

## EXMOOR PONY SOCIETY

### Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019 at the RBST Offices, Stoneleigh

Present:

Mr D Brewer (Chairman - DB), Mr G Bryant (Vice-Chairman - GB), Mr N Hill (Vice-Chairman - NH), Dr S Baker (SB), Mrs F Dickson (FD), Mrs V Lamb (VL), Mrs G Langdon (GL), Mrs C Phillips (CP), and Mr D Wallace (DW).

Mrs A Nicholls (President), Mrs S Mansell (Treasurer) and Mrs S McGeever (Secretary) were also in attendance.

The meeting commenced at 11.00am with Mr David Brewer in the Chair. DB thanked everyone for attending and given the large agenda asked everyone to keep to the business of the day.

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Mr T Hickman (TH), Mrs J McLaren (JM), Mrs J Payne (JP) and Mr R Taylor (RT)

#### **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**

DB and SM advised that they items to bring up under Any Other Business that were not listed on the agenda.

#### **4. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

GB proposed and FD seconded the proposal that the minutes of the meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> September be approved and this was agreed with 2 abstentions from those who were not present at the previous meeting. The minutes were duly signed by DB.

#### **5. Review of the action log**

As requested by the Trustees, the Secretary had updated the Action Log and this now formed the majority of her report to the Trustees giving individual tasks and actions taken/required. Where an item had been completed, the Action Log item had been closed. The majority of Secretarial items covered the day to day running of the office both for the Society and as a Passport Issuing Office.

DW requested that the Action Log be coloured coded:

Black – indicating closed at the previous meeting (to be removed before the following meeting)

Green –indicating ongoing

Yellow – indicating needs action

Red – indication should have been actioned

It was further decided that the Action Log would refer to actions required by the Trustees either singularly, as a group or in conjunction with the Secretary/Treasurer. Actions performed or ongoing by the Secretary/Treasurer would form part of their reports.

#### **6. Matters Arising (*Major items have been given their own agenda item.*)**

**Measuring Stick** - SB advised that the case, paperwork, insurance, locks etc were in place and that Secretary and herself would hold a key. It had not been possible to put 'property of the EPS' directly onto the stick. The measuring stick would be put into The Lion post-Christmas and a press release issued.

**Action SB**

**Microchip Readers** – In the absence of RT a further update was not possible. DB advised that he had acquired a new German reader and would provide RT with the details.

**Action RT to proceed with purchase**

**Lucy Allen** – the Secretary had provided SB with the information required and SB would follow up.

**Action SB**

**Professional fund raising** – DW advised that this was an ongoing project.

**Action DW/Secretary**

**Relationship with ENPA** – DW advised that he would write to the Patron asking for dates when she would be able to attend a ‘social gathering’ of EPS interested parties regarding the ongoing work of the EPS.

**Action DW**

**Exmoor Review 2021** – it had been agreed with the Editor that the EPS could submit 1000 words plus photos to celebrate the centenary. A further 25 word would be need for the contributor’s biographies section. It was agreed that Sue Burger would be approached to write a brief synopsis of 100 years of Guardianship - past, present and future – with the focus on the future. SB would have photographs that would show Exmoor ponies over the years.

**Action Secretary**

**Handbook** – The handbook had proved very popular and it was suggested that a Centenary edition could be brought - 100 years of Exmoor ponies – it was felt that much of the original copy may be available and could be updated.

**Action Secretary/SB**

**Leaflet distribution** – The Secretary had provided details of leaflet distribution on motorway services and in supermarkets. The cost was £26.50 per 1000 copies. FD felt that 1000 copies was not very many but the Secretary advised the amounts could go up in 1000s.

DB felt that people did go through the leaflets in the racks and would pick them up if interested and he felt that money could be spent on promotion. Advertising in horsey magazines was preaching to the converted what the Society needed was to get to people who are interested in Exmoor rather than just ponies.

CP asked if the EPS VAT registered and the Treasurer replied no whilst GB advised that certain transactions were VAT exempt. The Secretary advised that as long as the charity number was on an advertisement for example, the providing company could issue a VAT exempt invoice.

GB felt that in so far as leaflets in supermarkets was concerned, it could be fruitful and felt the Society should put its toe in the water on a modest scale effort for 2020.

**Action Secretary**

VL also thought the Society should be setting in motion the possibility of running Centenary articles in such magazines as Countrylife and Field.

**Action Secretary**

SB questioned how to monitor how effective the distribution had been and GB suggested a QR code with a link to an exclusive page on the website where people could indicate where they had heard about the EPS.

SB felt it would be helpful to look at a PR professional who could create a plan and identify target audiences.

**Action GB/Secretary**

VL felt certain local supermarkets may allow leaflets without charge.

The Secretary advised that some supermarkets had coins where customers voted for different charities and this might also be worth an approach.

**Action Secretary**

**GDPR** – it was agreed that lapsed members in any given year could be sent out to the area representatives. The Secretary advised that she would updating the database to move the areas across the postcodes as opposed to counties and the lists could be sent out after these changes had been made.

**Action Secretary**

**Membership forms** – it was agreed the Secretary would update the membership forms to reflect the new fees.

**Action Secretary**

NH asked that where an inspection took place for a non- member then a membership form should be included.

**June 2018 minutes** – as requested by the committee, the paragraph had been added and sent to Chairman for signature.

**Colt inspection form** – Secretary to ask Sue Burger and Stephanie Poulter on their thoughts about the new form for the February meeting.

**Action Secretary**

**Patron** – a letter had been sent to Baroness Mallalieu inviting her to the AGM and Breed Show.

**Action Secretary**

## **7. Secretary's Report**

The Secretary asked the Trustees to review the general administrative items listed in the Action Log pertaining to

DEFRA Minimum Operating Procedures and legislation

Zootech Legislation

Central Equine Database

GDPR

Charity Commission and

Companies House

and advised that the Society continued to fulfil its obligations in these areas.

With regard to GDPR work was ongoing to ensure that all necessary individuals had signed the GDPR agreement.

Information in the Action Log pertaining to administration, bursaries, archiving, insurance, Grassroots and training would be carried into the Secretary's report for future meetings.

**Promotion** – Sue Burger had submitted an article to Native Pony and the Secretary was contacting the ENPA with regard to the Exmoor Visitor and the online calendar. GB felt it was important that the Breed Show was shown in a clear way.

The Secretary advised that there was the potential to advertise in the Exmoor Visitor at a cost of £120.00.

FD proposed and GB seconded taking advertising and this was unanimously agreed.

**Action Secretary**

DB/NH both felt that the Society needed to make the most of the centenary and contact magazines such as

Somerset Life/Devon Life/Best of Britain/Ark etc. The Secretary agreed it was important to get the EPS out in the public domain.

**Action Secretary**

**Newsletter** – it was agreed that the call for volunteers and in particular the role of Treasurer and PR officer should be included.

**Action Secretary**

**Compliance** – It was noted that RT had undertaken the questionnaire regarding new Guidance for Charities. GB felt the only area for improvement was that it was hard to differentiate between Friends and the EPS and this needed more thought and separate tents at the Breed Show. It was noted that Friends normally have their own gazebo but the weather had made this impossible.

SB advised that Friends used to have a sign that spelt out Friends was the trading arm of EPS.

NH felt that confusion over who is who did exist.

**Action Trustees**

The Treasurer advised that Friends only wanted to have the books in store insured as they could not produce inventory. The Secretary requested a valuation of the books.

**Action Treasurer**

**Calvert Trust** - SB felt that the Society should check with charity commission if they could give a pony. DB felt that there was a directive regarding working with other charities.

The Secretary advised that in the past the Society had provided free transfers to MMT, reduced rate passports for RSPCA, Blue Cross etc.

DB suggested that the Secretary write to solicitor in general terms but NH/FD felt the request should go to the charity commission.

**Action Secretary**

## **8. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer had circulated her report and the figures for third quarter and asked if there were any questions.

DW was very concerned that the Treasurer was unable to allocate some of the income correctly. The Treasurer explained that payments came in without any name or reference. The Secretary advised that she did always request that online payments were referenced and many people sent an email notice which was forwarded to the Treasurer. In addition, the Treasurer always sent a list and the Secretary found she was able to answer most questions.

The Secretary had provided a membership figure of 543 and the Treasurer advised that of that figure the breakdown was

105 Life (no annual payment)

206 paid by standing orders

62 paying direct into the bank

169 paying through the office

FD asked what the difference was between lapsed (37) and resigned (7). The Secretary advised that lapsed meant a member had not paid in that year whereas resigned meant that they had advised they Secretary the no longer wished to be a member.

It was noted that in 2004 the membership had been 700 and there had been a general decline in membership numbers across the native pony breeds. DB felt the Society needed to use the centenary regain members.

The Treasurer believed those paying by standing order would not look to set up direct debit payments.

The Treasurer advised that membership standing orders under £20 were now allocated to donations and standing order of £25 were given associate membership.

GB advised he was chasing up newsletter revenue and believed this would all be paid by the end of the year.

**Action GB**

The Treasurer advised that Grassroots were changing their accounting package to Zero and the Secretary confirmed this and had learnt at the recent meeting that they were in the process of changing software and in future Grassroots would be held in the cloud making online entries etc easier.

The Secretary raised the issue of paying standard bills like Neopost through direct debit and the Treasurer did not feel this was feasible.

Mrs Dawn Westcott had asked if she can pay member's fee for her passports. The Treasurer advised that she had gone to DEFRA and their view producing passport does not cost more for a non-member and that any fee structure had to avoid discrimination.

SB asked if the Society had two rates. The Secretary responded that in line with many other Breed Societies, there is one fee and then a discount was offered to members.

As she was not a member, DB believed she was not entitled to the discount.

At the request of FD, the Secretary provided the actual costs:

Split fees  
£10 inspection  
£40 passport  
£60 DNA parentage testing  
Discounted to  
£5  
£20  
£30  
For members

It was proposed by FD, seconded by NH and unanimously agreed that Mrs Westcott, as a non-member, was not entitled to the member's discount.

The Treasurer advised that the cost of DNA parentage has increased again this year as more in-ground mares were DNA'd to parentage test foals. The EPS paid for mares through the special projects fund.

The Secretary advised that there were advances in the Grassroots systems that could potentially assist when DNA results did not match the sire and dam given as the Treasurer spent time correcting DNA. It would require co-operation from the laboratories and understood that had not been forthcoming in the past.

The Treasurer advised that the HBLB application had been sent off and news was awaited regarding grants for 2020.

GB advised that the Yorkshire Bank account had been set up and he was now setting up online banking and alongside that Paypal. He had spoken to Grassroots and taken their experience as to payment methods they use for their breeds and they had found Smart Debit to be the best.

GB advised that going directly through the bank meant you needed to apply for a SUM whereas if you use a company like Smart Debit they do it for you and it is cheaper. The fees were as follows:

Smart Debit  
DD transaction fee 33p per month  
Monthly subscription £33.35  
Add new users £5 per submission irrespective of the number of people being added  
File submit for DD is £5

DB asked for comparative figures of using the bank to be put forward to the next meeting.

**Action GB**

FD questioned whether DD was needed once there was a pay pal option.

The Secretary questioned the current fee structure with the proposed discount for DD payments when DD was not in place. She felt that the increased fees should be published and discounts for DD payments offered at a later date if that route was taken.

DB advised that he would go along with the Secretary and proposed that the new fees be published without a discount option and this was seconded by FD and unanimously agreed.

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

Given that no-one had come forward to take the position of Show Affiliation Secretary and Show Affiliation requests were being received, it was agreed that the Secretary would take on the role for 2020.

The Secretary asked if the fee structure would remain the same:

General affiliation - £10 to include 2 rosettes

POTY - £15 to include POTY rosettes

Additional rosettes could be purchased at £2.50 per rosette.

The Trustees confirmed status quo would prevail for 2020.

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

CP advised that the decision had been taken that lunch would not be before 12.30 and when championships had concluded in both rings.

CP advised that Lisa Clarke could not judge and the Trustees undertook to make suggestions directly to Clare. FD suggested Jill Graham.

**Action Trustees**

The cost of entry to showground was expensive and she asked permission to ask the show committee if the rate could be reduced to £8 if an EPS sticker was on display.

It was agreed that CP should ask the committee for a reduced rate for members and, if agreed, NH suggested that a sticker go out to every member with Spring Newsletter. The Secretary advised that a downloadable sticker had been used for Festival goers and this might be easier than including a sticker in the Newsletter. However, the people on the gate needed to know that stickers to obtain a discount were being issued.

CP understood that some people wanted a stand- alone show but being attached to Exford Show meant the Society did not pay insurance, medical cover, lunches, toilets etc. It also meant that non Exmoor pony people came to the rings. Exford Show were keen for Exmoor ponies to compete in other classes i.e. M&M WHP and they also provided a £500 cheque.

Probationer judges needed to let CP know if they required a car park ticket/lunch.

Main ring parade - all ponies should join the parade in the main ring at 2.15. Classes in the two EPS rings would be paused and it needed to be clear that all competitors were expected to join the parade. DB suggested that the Society advise that if you do not parade you are eligible to forfeit your prize money after all members wanted to see the parade and the general public enjoy it.

## **11. Project Report**

**PhD** – SB advised that the first payment had gone to Glasgow University and Mark Lewis and University had now reached final agreement.

Debbie Davy had been offered access by St Petersburg museum to their zoological collection and this would include the measuring skulls from their collection. A report would be produced in February. There were interesting developments in Exmoor pony DNA v ancient pony DNA and the genetic side of things would start after Christmas.

Debbie Davy had been busy with the ecological study and sorting out sites and Scorraig now had fenced off areas to exclude Exmoors. Ponies would also be monitored on sites for 3 years. It was hoped that collars could be fitted to transmit information and funding was likely to be available from other sources.

Debbie Davy had been invited to give a short presentation at a conference and was also looking to involve local schools.

The Secretary asked if there was potential to involve local schools on Exmoor and SB undertook to suggest this to Debbie Davy.

**Action SB**

**Genome Project** – The Treasurer advised that it look as if Novogen had not been successful in extracting DNA and it could be the hair samples. It looked more and more likely that blood samples would be needed and gaining permission could be difficult.

The Secretary suggested using the blood sampling kits used by Grassroots for DNA parentage testing that required a prick whilst FD suggested that blood be taken and a haematology report completed as well.

**Action Treasurer**

## **12. Health and Safety Report**

No Health & Safety issues had been reported to the Society.

CP had provided her certificate and had been appointed Safeguarding Officer.

Copies of Health & Safety at Work law and Intro to Health & Safety were being ordered ready for distribution.

**Action: Secretary**

## **13. Review of honorariums**

The Secretary left the room and after much discussion, it was agreed by the Trustees that the Secretary's remuneration be increased by £1500 per year from December. It was also agreed a further investigate the possibility of making it a full time position.

**Action: DB/GB**

## **14. Inspections/Inspectors Meeting**

**Inspections** - The Secretary's report on inspections was noted.

**Inspector's Meeting** - DB knew that there were many aspects of inspections that were discussed around this table but which did not always come to the attention of inspectors and this was why he felt a meeting would be worthwhile.

He noted that inspectors were seeing problems much less than before but they do sometimes occur and FD felt that teeth were important and people did not always understand under shot and over shot jaws as highlighted in a recent case. Whilst NH acknowledged this, the committee had to go with the decision made on the day in the knowledge that the ponies were eligible for re-inspection and all inspections were subjective.

NH felt that inspectors were able to say if they wish to inspect and the distance they would travel and DB noted that he had signed more cheques for inspections.

GB raised concerns about the conditions some inspectors encountered and it was noted that all breeders/owners putting a foal forward for inspection undertook to ensure the conditions were viable. Inspectors could turn away if conditions were unsuitable. With regard to hospitality that was often decided by location and facilities.

#### **15. Area Representatives/Events**

The Secretary advised that positive responses had been received from Area Reps to the proposed changes and the database, website and welcome letter would be updated to reflect the changes.

**Action Secretary**

#### **16. Appointment of Judges/Judge Training/Inspector Training**

Judge training – reports for all the candidates had been sent to the Chairman and he felt that all should progress.

Year 3

Vicky Lamb and Sarah Taylor - appointment to judge's panel

NH proposed and GB seconded that both candidates should go forward to the panel. This was agreed with 1 vote against (FD) who felt it was important that all candidates completed 9 reports.

Year 2

Susannah Muir continue to Year 3

Robyn Westcott continue to Year 3 but complete the required number of reports

The Secretary advised that work was ongoing for the judge's assessment in the Spring with Lauren Brill.

**Action Secretary**

Inspector training – there were no trainees in Year 3.

Appointments to the panel

Requests had been received to appoint some senior judges to the inspector's panel and this lay within the remit of the Trustees. DB also wished Sandy Walgenbach who had worked with him on inspections in Germany for many years to be considered.

GB propose and VL seconded the appointment of Gill Evans and Margaret Partridge-Keane and Sandy Walgenbach be appointed to the inspector's panel and this was seconded by VL and unanimously agreed.

Year 2

David Wallace continue to Year 3

Year 1

Gemma Parry continue to Year 2

All appointments and progressions to be notified to the individuals concerned and the lists amended as required.

**Action Secretary**

#### **17. Yearbook**

GB advised that work on the Yearbook was ongoing and leaflet regarding advertising would be included in the Autumn Newsletter. VL asked that her telephone number be corrected.

**Action GB**

#### **18. Website/Facebook**

Sub-committee of JP/JM/GB and the Secretary had brought together a number of quotes and a short list of two had been produced.



GB and the Secretary had met the two candidates on short list and both of them had quotes within the budget that was approved and both felt that one company stood above the other and this recommendation was sent to JP/JM. The chosen company was Oxygen based in Tiverton. They operated a second company expressly for supporting small organisations and thus were able to invoice without VAT.

Work was now ongoing to produce the new website but it was felt that it might not be ready when the contract with existing website provider is scheduled to terminate on 31<sup>st</sup> January and this might have to be extended. It would be a huge amount of work.

Pages would need to be edited to make it much more accessible and attention would be paid to copyrights.

**Action: GB/JM/JP and Secretary**

#### **19. Exmoor Pony Festival Trust**

The schedule was set for 2020 and this included a Beetle Drive on 5<sup>th</sup> May. JPs VE Day Show would also be advertised as would a fun day when the date was set. The schedule would be published in the Autumn Newsletter.

**Action Secretary**

#### **20. EPS Centenary Events**

SB reported that the sub-committee had not met. However, the event November 26<sup>th</sup> at The Lion had been booked.

VL had also received message from Stephanie Poulter that the bronze Exmoor on a plinth would be able to be ordered direct from company or through Society and then a proportion would be donated to Society.

**Action Centenary Sub-Committee**

#### **21. Guest presentations at the AGM 2020**

The Secretary advised that Andy Dell (SPARKS) had accepted the invitation. Michael Dewhurst was unable to attend but could potentially give a talk the day after. GB asked SB to see if Debbie Davy would be available.

**Action SB/Secretary**

#### **22. Future Strategy**

GB advised that he had looked at a number of PR firms and found that a number of the website providers also provided PR. After careful consideration, it was felt that combining the PR and website function might be worthwhile.

Companies normally worked on a retained basis. Again going with Oxygen would mean that invoices did not incur VAT. GB's recommendation was that a PR company be appointed for a year.

It was agreed that Oxygen would come to the February meeting and provide the Trustees with a breakdown of the role of a PR company and how they could assist in raising the profile of the organisation, improving revenue streams, donations, getting articles into magazines etc.

Following that meeting a decision could be made but with one part-time employee and being dependent on volunteers would not secure the future of the Society.

#### **23. Any Other Business**

It was felt that discussion on the foal show should be brought forward to the next meeting.

David Brewer closed the meeting at 4.20 given that the RBST offices closed at 4.30pm.

