

## EXMOOR PONY SOCIETY

### Trustee Notes from the 'Virtual' Committee Meeting held Tuesday 12 July 2022

Nigel Hill (Chairman) – NH  
Geoff Bryant (Vice-Chairman) - GB  
Portly French - PF  
Vicky Lamb - VL  
Sheralee Matravers – SM  
Margaret Partridge Keane - MPK  
Stephanie Poulter - SP  
Rob Taylor – RT  
Vivien Taylor – VT

Also in attendance were Liz Barker (President), who joined the meeting before Item 13, Sue Baker, who was present only for Items 25 through 27, and Jay Gee (secretary).

The Chairman opened the meeting at 10am and welcomed all those present.

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

Apologies for absence had been received:

David Wallace (Vice-Chairman)  
Sue Burger  
Mark Drummond  
Marcello Riggio  
Vicky Lamb

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

NH explained the purpose of declarations of interest and the importance of confidentiality for the benefit of the newly co-opted trustees.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **Confirmation of Confidentiality**

*It was proposed by GB, seconded by RT and unanimously agreed that confidentiality with respect to the discussions at the meeting would be maintained.*

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

NH introduced an email from a member regarding the membership of two other members.

GB introduced the issue of updating trustees about the Yearbook.

#### **4. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 17 May 2022**

*It was proposed by SP, seconded by SM and unanimously agreed that the minutes were a true record of the meeting and would be duly signed by the Chairman as and when possible.*

#### **5. Notification of matters pertaining to:**

##### **Health & Safety (SECRETARY)**

The secretary advised that there was nothing to report under Health and Safety.

##### **GDPR (SECRETARY)**

The secretary advised that there had been no GDPR issues raised.

#### **Safeguarding (SM)**

SM advised that there had been no safeguarding issues reported.

#### **Welfare (SECRETARY)**

The secretary advised that there had been no welfare issues reported.

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

#### **Responsibilities of Trustees/Management Committee**

NH reminded trustees that certain responsibilities had been allocated to them, some of which include attendance at external meetings.

#### **Chairman's Report**

The SAR had been processed.

NH and GB had conducted Jay Gee's appraisal at the end of her three-month probationary period and advised that she had signed her employment contract.

The issues with the original Facebook page had been resolved and it was back up and running. All information that had been posted on the temporary page in the meantime would be transferred back over to the original page.

NH explained the ongoing issues with one specific moorland herd. These ponies had not been inspected for around 20 years and the EPS had received some criticism for this. NH advised that he had been in regular contact with the land owner and had been advised that the DNA of several of these ponies had been sent to a lab in the USA for analysis, in an attempt to create a family tree. On June 29<sup>th</sup>, a discussion took place between the EPS, Grassroots and Weatherbys where Romy Morrin-O'Donnell suggested several questions to be put to the land owner. NH emailed these questions to her the same day but was yet to receive a response. Romy hoped to speak with her American colleagues about this DNA in the coming weeks.

### **7. Secretary's Report (SECRETARY)**

The secretary advised that there was no additional information to add to her report.

RT informed JG of a broken mobile Grassroots link on the website.

### **8. Treasurer's Report (GB)**

GB advised that a full set of accounts from January to June 2022 would be completed as soon as possible. This delay was due to the amount of time taken up by the subject access request and setting up Xero access for the secretary. GB and the secretary had met with accountant, Dan Stone, who had introduced the secretary to the software. In the meantime, draft accounts for January to April had been created, which covers the transition period between the two secretaries. This report had been circulated before the meeting.

The Yearbook cost more than initially expected due to the issues with completion. Otherwise, income and expenditure were broadly as expected.

GB explained that Grassroots had reconciled all transactions that fell under their remit since the beginning of the year and had invited all members who owed £5 due to the increased membership rates to top up.

#### **9. Show Affiliation Secretary's Report and Judge Training (NH)**

NH advised that Jackie Wharton had been in contact with all current probationer judges.

No report had been received from Susannah Muir.

NH drew attention to the social media policy which had been sent to the newly co-opted trustees.

#### **10. Breed Show Secretary's Report (NH)**

JG read a report which had been received from Millie Richards.

NH advised that less entries had been received so far than in 2021.

MPK raised the question as to whether there would be a parade in the main ring, or whether we could have a grand parade in one of our rings. NH suggested that it was too late for this year but it could be discussed for 2023.

RT reported that Sarah Taylor had notified members about returning their trophies.

PF suggested that judge profiles be included in the schedule.

#### **11. Area Report (NH)**

NH reminded the trustees that Lauren Brill would be stepping down after the Midlands Show, so a new area representative would be required. He asked if any of the new trustees would be interested in assisting VL.

PF volunteered to help VL in this role.

#### **12. Inspections/DNA (RT)**

RT reported that inspection planning is going well and, so far, there were no days with more than one event scheduled. It would be important to involve as many probationers in the moorland inspections as possible.

The secretary explained the new Grassroots process for moorland inspection requests.

#### **13. Website/Facebook (GB)**

GB advised that the secretary was slowly updating the website when time allowed. All trustees were asked to send any required changes to the secretary.

#### **14. Exmoor Pony Festival Trust (RT/SM)**

NH explained that, due to a clash with this meeting, he was unable to attend the launch of the Exmoor Pony Festival but a representative had been sent.

SM reported that the organisation for Jacky and Gill's Memorial Fun Day was going to plan.

#### **15. Review of Charity Policy Documents (NH/GB)**

NH and GB advised that other issues had taken priority and this would be done as soon as possible.

#### **16. Young Judge's Competition (SB)**

JG read a report from SB to which there were no additional comments.

#### **17. Breed Promotion (GB)**

GB reported that new stories and press releases were being sought constantly. NH reported that Steve Lodge had written an article about the Scientific Advisory Panel that had been well received.

#### **18. Conservation Grazing (SP/RT)**

SP advised that SB was reviewing the original script for Guardians of the Land and Alan Tibbetts had offered his assistance. Alan Tibbetts had come back with provisional pricing which looks like it will be under £2000, though this was not yet confirmed. Any extra filming would need to take place soon. SB had suggested the additional filming took place at Knepp Castle.

#### **19. Stallion Inspection Charges (NH/SECRETARY)**

The secretary explained that there was a discrepancy in stallion inspection fees across various documents and a decision needed to be made as to whether we charge £50 or £100 for inspections at home and at shows. The Yearbook also stated that the £100 for home inspections would be charged "with discretion" and the secretary expressed that some clarity was needed as to what this meant.

SP expressed that it made sense for inspections at shows to be £50 as the judges were already in attendance. GB suggested we ought to clarify that these prices were for mainland UK inspections. NH agreed that the fee should be £50 at a show and £100 at home.

GB suggested that the wording should include, "For two or more inspections at the same location on the same day, please contact the secretary for the fee"

#### **20. White soles in judging/picking up feet during inspections (NH/GB)**

NH described two recent situations. The first was at a show, where a judge put a pony to the bottom of the line and explained that this was partly, but not entirely, due to the pony having white soles. The second was a stallion inspection where the judge inspector picked up the feet to look for white soles. In this case, the soles were not white. At the 2018 AGM it was decided that inspectors would not pick up feet anymore. At the time of the decision, it was not considered that this issue would carry over into showing.

NH, SP and RT suggested that we need to remind judges and inspectors about the decision to not pick up feet.

MPK expressed the importance of differentiating between white markings and a few white hairs.

RT was of the opinion that, having been decided on at the AGM, a pony could not now be marked down for white soles in the ring.

MPK and NH highlighted the difference between white soles and cream areas on the sole caused by things like waterlogged ground or abscesses.

PF believed that white hairs needed to be mentioned in the breed standard too.

It was agreed that the committee would vote in principal and a proposed amendment to the breed standard would be circulated at a later date for all to agree. NH stated that, when amended, it should be sent to all EPS judges and inspectors along with NPS judges.

*It was proposed by SP, seconded by GB and unanimously agreed that judges and inspectors should be instructed that feet are not to be picked up and any white on the sole is to be disregarded.*

*The meeting adjourned for lunch at 12pm and resumed again at 1pm.*

#### **21. The Great British In Hand Show (NH)**

PF explained that there were only 6 Exmoor Pony entries to this show last year and entries were low across all breeds. She suggested finding out if they were going to have a breed judge.

GB suggested we could give money to the organisers of the show along with a premium offered to those who go to the show with an Exmoor. We could also sponsor classes. PF expressed that if it were a HOYS qualifier, the number of entries would increase and we ought to promote the show on our website and social media.

*It was proposed by VT, seconded by RT and unanimously agreed that the EPS sponsor 6 classes at £25 plus £50 towards the championships, providing there would be a breed judge. MPK was not present for this vote.*

#### **22. Secretary Appointment (GB)**

This had been covered in the Chairman's report. GB added that the secretary had completed a Health and Safety Checklist for working from home.

#### **23. Reprinting of Herds of Exmoor Leaflet (NH)**

NH explained that the contact details of the secretary and those of certain herds needed updating. GB stated that the new leaflet ought to be made available as soon as possible, preferably within a week or so.

#### **24. Summer Newsletter (GB)**

GB requested that trustees write approximately 300 words each for the upcoming newsletter.

#### **25. Project/SAP Report**

There was nothing to add to the report received from SB.

#### **26. Gene Bank Campaign (SB)**

SB explained that the secretary had been liaising with collection centres and an invitation to tender would shortly be sent to three centres. SB would create a comparison document to help the committee make a decision as to which centres to use once the quotes had been received.

Steve Lodge had sent three campaign graphics and a decision needed to be made as to which would be used for press releases and other public information.

*VT proposed, SP seconded and it was unanimously agreed that the first of the three graphics in the correspondence received from Steve Lodge should be used.*

SB would seek the advice of Steve Lodge as to when the campaign should be officially launched. As some funding was already secured, the project would not be hindered by waiting for an opportune time to launch the public fundraising campaign.

#### **27. Genome Project**

An email had been received asking whether the EPS planned to use the data from the Genome Project.

SB explained that the SAP had not discussed this, but she would explain the background to the trustees. At the conclusion of the Genome Project, one genome had been sequenced. This genome was constructed using parts of the genome of several different ponies. She was unsure as to whether that made the genome more or less useful than a fully sequenced genome from one individual.

The purpose of the Genome Project had been to seek a breed specific genetic test i.e. could you take a sample from a moorland foal and, even without being able to identify both the sire and dam, would you be able to say whether it was an Exmoor pony?

SB suggested that she could work with the SAP to put a written explanation together. The genome resulting from the Genome Project would be available for analysis once published, as would those sequenced at Glasgow University in due course.

NH asked that one member of SAP be present at all future committee meetings. SB agreed that this was a good idea and asked that all questions be sent to the SAP beforehand.

## **28. Any Other Business (All)**

### **Yearbook (GB)**

A report had been circulated by GB prior to the meeting.

GB gave a brief history of the editing and printing of the Yearbook for the benefit of the newly co-opted trustees. The issues with the Yearbook this year had led to a £1479 deficit, which is approximate to what it was 6 years ago when GB took over the coordination.

GB suggested that the workload for 2023 ought to be divided into more manageable roles, as stated in his report. PF volunteered to coordinate the area response for the 2023 Yearbook.

GB requested that all trustees contact anyone they know who uses Adobe InDesign.

### **Email from Member (NH)**

An email had been received about the exclusion of specific previous members from the Society.

NH suggested that nothing had changed since the decision had been made. He explained that a motion had been passed at a previous meeting not to reply to any correspondence from them, other than to fulfil our duties regarding matters such as passports.

VT suggested a polite reply explaining that there would be no change. MPK and NH agreed.

NH closed the meeting at 2.50pm.

The next scheduled meeting would take place on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 10am.