EXMOOR PONY SOCIETY

Committee Meeting held on Zoom on Friday 23rd August 2024 at 10am

Trustees Present:
Geoff Bryant (GB) – Vice Chair
Sue Burger (SB)
Mark Drummond (MDR)
Nigel Hill (NH) – Chair
Sheralee Matravers (SMA)
Stephanie Poulter (SP)
Rob Taylor (RT)
Vivien Taylor (VT)

Others Present:
Deborah Drummond (DD) – Honorary Treasurer
Jay Gee (JG) – Secretary
Susannah Muir (SMU) – Registration and Memberships Administrator
Ruth Thomas (RT) – President

Apologies had been received from David Wallace, Vice Chair.

<u>Declaration of Interest/Confirmation of Confidentiality</u>

There were no declarations of interest.

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

<u>Registrations and Memberships</u>
GB, MD, NH and SMU would meet to put together a proposal for the 2025 Scale of Charges.

The trustees agreed that owners needed to be reminded to provide a stamped, addressed envelope if they wanted the passport of a deceased pony returned to them.

<u>Advertising</u>
SMU had suggested that non-members be charged a fee for advertising their pony for sale on the EPS website. However, the reputation of the EPS website as a place to advertise ponies was still growing. It was felt that this should continue to be free for both members and non-members for the time being. This may then allow for it to be monetised in the future.

<u>Gift Aid</u>
It was agreed that the Treasurer should set up and backdate Gift Aid as soon as possible.

There were a number of processes that would need amending in order to maximise the amount of Gift Aid available to the Society. This needed to be prioritised.

Insurance
GB would send a copy of both current insurance policies to alternative insurers for like-for-like quotes.

Xero
GB would transfer Xero ‘subscriber’ role to treasurer@exmoorponysociety.org.uk.

Zoom
The Society usually paid the Zoom subscription annually. It was agreed that a discounted version should be obtained ahead of renewal, either by purchasing a Charity Digital membership or through another website if cheaper.

Yearbook
The Secretary suggested that members could be asked to opt in to receiving a hard copy of the Year Book; those who did not opt in would receive an email copy only (if the Society had their email address on record).

The trustees agreed that, in order to spread the message of this change as widely as possible, this should not be implemented for the upcoming Year Book. Instead, they should be informed about this in the 2025 Year Book, so they have a full year’s notice ahead of the 2026 publication.

They felt it was important for the accompanying message to be that the EPS still wanted to send hard copies to anybody who asked for them, but wished to ensure they were not spending money where it was not necessary.

AGM Mailing
The trustees agreed that it made sense to provide a facility for online voting, rather than postal voting. Not only would this reduce costs for the Society, but members would not have to pay for the return postage and this may even encourage more members to vote.

A link to the AGM page on the EPS website should be provided in the Yearbook, along with the basic AGM information. All other relevant documentation (such as the accounts and minutes of the previous AGM) and the legal AGM notice would be available at this link.

Exchange Rate Fees
DD and SMU would research Paypal fees for foreign currency payments.

Professional fees
The Secretary suggested that the Society could advertise for new trustees with specific skills and backgrounds (such as legal or HR) which it currently had to pay a professional for.

The trustees agreed with this suggestion but no specific actions were discussed.

Secretary Broadband and Landline

After considering the potential saving of approximately £1200 a year, the trustees agreed that the Secretary's BT Broadband and Landline contract should be cancelled. The mobile phone number should be advertised as the sole contact number for the Secretary.

Mobile Phones

The Secretary suggested that changing both mobile phone plans could save up to £30 a month. The Society did not have to take out a contract and could instead use a 'pay monthly' plan, paid by direct debit.

The trustees agreed that this should be actioned. The same mobile numbers should be retained.

Postage

The Secretary would contact Quadient regarding overseas Royal Mail mailing options.

Affiliations

The trustees felt that the EPS should continue ordering the standard set of rosettes for EPS Area Shows to ensure consistency.

The Society's affiliation fees also needed to be compared with those of other Societies.

Premiums

Show Secretaries would be asked to include information about available premiums in the schedule.

Membership payments

The trustees agreed that it was important to minimise the hours spent on this matter each year. While it was not possible to prevent membership payments being made by certain methods, members could be informed that we would no longer be allowing renewals by standing order and reminding them to set up their direct debits ahead of 1st January 2025.

In January 2025, any member who still sent a standing order/BACS payment could be contacted to set up their direct debit ready for January 2026.

Cheque payments should continue to be allowed, as a small number of members would not make payments any other way.

Susannah Muir would put together a piece for future newsletters/Facebook/EPS website about signing up for direct debit.