

## **EXMOOR PONY SOCIETY**

### **Trustee Minutes from the 'Virtual' Committee Meeting held on Wednesday, 30 June 2021**

Nigel Hill (NH) Chairman  
Geoff Bryant (GB) Vice-Chairman/Treasurer  
David Wallace (DW) Vice-Chairman/ECHO  
David Brewer (DB)/Policies  
Sue Burger (SB)/Articles and liaison with PR Company  
Claire Phillips (CP)/Breed Show  
Stephanie Poulter (SP)/Conservation Grazing Officer  
Rob Taylor (RT)/DNA and Moorland Communications (Present to Item 16)

Susan McGeever (Secretary)

The Chairman, NH, opened the meeting at 10.05am and thanked everyone for their attendance. It was noted that the Trustees were holding virtual meetings to allow for continued good governance during the Covid pandemic.

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

Apologies for absence had been received:  
Dr Sue Baker (DSBA)/Scientific Officer  
Vicky Lamb (VL)/Area Rep Liaison Officer  
David Mansell (President)

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

Decision:

It was noted and agreed by all present that declarations of interest should be made in relation to the business set out in the agenda and Secretary's report.  
There were no declarations of interest.

Decision:

It was noted and agreed by all present that the Trustees should maintain confidentiality in accordance with the instructions of the Chairman.  
Proposer GB, seconder DW – unanimous.

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

The Trustees present did not raise any other items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

#### **4. Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings held on 6 May 2021 and 22 June 2021**

The minutes of meeting on 6 May 2021 had been circulated to the Trustees and any notified amendments incorporated.

Decision:

SP proposed and GB seconded the proposal that the minutes be adopted as a true record of the meeting and be signed by the Chairman and this was unanimously agreed.

The minutes of meeting on 22 June 2021 had been circulated to the Trustees and any notified amendments incorporated.

Decision:

SB proposed and GB seconded the proposal that the minutes be adopted as a true record of the meeting and be signed by the Chairman and this was unanimously agreed.

## **5. Notification of matters pertaining to: Health & Safety**

The Secretary advised that there had been no reported H&S matters since the last meeting.

### **GDPR**

The Secretary's advised there had been no reported breaches of data since the last meeting.

### **Safeguarding (Claire Phillips)**

CP advised that there had been no reported Safeguarding matters since the last meeting.

The Secretary advised that there were still a number of volunteers who had not signed the new Child Protection Policy and a further reminder had been sent (DW).

### **Welfare**

The Secretary advised that there had been no reported welfare cases within the UK to the Society since the last meeting.

However, concerns were still being raised about ponies on Danish re-wilding sites especially in respect to the recent legislation passed by the Danish Government. The Society itself was clearly very concerned and disappointed at the condition of the ponies in Denmark but whilst it did provide information on caring for Exmoor ponies and the promotion of high welfare standards, it was not in a position to act as an international welfare organisation and had approached the relevant bodies.

In this respect, the Society had put out a statement in response to the situation and written to Horse & Hound. The Society was in discussions with both the RBST and World Horse Welfare who in turn was in contact with the Danish equivalent of the RSPCA.

It was noted that certain parties wished to link the use of Exmoor ponies on conservation sites to the Society's policy of a closed studbook and were calling for an upgrade system. It was considered that there was no link between the registration status of a pony of a pony and its welfare. Breeding policy and registration decisions were down to the individual owner as indeed was the welfare of the pony. At present, of the native breeds, only the Dartmoor Pony Society had provision for an upgrade system.

Decision:

It was not felt that an upgrade system was required at this time and any such decision would one for the membership as a whole.

The Society provided an advisory service to those interested in conservation grazing and re-wilding and worked closely with a number of projects. Leaflets and a video were available to those wishing to learn more before starting such a project. The Secretary handled all enquiries from interested parties as well as using a network of members around the country who were able to offer advice, visit sites and identify suitable ponies. Not all enquiries came through the office some individuals went direct to breeders. The Society always advised that transfers of ownership were made before any pony travelled abroad and that the passport was signed out the food chain.

Decision:

The website should carry more information on conservation grazing and promote the fact that the Society is there to provide advice. It was important that the Society published its policy on and guidelines for conservation grazing sites.

It was noted that DB held records of conservation grazing/re-wilding sites in Europe and this information was also held at and/or available to the Society.

Steve Lodge (Sole Trader) had been handling press enquiries.

NH advised that certain individuals had asked for their membership of the Society to be re-instated and he would respond appropriately.

## **6. Responsibilities of Trustees /Management Committee and Chairman's Report**

### **Responsibilities of Trustees**

The Chairman reminded Trustees that if they had been tasked with an action point then any actions taken should be reported to the Secretary in good time so that such reports could be included in the Management Committee or Trustee meetings accordingly. Wherever possible, Trustee actions points should be completed prior to the next meeting although it was noted that some tasks were by their very nature ongoing.

### **Management Committee and Chairman's Report**

The notes from the Management Committee meetings on 15 and 18 June 2021 had been circulated to all Trustees and had been incorporated into the report for this meeting. Outstanding action points had also been incorporated into the report.

The following items were noted and remained ongoing and as action points:

- Code of Conduct
- Outstanding DNA
- Grassroots
- Working Procedures
- Letters
- Presentations

It was noted that recent bereavements and following the appointment of Trustees at the AGM, it would leave the Trustee number at 10 for the coming year rather than the allocated 12.

GB asked all Trustees to consider individuals who may be prepared to be co-opted for the period of one year and pass those suggestions to NH. Such individuals could then stand in their own right at the 2022 elections.

It was also agreed that a notice should be put on the Facebook page.

## **7. AGM 2021**

The AGM had been discussed in detail at the Trustees meeting on 30 June 2021.

GB raised two points:

Celebration cake

This would be cut after lunch and discussion was ongoing with respect to the provision of champagne flutes.

Attendance

The Secretary had circulated the list of members who had purchased lunch tickets and for budgetary reasons it was important that the numbers were between 50 and 60. It was noted that not all attendees purchased lunch in advance.

It was important that 35 voting members were present to conduct the business of the meeting.

He asked all Trustees to contact members and encourage them to come to the AGM and pass details of those who said yes to the Secretary.

There was still accommodation available on Exmoor.

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

The Secretary asked if there were any questions with regard to the report put forward of administrative activity.

GB raised the question of membership and the lists of those who had not renewed during 2020 and 2021. He felt retaining membership was crucial and there was no doubt that Covid 19 had impacted on membership renewals.

It was noted that the Chairman had written to all those who had not renewed in 2020 and 38 remained outstanding. Some members might renew now that the Society's activities had recommenced.

There were 50 outstanding memberships from 2021 and it was noted that some had indicated that they would renew their memberships. The Secretary had written to all individuals concerned.

Lists of members are provided to Area Reps who also speak to members.

NH felt it was important that members provided telephone numbers and the Secretary advised that some chose not to.

### **Decision**

It was agreed that the Trustees would contact those who had provided telephone numbers. The Secretary would contact those who had not.

### **DEFRA**

The Secretary had circulated reports from the semi-feral forum and PIO meetings. There was a general opinion that a hybrid digital/ paper passport route might be adopted. The EPS did not have a digital passport although a passport could be saved as a pdf.

There was a possibility that a centralised system for ID only passports for all equines would be set up with breed societies reverting to issuing registration certificates. If smaller societies lost transfer and passport revenue, it could have a significant impact. RT asked the Secretary to forward information on the semi-feral forum which he had been copied in to.

### **RBST**

The EPS has confirmed attendance at the RBST Genome Project meeting and further details as to the actual date is awaited.

### **Scanning**

NH/GBDW would be looking through the EPS files on 7 July 2021 to make a decision as to what should be kept and stored, what should be scanned and what should be thrown away.

### **Insurance**

Quotes for 2022 would be obtained and cover both the EPS and Friends.

GB reported that information relating to Friends stock was still awaited.

The EPS 2020 accounts would need to be re-stated in the financial period for 2021 because the correct information relating to Friends of Exmoor Ponies Ltd would need to be included.

Going forward, it was important that Friends accounts were completed ready for inclusion in the EPS accounts by the beginning of March. He appreciated that it had been a difficult few months following the sad loss of Gill Langdon.

Image Library

It was noted that DSBA was unwell and the project was temporarily on hold.

## **9. Treasurer's report**

GB advised that the 2020 accounts had been circulated to all Trustees and requested that the Trustees approve the accounts prior to the AGM.

Decision

DB proposed that the 2020 accounts be adopted, this was seconded by DW and unanimously agreed.

GB has also circulated financial figures for the period up to 31 May 2021 and there was a current deficit of £1915.

The amounts for Secretarial and Admin covered payments under the Secretary's self-employed contract and payments to the outgoing Treasurer.

Going forward the Secretary's remuneration would appear in salaries.

Reports would be prepared for each Trustees meeting.

A number of questions were raised mostly relating to some discrepancies in coding which would be ironed out prior to the next financial report.

CP asked where Sole Traders monthly payment appeared and GB replied under Marketing. CP felt as it was a substantial amount of money it should be clear in the accounts.

GB advised that Sole Trader would be speaking at the AGM.

GB advised that he would address other outstanding financial matters such as Direct Debit and Trustee Expenses at the next meeting.

With respect to Fundraising, the Trustees would reflect on the possibility of raising funds through website links and advertising.

GB commented that links to other complimentary organisations should be encouraged provided that a reciprocal link was put in place. Such links did not attract a charge.

Advertising was more difficult and would have to be carefully considered so that the society was not compromised. Yearbook advertisers did request a presence on the website which was currently not given.

Decision

Bring forward to next meeting.

Matters regarding the 200 club and the cost of DNA were ongoing. The Management Committee had made the decision to stay with BT for telephone/broadband and hoped to be able to take over the telephone account that was in the Secretary's name.

The microchip reader had been purchased at a cost of £496 and was working well.

## **10. Show Affiliations Secretary's Report and Judge Training**

The report was taken as read.

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

The Breed Show was covered in the minutes of the meeting on 22 June 2021.

The schedule was now available and on the website.

### **12. Project Report**

In the absence of DSBA, this item was carried over to the next meeting.

Debbie Davy would be presenting to the AGM.

### **13. Area Report**

In the absence of VL, SB advised she had spoken to all Area Reps who would like to have an online meeting hosted by the Society.

The meeting would be arranged when VL could attend. GB to also be attendance to speak about the Yearbook.

### **14. Inspections/Inspector's Meeting/DNA**

GB confirmed that he was looking at alternative venues but most offices had not reached the point of re-opening for outside meetings.

The Secretary had suggested a venue used by Grassroots.

All other items were carried forward to the next meeting.

### **15. Yearbook**

GB has circulated two documents on the Yearbook to Trustees which were self-explanatory.

The Yearbook had been well received and had a good and varied content. It had posted a deficit of £49 excluding mailing.

A contingency plan for its production may need to be put in place for 2022 depending on the personal circumstances of the Editor.

The 2022 edition would revert to its normal size in order to control content and cost.

DW thanked GB and the production team for their efforts.

### **16. Website/Facebook/Twitter**

#### **Website**

GB reported that the migration of the website would be concluded on 30 June 2021. There would be a short period to then sort out any glitches from the transfer of information and restore some missing items.

#### **Emails**

GB reported that the migration of the email addresses was slightly behind schedule and he had received confirmation from Biziserve that the emails would continue to run with them for a further week thus avoiding a disruption in service.

A notice would be posted on Facebook to advise members that there could be disruption to both the website and emails.

The Secretary advised that Facebook continued to generate a lot of interest. Twitter was less engaged.

### **17. Exmoor Pony Festival Trust**

In the absence of RT, the Secretary undertook to enquire about the bank account.

### **18. EPS Centenary Events**

Centenary events had been broadly covered in the Fundraising meeting.

The Secretary advised that she was re-thinking the virtual ride in the absence of funding but hoped to have material ready for Facebook in approximately two weeks.

SP asked if participants in the Virtual Stallion Parade would receive centenary rosettes and the Secretary advised yes. The intention was that everyone who competed or entered an online event would receive a rosette at the end of the year.

Rosettes would be sent to the Area Shows for presentation on the day and these names would be highlighted on the year end list.

### **19. Review of Charity Policy Documents**

DB advised it was a work in process with three of the policies completed.

### **20. Young Judge's Competition**

The sub-committee was putting the 2022 competition in place.

### **22. Breed Promotion**

It was noted that the majority of items remained outstanding.

The Pony Map would be signed off this week and work was ongoing by SP/DSBA on re-writing the conservation grazing information. SP required photographs and the Secretary undertook to see if a number could be identified.

SB undertook to speak to JP/LR regarding the videos of the online show going onto the EPS YouTube channel.

### **23. Conservation grazing**

There was a great deal of interest in the use of native breeds for conservation grazing and Exmoors could play a key role.

SB had been discussing the conservation grazing map with DD and it was hoped that a MA student would be able to take on the work.

It was important that the Society ensured that its work on conservation grazing and the advice it could give was prominent on the website.

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

It was agreed that the NPS Accumulator should come off the agenda.

#### **Czech Republic (Daughter Society)**

The Secretary advised that the Czech Republic were nearing completion in setting up a daughter society that would abide by EPS rules. They needed agreement from the EPS to formally establish the society and establish a daughter studbook.

Work on a studbook which covered the ponies in Europe was nearing completion.

Decision:

DB proposed and DW seconded the proposal and it was unanimously agreed that the daughter society.

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

It was agreed that the NPS Accumulator should come off the agenda.

Czech Republic (Daughter Society)

The Secretary advised that the Czech Republic were nearing completion in setting up a daughter society that would abide by EPS rules. They needed agreement from the EPS to formally establish the society and establish a daughter studbook.

Work on a studbook which covered the ponies in Europe was nearing completion.

Decision:

DB proposed and DW seconded the proposal and it was unanimously agreed that the daughter society be approved and that they could have access to the studbook.

The date of the next meeting was 21 July 2021 following the AGM.

NH closed the meeting at 2.20.