the meeting.

## **8. Secretary's Report**

**DEFRA** – The Society continues to uphold the Minimum Operating Standards. Information was included in the Winter Newsletter to remind owners of their responsibilities as equine owners.

Grassroots are involved in discussions with DEFRA on studbook and sister studbooks for ponies registered outside of Europe.

**Zootech legislation** – The situation is monitored should any changes be brought about as a result of Brexit.

**GDPR** – there have been no reported breaches of data but it is important to maintain good internet security and check unknown emails.

**Companies House** – the annual return was completed with the timescales.

**Membership forms and List of Charges** – these have been updated.

**Welcome Letter** – this has been updated to reflect area changes

**Winter Newsletter** – the newsletter went out just before Christmas.

**Scanning** - final preparations were underway for sending the inspection forms away for scanning. Once this is done, the next set of paperwork will be sent to Data Scan in South Molton.

**Promotion** – an advert was taken in the Exmoor Visitor and the ENPAs online calendar carries the stallion parade and AGM and the Breed Show.

**Insurance** - a book valuation was awaited from Friends. The insurance policy is up for renewal in April.

**Action GL as Chairman of Friends**

**Pony Map** – the Secretary reported that feedback had been slow and she had asked RT to speak to breeders during inspections. RT reported:

Bluegates – name and phone number

Ilkerton – name, address and email

Tippbarlake – name phone number and email

Greystonegate – name, address, phone and email

Withypoole – name, address, phone and email

Tawbitts – name, address and phone

Anchor – name, address, phone and email (new wording)

It was agreed that the Pony Map was a valuable asset and the budget to re-print it had been agreed. There would need to some changes to the wording and a sub-committee was established with a view to it being ready to print by the end of February. It should also be available in A5 format for inclusion in the Yearbook.

**Action JP/RT and Secretary**

## **9. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer presented her report to the Trustees and asked if there were any questions saying that the Society had once again made a loss on general activities and she hoped that the new website, PR and the centenary would raise membership and donations.

GB noted the solicitors fees and the Treasurer advised that 2/3<sup>rds</sup> was attributed to the PhD at Glasgow University and one 1/3<sup>rd</sup> was for general society business.

DB felt that with such a large sum was being allocated to Glasgow University, it had been appropriate to ensure that the contract was correct.

GB advised that he understand that all costs associated with the PhD were being allocated to Special Projects rather than to general funds and the Trustees agreed that the appropriate portion of solicitors fees should be assigned to Special Projects thereby reducing the deficit.

**Action Treasurer**

HBLB - RT asked if the Society would receive the grant in 2020 and the Treasurer was awaiting the results of the new funding procedure which involved DEFRA and the RBST but she felt the rarest breeds would be allocated funds.

GB advised that under the heading newsletters, income had exceeded expenditure. The cost of the colour winter newsletter had been met by himself. This year's Yearbook had not received the same support from members and the short deadline period may have attributed to this. It was agreed that a notice would be put on the website and social media extending the deadline.

**Action Secretary**

**Bank Accounts** – The Yorkshire Bank account was up and running but the Treasurer was not yet linked up on line.

Paypal had been established but the Society was awaiting confirmation that it had been set up under charitable status.

The Yorkshire Bank account was intended as an intermediary between PayPal and the Natwest account and online payments with the Natwest account being ring fenced for cheques etc.

It was noted Breed Show entries could be by cheque or PayPal/online payments.

**Trustees Expenses** – see discussion on Gift Aid.

**Gift Aid** – The Trustees noted the information provided on Gift Aid by the Secretary and GB then tabled a paper which simplified the Charity Commission's guidance.

GB noted that since becoming a Trustee in May, the subject of Gift Aid had been raised on a number of occasions particularly with regard to donations.

DB and the Treasurer confirmed their view that Gift Aid was not available on subscriptions but GB felt that there have been a number of changes to the rules over the years and he believed that the Society should be making use of Gift Aid.

Anyone who is paying tax in a given year can sign up to Gift Aid and any donation can be subject to the 25% payment by the government scheme meaning that a donation of £100 becomes £125.

In addition, Gift Aid can be claimed on any minor donation of less than £30 without the donor having to sign anything.

Gift Aid was an enduring document and the person would have to sign a form to notify the charity that they were no longer paying tax. That said most charities reminded donors of their Gift Aid form every 5 years.

GB advised he had taken verbal guidance from an accountant with respect to membership. Membership, if purely as a means of donating (i.e. a supporter who does not have any ponies) would be eligible for Gift Aid because the individual is not eligible for the benefits the Society offers to members because these benefits only relate to pony owners/breeders. If the Society attracted 100 supporters @ £10 each Gift Aid would add a further £250.

That said whilst all member categories are eligible for discounts on registrations etc, there are quite a lot of members who do not own ponies. Thus all subscription categories where the member does not have ponies would be eligible for Gift Aid and a partial claim could be made. Receiving a newsletter is not considered a benefit.

With respect to Trustees expenses, it is quite common for people to spend their own money and not claim expenses. However, within Gift Aid rules that can be treated as a donation. In essence, the charity pays the expenses to the Trustee and the Trustee donates it back to the Society thereby allowing the Charity to claim Gift Aid.

It is possible to claim retrospectively and the period is four years on subscriptions/donations and 2 years on minor donations of £30 or less.

GB put forward the following recommendations:

Register EPS for Gift Aid

Obtain a formal interpretation by an accountant of GB's paper on Gift Aid

Encourage all tax paying members to sign up to Gift Aid

Retired people have progressively changed and nowadays the majority of pensioners are paying tax, the stipulation being that they pay more tax than is being claimed on Gift Aid. Thus there could be a substantial amount to claim back.

DB asked the Trustees if they felt it worthwhile to obtain a formal interpretation from an accountant and this was agreed.

**Action GB**

TH proposed and NH seconded the proposal that the EPS registers for Gift Aid and this was unanimously agreed.

**Action GB following advice of accountant**

DB asked the Trustees if they felt it worthwhile to encourage members to sign up for Gift Aid and this was agreed. Gift Aid could be included on the membership application form and renewal form.

**Action Secretary following advice of accountant**

DW asked that if all goes ahead someone will be appointed to look at the retrospective claim and this was agreed.

**Action all**

It was noted that there was no retrospective claim on expenses and these would have to be shown in the accountants as being paid. NH commented that expenses had been paid for inspections.

DB confirmed that expenses could be claimed at the current HMRC rate (current mileage allowance 45p per mile).

TH asked if Trustees expenses was included on the nomination form and the Secretary replied in the affirmative as the Trustees had decided that this might encourage applications.

## **10. Show Affiliation Secretary's Report**

Show Affiliation documentation has been updated and posted on the website and facebook and 18 shows had affiliated to date.

The Secretary asked that the Breed Commentary which was sent out to shows with their rosettes by updated for this year and then adapted for centenary year. She would be writing to all shows to ask if there was some way the centenary could be celebrated in 2021.

**Action SB/Secretary**

JP proposed and RT seconded a vote of thanks to the Secretary for taking this additional role on.

All Area Reps have been contacted to either provide details of their own shows or nominate a show to act as the Area Show. They were all aware that CP was the person to contact for NPS affiliations and that FD was in charge of Gold, Silver and Bronze medals which would be sent out at the end of the year.

Affiliated shows accepting probationers were being notified to Jackie Wharton (judge training co-ordinator).

All judges had been contacted to confirm their details prior to publication on the EPS website and in NPS Judge's book.

The Trustees considered Yvonne Campbell's request that the Society assist with the cost of rosettes for Area Shows. After discussion, it was felt that this would not be appropriate use of Society funds and that shows should be self-sufficient. The Treasurer advised that she (Mrs Mansell) was taking over as Treasurer of the Somerset Area Show. It was felt that legacy funds should be directed towards future projects.

The request for 'Best Senior' rosettes was considered and JP proposed and NH seconded the proposal that there was no change in the rosettes offered and this was unanimously agreed.

DB felt that there should be a review of the cost of rosettes and the Secretary advised that normally shows did return unused rosettes or advised that they did not need rosettes when they affiliated. In agreement with the Chairman and Treasurer, the affiliation fee was waived for the 2020 Cumberland Show as they had not awarded their 2019 affiliation rosettes.

**Action Secretary**

The Secretary also advised that show schedules offered EPS rosettes to 'a member or someone who becomes a member' and there was no way of ensuring that in the latter case the recipient joined the Society although it would be possible to write to them following the show. The Trustees might like to consider this wording for future years.

**Action all**

### **11. Breed Show Secretary's Report**

CP confirmed that the judges were  
Michael Dewhurst – in-hand  
David Lee - geldings  
Harriet Dean – ridden  
Ann Nicholls – reserve

She advised that the £15 entry fee could not be changed, however, if people became a member of the show (£10 per person or £15 per family) then they received a car pass, members pass and access to the members enclosure.

Exford Show bears all of the cost and the EPS receives a donation after show.

It was noted that there was no entry charge for those competing and ultimately the EPS did get a significant amount out of the show and show needed to make money to be viable.

CP confirmed that the schedule almost ready.

The Secretary advised that Sue Burger was unable to judge Pony of the Year.

JP proposed and GB seconded the proposal that Emma Wallace be appointed as Pony of the Year judge and this was agreed with one abstention (DW).

GB proposed and DW seconded the proposal that Margaret Partridge-Keane be appointed as Mrs Wallace's reserve and this was unanimously agreed.

### **12. Project Report**

**PhD** - SB reported that all contract paperwork had been finalised and signed by Chairman. Debbie Davy would be submitting a report for the Yearbook and was establishing links with local schools in Scotland and would explore the possibility of establishing links with local schools on Exmoor.

CP asked if the study would prove Exmoors were best and SB advised that if you wanted to scientifically establish that Exmoors were best then the same PhD would have to be carried out all breeds.

**Genome Project** - DB expressed his concern with regard to the Genome Project and the lack of progress and reporting methods. It had started with great enthusiasm and ENPA, RBST and EPS had all put money into the project and there appeared to be little accountability. He wished to know if there was paperwork in place, who was holding the money, what was being held by Nottingham and had any of the money been spent.



The Treasurer advised that there had been very little progress as it looked as if sufficient DNA would never be obtained from the hair samples. Some money had been spent. Consideration had been given to blood samples but it was extremely difficult to get permission and the option of a blood prick was not viable. The Society needed to be very careful when considering blood samples. She advised that there was documentation from DEFRA to say that blood sampled could not be taken for the project and she was still trying to find the samples that were left over from the research done in Kentucky in 1980s. She advised that the RBST were happy to leave the project as it is and there was the possibility that advances in science would improve DNA extraction from hair samples.

NH asked if the project closed down would the EPS be refunded. The project had been trumpeted but was going nowhere and RT was concerned that some of the original mares had passed away.

SB felt that the EPS should ask for their funding back and then discuss the options with Debbie Davy.

DB felt the Society needed written confirmation of what the current situation is and the Treasurer undertook to write to Nottingham and confirmed that any costs to date would be divided between all participating parties.

**Action Treasurer**

### **13. Health & Safety Report/Safeguarding**

CP (Safeguarding Officer) and the Secretary reported that no safeguarding or health and safety incidents brought to the Society's attention.

Following the HOYS meeting, a renewed emphasis had been placed on safeguarding and bearing in mind the Society's Child Protection Policy forms dated back to 2006, it was considered prudent to resend them to all judges, inspectors, volunteers and trustees with the Winter Newsletter. The British Equestrian Federation's (BEF) online safeguarding toolkit had been highlighted in the letter accompany the forms as had CP's role as the Society's safeguarding officer.

VL had undertaken the BEF toolkit and provided her safeguarding certificate.

The BEF safeguarding policy was a 64 page document and would be taken into consideration when reviewing the Society's policy.

GB felt that the generic Health & Safety leaflets were not applicable to the EPS and ongoing research to find an equine version has not resulted in a publication being purchased. The British Riding Club handbook provided comprehensive Health & Safety guidelines and Area Reps have been notified accordingly. It was agreed that the EPS should produce a Health & Safety leaflet specific to the Society.

**Action Secretary**

### **14. Area Report**

The database had been updated to reflect postcodes and all area reps have received their new membership lists. The Secretary had also written to them regarding area shows and the centenary celebrations. Further correspondence regarding Friends merchandise would be sent.

**Action Secretary**

GB noted that JM had intended to liaise with Area Reps but for the last 6 months or more, the Secretary had taken on the role. It felt this should be borne in mind when the new trustees were appointed as one might be interested in taking on responsibility for Area Reps.

**Action Trustees**

### **15. Inspections/Inspector's Meeting**

The majority of inspections had taken place but there were some late notifications which would require spring inspections and RT advised that he believed there was a foal on Countisbury.

**Action Secretary**

MMT had taken on a number of foals from Yorkshire.

NH and AN were appointed to carry out the inspection for Mrs Dawn Westcott and it was noted that with the approval of the management committee, the late notification fee had been waived.

A colt inspection was required near Taunton and AN suggested Pam Cox and Jackie Webb.

**Colt inspection form** – Stephanie Poulter, Gill Langdon and Sue Burger had revised the form taking into account comments received.

DB felt the new style form was easier to use than previous form and the amendments were in line with the comments received.

AN had used both on free-living and in-ground colts and using the long one was very difficult in a free-living situation and she felt the shorter form worked well.

After discussion, it was agreed that judges looked at the colt in its entirety and that there was nothing wrong in a colt being 'typical' and the current wording required the colt to be good in every section.

RT proposed and JP seconded the proposal that the column:  
Good would be replaced by Good/Typical  
Average/Typical would be deleted and  
Below Average would be replaced by Below Standard  
This was unanimously agreed.

**Inspector's Meeting** – A letter was sent to all inspectors seeking responses – six written and one oral response had been received and these had been forwarded to the Chairman who confirmed he had also received one verbal response.

Of the 41 listed inspectors, responses had been received from eight and the question of making the meetings mandatory had been raised as this was very unusual for unpaid volunteers and this would need to be considered very carefully. The Society would need to look at other ways of ensuring that inspections were consistent. That said, all inspections were subjective and you would not get every single person to agree. There would always be cases of disagreement which is why two inspectors are sent and there is the option to take re-inspect.

DB undertook to call all the inspectors and felt it should be more of an informal gathering.

**Action DB**

The Secretary suggested that in the first instance the Society looked to invite all inspectors based in and around Exmoor to an informal meeting. This would provide a good sounding block and they in turn would be able to speak to other inspectors at shows and events and thus gain a good overall view of inspector's thoughts and ideas. DB felt this would be a good starting point and undertook to arrange the meeting. GL advised she was happy to host such a meeting.

**Action DB, GL and Secretary**

**Inspector's Panel** - Miss Gill Evans and Mrs Partridge-Keane had accepted their respective appointments to the inspector's panel and confirmation was awaited from Sandy Walgenbach.

The Secretary advised that she also used Mrs Mandy Hill as an inspector and felt that perhaps as another senior judge, she should be invited to join the inspector's panel and this was agreed.

**Action Secretary**

**Email from Fiona Dickson** – The Trustees considered both the short and longer emails received from Fiona Dickson and discussed whether any changes were required to the DNA process to increase efficiency.

The Treasurer advised that this was the first time a set of results had gone missing and re-iterated the amount of work that AHT carried out with respect to DNA parentage testing and finding rather than checking DNA samples. She had found elements of the email upsetting and recommended that she look at procedures and come back if any changes were required.

NH was concerned about the processes and questioned why the Secretary had to send the samples to the Treasurer who then sent them to AHT and felt the Secretary sending them direct to AHT would be both time and cost effective.

The Secretary advised that she received the samples, completed the DNA bags, added the DNA lab numbers, scanned the bag and then electronically filed it under the individual pony record before sending it to the Treasurer.

DB asked how the results came back to the Society and the Treasurer advised that they were posted to her and then she normally put the results into a spreadsheet and sent them to the Secretary who entered them onto the database and issued the passports.

The Trustees considered that there was some duplication of effort on behalf of the Treasurer and Secretary but the Treasurer felt it was important that the current methodology continued because of the special relationship she had with AHT and the work she did in sorting out problems and the Trustees had to find someone else to fulfil the role.

NH noted that when GB and himself had visited the Treasurer she had indicated that she was looking to retire in May 2021 and, therefore, there was a need to start looking to re-allocate the Treasurer's current roles and this could not be done at the last minute.

The Treasurer felt the first role to be handed over should be the accounts especially if it was the Society's intention to use the accounts package on Grassroots.

GB felt that the DNA was such an important part of the Society's work that he agreed with NH and believed that the handover of this role should begin so that whoever took over the role would have a full year of shadowing with Sandra which would be invaluable especially given the Treasurer's views that it was not straightforward.

DB felt that to take the matter forward, the Secretary should send the DNA samples directly to AHT as all the paperwork from inspections came to the office. He felt this could make a possible saving of £100.

NH proposed and RT seconded the proposal that the Secretary send the samples direct to AHT and this was agreed with one abstention (SB).

**Action Secretary**

GB felt DB's reasoning was good but also felt that to kick start the transition the Treasurer and Secretary should make a joint visit to AHT. The Treasurer advised the AHT did not like individuals visiting their premises.

The Secretary suggested that the Trustees set up a working group to assess the current systems and look at crossovers in workload. Her attendance at moorland inspections had meant that all inspection paperwork arrived back in the office on the day of inspection whereas when it was posted there was an inevitable delay.

DB agreed that this would enable the Trustees to look at strategies and GB and JP agreed with this approach.

GB proposed and JP seconded the proposal that a sub-committee be set up to look at the working process and any overlaps of duties and this was unanimously agreed.

GB/DW and SB put themselves forward for the committee and DB noted that as Chairman he was required to sit on all sub-committees.

GL proposed and NH seconded the sub-committee should consist of DB/GB/DW and SB and this was agreed with one abstention (CP).

**Action DB/GB/DW and SB**

## **16. Yearbook**

GB advised that only about 5% of the requested content had been received on the designated dates and together with the Secretary he was chasing information and this had proved frustrating for the editor, Sandy Wooderson.

As previously reported under finance, the Yearbook was short of member adverts and a short extension would be given.

**Action GB/Secretary**

## **17. Website/Facebook**

GB and Secretary had met with Oxygen on 23<sup>rd</sup> January to discuss the website and the basis of a website has been agreed. Before the meeting the Secretary and GB had discussed the format/structure and produced a basic site map. A review of all current information both existing page content and forms was required taking into account that generally speaking people read the first 30 words.

In the period between the December meeting and this meeting, it had not been possible to spend as much time as the sub-committee would have liked on moving the project forward and, therefore, the decision had been made to extend the existing website contract for three months.

Attention would have to be paid to the renewal of domain names.

**Action website sub-committee GB/JM/JP and Secretary**

The Secretary advised that the facebook pages continued to be updated by the team and that FD would need to be replaced with respect to the Pony of the Year page.

**Action Secretary**

The Secretary then circulated an email from Tricia Gibson regarding Friends website and photography.

The Secretary explained that historically the Friends website had always been linked to the EPS website. When she first became secretary the website had been produced/run by Kevin Andreoli and when he gave up, the EPS had commissioned and paid for Biziserve to produce both the EPS and Friends websites. The EPS were billed for the hosting of both sites.

The Trustees had then made the decision to have a new EPS website and the negotiated contract had included Friends website as it was logical both were hosted by the same provider. The current commercial side of the website used Magento and this, under Oxygen, would change to Wordpress.

Oxygen had commented on photographs on Friends website and had felt that the items for sale could be styled differently to increase visual appeal.

GB had requested the Secretary to speak to Carol Bigge who held the Friends stock to see if it would be possible to re-photograph the ongoing items bearing in mind that some items of stock were coming to the end of the life and would not be replaced. Discussion had also taken place on featuring a calendar for events Friends would be attending.

GB advised that he had been a Trustee since May and had understood that one company hosted two websites and he had taken it as read that he was going to get quotes for both websites both with working shops – one for EPS and one for Friends. Every designer he had spoken to said you need to re-do photographs and built that in to the quote. GB expressed his sorry and apologised for any misunderstanding and Friends had access to two very good photographers. The subject of photographing items had been raised at December meeting.

It was agreed that there was miscommunication between the Trustees and Friends and that there was never any intention to cause distress or upset and the role of volunteers was extremely important and much appreciated. Friends would be able to update their own website and training would be given on Wordpress if required.

DB felt it was an unfortunate situation and re-iterated how much the Society relied on people giving their time and felt that a little more consideration given to them.

The Treasurer advised that like GL, she was a director of Friends.

DB commented that in the area of relationships between Society and Friends, it was up to everyone to work a little harder on both sides. Friends contributed an average of £3000 a year to the Society and all raised by voluntary effort.

DW said that he hoped that the two Chairmen would be able smooth feathers and find a way forward as all parties in their various different ways were doing their best.

### **18. Exmoor Pony Festival Trust**

RT advised that the schedule as reported in the Winter Newsletter was going ahead as planned.

The Beetle Drive would take place on 5<sup>th</sup> May but unfortunately the family fun day would not take place due to lack of free weekends with the busy show schedule which had resulted in a lack of support in 2019.

He advised that the festival had held an AGM and it had been agreed that all the current Trustees would step down.

The new Trustees were:

Linzi Green (Chairman/MMT Officer)  
Kirsty Gatland (Secretary/MMT Officer)  
Tricia Gibson  
Sarah Taylor  
Gill Langdon (EPS Trustee)

RT advised that without regular accounts, the festival could not apply for match funding from ENPA and asked that the EPS approve a fund of £500 that the festival could call upon if needed.

RT proposed and GL seconded the proposal that the EPS make £500 available to the Festival and this was unanimously agreed.

JP understood that the reason it appears on the EPS agenda was the events were run under the EPS insurance and RT confirmed this was the case and that events run under MMT were covered by their insurance. JP felt that this left the EPS exposed.

CP asked why the EPS had been asked for money and RT advised that the festival used MMT's room for the quiz night and Thursday evening talk.

RT advised that the Festival did not have any accounts.

The Secretary advised that Evie Hickman had been the Treasurer and all the paperwork from previous years together with bank statements had been handed over to Linzi Green in September. Evie Hickman had closed the Festival bank account because it was linked to her own account and placed the money into the Secretary's (Sue McGeever) private bank account – it was a sum of approximately £980 – at the time the Secretary had been a Trustee of the Exmoor Pony Festival Trust and had understood that Trustees would not seek re-election. The Secretary had understood that the Festival was going to open its own account but to date this had not happened. She felt it should be possible to produce accounts for the previous what must be four years since the Exmoor Pony Festival Trust was established in 2016.

TH advised that Evie Hickman and he had put a fairly substantial amount into the Festival when it had been first set up but that no match funding had been received from ENPA.

DB felt that further discussion was not for this meeting as some Trustees understood the management of the Festival and others did not.

RT advised that the next meeting was going to take place on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30pm and a wider committee could be present. He invited all Trustees to attend.

## 19. EPS Centenary Events

The sub-committee of SB/JP and the Secretary had met before the Trustees meeting to discuss the logo and calendar of events and a Centenary Newsletter would be produced for inclusion with the Spring Newsletter.

**Exmoor Review 2021** – Sue Burger had agreed to write the article and would with liaise with SB. Devon Life had also agreed to publish an article on the EPS during the centenary year and the Livestock Conservancy in America would run a feature of their website. Further magazines/potential outlets were being contacted.

**Update Handbook** – SB/Secretary to look into cost of updating.

**Centenary studbook** - this would cover the 20 year period from the last published studbook and it was difficult to provide costings until the pages had been put together and a final decision made on what additional information to include such as Breed Show Champions/Best of Breed at HOY/Olympia etc. There had been considerable interest and was, therefore, a project to be completed. Publication would be 2021.

**Centenary logo** – SB advised that there had been a disappointing response of only 3 designs. After consideration, it was decided to combine two designs to create the centenary logo. SB had out designs commenting that it might be necessary to create two versions one for the Exmoor Pony Society and one for the general public. Further work was required and it was important that the logo was easy to reproduce on merchandise items.

JP advised that the centenary programme was pretty well finalised with something happening every month.

DB confirmed that a budget of £2000 had been set aside for the sub-committee to use with regard to any work required on the logo, promotion etc.

## Item 20 - Future Strategy

**Professional fund raising** – DW advised that he must try harder and had not really progressed this action item. The Secretary felt that if the Society was going to have a more professional approach to fundraising then it should join a professional body such as the Institute of Fundraising or the Fundraising Regulator which would give donators confidence that the Society was acting in accordance with all the regulations.

**Action: DW/Secretary**

**Relationship with ENPA** – DW reported that the date for the ‘social gathering’ had been set for 20<sup>th</sup> February with a further event on 9<sup>th</sup> April. Guests would include the ENPA, MPs, councillors, the National Trust, English Nature, Devon Wildlife etc. It was hoped that these gatherings would improve relationships and identify areas of co-operation and ways to promote the ponies.

A number of Trustees would be present at the first gathering DB/DW/RT/GB/NH and TH with invitations also extended to the Treasurer and Secretary – wives and partners would be welcome. It would start at 6.30pm and last for approximately two hours.

GB suggested that Steve Lodge and his wife be invited as the official PR company of the EPS.

It was noted that the Society had offered to fund the event but DW had very kindly undertaken to meet the costs of hosting the event and DB requested that the Society’s thanks be minuted.

GB suggested that it might be an ideal time to hand over the Treasurer’s ENPA role to two Trustees and proposed NH and RT to represent Society on ENPA matters believing that it would be nice to introduce them at the gathering as it was extremely important build a relationship with ENPA. The Treasurer advised that the appointment of representatives lay with the ENPA and not with the Society – it was a decision for the ENPA.

**Patron** – a letter had been sent to Baroness Mallalieu inviting her to the AGM (unable to attend) and the Breed Show. With regard to the latter she would be in attendance but picnicking with her guests. She had however asked if the Society hosted a drink’s party at the event.

The matter was considered by the Trustees who felt that everyone already had a great deal to do on the day. However, it might be worth consideration in 2021.

It was hoped the Baroness would be able to attend the 2021 AGM.

**Leaflet distribution** – The Secretary had provided details of leaflet distribution on motorway services and in supermarkets. The cost was £26.50 per 1000 copies. The Trustees held felt that this could be something worth pursuing but in order to take it forward a budget would need to be agreed.

Following discussion it was agreed that a leaflet would be designed for distribution at venues in Minehead, Barnstaple and Tiverton and that 1000 leaflets would be produced for each outlet making a total of 6000 copies during July and August.

**Action GB/JP and Secretary**

Leaflets would continue to be distributed to Information Centres around Exmoor.

**Action Secretary**

**Supermarket fundraising** – The possibility of fundraising within supermarkets would be pursued.

**Action Secretary**

**Part-time/full-time role of Secretary** – bring forward to June meeting.

## **21. Review of Charity Policy Documents/Company Policy Documents**

A sub-committee of DB/Sue Burger and the Secretary was set up to review the Charity Policy Documents and Company Policy Documents and Showing Guidelines to include all items raised at the HOYS meeting.

The documents would be circulated prior to the June meeting so that finalised policies could be brought to the June meeting for adoption.

**Action DB/Sue Burger and Secretary**

## 22. Any Other Business

**Performance Awards** – Bring sponsorship of rosettes forward to June meeting.

**Young Judge of the Year** – TH undertook to speak to Mrs April Westcott regarding this valuable competition.

**Christmas Foal Show** – TH advised that the 2020 Foal Show would take place on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2020. A letter would be sent to this effect to the Exmoor Pony Festival Trust. A minimum of 35 entries was needed to break even and the current bio-security guidelines did affect entries bearing in mind that ponies kept out on the moor were not normally flu vaccinated. JP advised that the Showing Council, BEVA and others had issued their 2020 recommendations and the previous six month rule had now been relaxed to the standard 12 months for flu vaccination.

TH explained the history of the show and how Evie Hickman and he had taken over the show which was affiliated to the EPS but was independently run.

TH advised that they had looked for venues where flu vaccines might not be required in order to assist moorland but had found that anyone with an indoor school was going to insist of flu vaccinations.

GB commented that it would be helpful if the schedules were out earlier.

**Action TH/Secretary**

## **Marion William Bursary applications**

Applications had been received from Kitty French and Lowenna Payne both of whom had received the Marion Williams Bursary rosette at qualifying shows and thus were eligible to send in a letter requesting they be considered for the Bursary. It was noted that the fund currently sat at £6719. Before discussions began, JP declared an interest and left the room.

After careful consideration, the following proposals were made:

NH proposed and TH seconded the proposal that Lowenna Payne be awarded £125 to cover a series of working hunter pony lessons on her Exmoor pony.

SB proposed and RT seconded the proposal that Kitty French be awarded £250 to cover a series of lessons required to assist her in achieving equestrian qualifications. It was noted that Kitty frequently competed on her Exmoor pony.

The Secretary asked if the Society would once again provide Marion William Bursary sashes and this was agreed and the purchase would be made via Rosettes Direct who held the artwork. Recipients would be asked to provide photographs for either the Yearbook or summer newsletter.

**Action Treasurer/Secretary**

**National Equine Forum** – The Treasurer was attending on behalf of the Society.

**HOYS meeting** – Mrs Amanda Hill had attended the meeting on behalf of the Society and a number of points were raised.

1. Disciplinary Procedure – these are given in the EPS policy documents.
2. Health and safety - see previous policy discussion.
3. Dope testing – see previous policy discussion
4. Judges on multiple judging panels – it was noted that if a judge was removed from one panel then they should automatically be removed from all other panels.
5. General society rules – the Trustees should look at introducing a rule to deal with grooms/family members behaving badly/aggressively towards other members.  
It was noted that HOYS would be circulating new wording regarding adverse comments on social media.
6. Advice to Breed Societies
  - a. Litigation insurance needed if not already in place – Secretary to check current policy
  - b. Child safeguarding policies need to be looked at regularly in order to keep them up to date – see previous policy discussion
  - c. The BEF (British Equestrian Federation) online equestrian child safeguarding – see previous policy discussion.

**Action all (as required)**

**Email from Susannah Muir** – the offer of a saddle pad for an Exmoor competing at the National dressage competition was accepted.

A letter of thanks would be sent for both the financial contribution (to go into the general account) and the saddle pad.

**Email from Jackie Wharton regarding Family Membership** - GB advised that some other breed societies offer a family membership equivalent to two full members with children under 16 being free. Should this be dropped to under 14 as per showing rules?

Given the late hour, it was agreed to have a fuller discussion at the next meeting.

**Judge's Assessment** – The Secretary confirmed that there would be a judge's assessment in 2020.

#### **Next Meetings**

The next meeting will take place at the AGM with subsequent meetings being set at that meeting. VL advised she would be away for much of the month of June.

DB closed the meeting at 6pm.



# EXMOOR PONY SOCIETY

## Report of the Committee Meeting held on Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020 at The Moorland Hall, Wheddon Cross

Present: David Brewer, Geoff Bryant, Toby Hickman, Nigel Hill, Sue Baker, Vicky Lamb, Gill Langdon, Jenna Payne, Clare Phillips, Robert Taylor and David Wallace

Also in attendance: Ann Nicholls (President), Sandra Mansell (Treasurer) and Sue McGeever (Secretary)

David Brewer opened the meeting at 11am.

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Fiona Dickson (FD) and Jen McLaren (JM).

### **2. Declaration of Interest/Declaration of Loyalty/Confirmation of Confidentiality**

DB reminded all Trustees of their duty to respect the confidentiality of the meeting and only disseminate information where it had been agreed to do so – this was extremely important and should be adhered to.

### **The following items were discussed:**

The Minutes of the meeting on 2 December 2019 were approved as an accurate reflection of the discussions and were duly signed by Mr Brewer.

The Society continued to comply with the Minimum Operating Procedures for Passport Issuing Offices and the requirement to upload data to the Central Equine Database as well as monitoring EU and DEFRA as well as complete all the necessary paperwork required if the UK became a third party country.

The Society continued to review its practices to ensure compliance with GDPR, DBS, Company Law and Charity Law and the annual review of policy documents was underway.

Working practices and inspections would be reviewed over the coming year and a replacement for the position of Treasurer and Project Officer was actively being sought to enable a smooth handover.

The Society continued to promote the Exmoor pony through articles and advertisements in local and national media and through the website and facebook pages and work was well under way on the Yearbook.

Society and joint initiatives such as the Genome Project, PhD at the University of Glasgow and the Exmoor Pony Festival continued to be progressed as well as the Centenary Celebrations.

It was noted that the Trustees would not be putting forward any proposals to the AGM.