EXMOOR PONY SOCIETY

Committee Meeting held on Zoom at 10.00am on Tuesday 12 November 2024

1) **Apologies for Absence (All)**

Trustees present:
Geoff Bryant (GB) – Vice Chair
Rachael Davis (RD)
Mark Drummond (MD)
Nigel Hill (NH) - Chair
Sheralee Matravers (SM)
Stephanie Poulter (SP) (Items 1-20 only)
Rob Taylor (RTA)
David Wallace (DW) – Vice Chair

Others present:
Oliver Asha – Make a Will Online (Legacies item only)
Marie Broxholme - Make a Will Online (Legacies item only)
Deborah Drummond (DD) – Honorary Treasurer (Treasurer's Report item only)
Jay Gee (JG) – Secretary
Ruth Thomas (RTH) – President

Apologies had been received from Dr. Sue Baker.

Declaration of Interest/Confirmation of Confidentiality
It was proposed by MD, seconded by RTA and unanimously agreed that confidentiality with respect to the discussions at the meeting would be maintained.

DW declared a conflict of interest for the item which related to an email from his wife.

SM declared a conflict of interest for the item about Probationer Judges Scheme as her daughter was one of the participants to be discussed.

DW and SM would remain present throughout but would not contribute to these particular discussions and would abstain from any votes on these items.

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 17 September 2024
It was proposed by GB, seconded by SM and unanimously agreed that the minutes of Tuesday 17th September 2024 were a true record of the meeting.

Requirement for new Area Representative Co-ordinator
Secretary would contact Gail Whetter to discuss her willingness to take on this role.

Northern Area Representatives

It was proposed by RD, seconded by SP and unanimously agreed that Lizzie Heron would be appointed as joint Northern Area Representative, joining Gail Whetter and Davinia Johnson.

Inspection of foal in Austria

As suggested by Christian Scharch, a working group with representatives from all daughter societies would be formed to clarify fee structures and to facilitate the gathering of information from daughter societies when it would be useful for trustee decision making. Susannah Muir should be involved in these meetings.

Volunteer inspector to contact new breeders

SP volunteered to act as a point of contact for informal discussions with new breeders, or those who are returning to breeding after a break. She would provide general inspection advice and answer any specific questions.

Inspector expense claim

The trustees had a duty to ensure the charity's funds were spent correctly. They asked the Secretary to contact the inspector to express their surprise about the claim being made, given the information the Secretary had received about the visit having already been arranged. He should be asked for clarification on this and, if the response is satisfactory, the amount could then be paid.

The expenses claim form needed to be amended (or a policy created to accompany it) to ensure future claims were only paid for journeys which were entirely and exclusively for the purpose of the inspection. MD would prioritise this when working on the policies.

Your Exmoor 2025 Advert

It was proposed by DW, seconded by GB and unanimously agreed that a half page advert would be taken out in Exmoor 2025 at a cost of £575.

Winter Newsletter

A number of articles to include in the newsletter were agreed upon:

- An update from the President – RTH
- Updated 200 Club advert – DW
- 2025 EPS shows and AGM dates - Secretary
- Information about co-option – GB

There would also be an explanation of Dr. Davy's grant proposal and the outcome of this, along with information about the resignation of the SAP members and recent trustee resignations. A draft of this particular article would be circulated to all trustees.

Yearbook 2025 design/printing service

The trustees agreed that they would not use Redpin's services for the 2025 Yearbook.

It was agreed that Simon Mayhew's services would be requested for the 2025 yearbook.

Yearbook stallion list feedback
Feedback collected by the Secretary indicated that the yearbook stallion list had not resulted in contact from members to stallion owners. However, the trustees were in agreement that it should still be included in the 2025 Yearbook.

Requirement for new Conservation Grazing Advisory Board Chair
The trustees agreed that the Conservation Grazing Advisory Board would consist of SM, SP and RTA, with SM as Chair of this group. SM would speak with anybody requesting information on the use of Exmoor ponies for conservation grazing or asking if any ponies were available for this purpose. The same request template would then be filled out and sent to the relevant members, where applicable.

NPS M&M meeting reserve representative and 'HOYS Rules Meeting' representative
Given that Janet James was the reserve representative for NPS M&M meetings, with SM being the primary representative, the trustees considered that it was not an issue for Janet to be representing another Society alongside the EPS. As such, an alternative reserve representative would not be sought.

The trustees considered that Amanda Hill had attended the annual 'HOYS Rules Meeting' for many years and had always done an excellent job representing the EPS at these meetings. It was agreed that Amanda would be asked to continue in this role. No other member would be asked to attend alongside her.

826 ESA reserve representative
DW would take on the role of reserve representative for future 826 ESA meetings, should SM be unable to attend.

Premiums
It was proposed by GB, seconded by SP and unanimously agreed that all EPS Show premiums were to be paid per pony going forwards. A stallion may only receive one Stallion/Youngstock Premium per year.

Member suggestion for alternative Autumn Show 2025 venue
A member had suggested the Autumn Show be held at Cannington or Stretcholt in future years.

One of the reasons the show was no longer held at Cannington was because ponies were required to have had their first vaccinations to attend this venue. One of the original purposes of the show was for moorland breeders to be able to show their foals and, as a result, the trustees felt it should not be moved away from Exmoor.

Ware Trophy
The Ware Trophy would be presented to the Supreme Champion at the EPS Autumn Show.

Medal Rosettes
An alternative sponsor for the Medal Rosettes would be sought via the Winter Newsletter.

Policies
MD volunteered to take on the project of researching which policies the EPS were required to have but currently did not, and drafting these new policies.

This meant he would not have time to amend the Colt/Stallion Inspection Guidance by the January 2025 meeting, as he had volunteered to earlier in the meeting. It was agreed that the drafting of the new policies had to take precedence.

Draft Reserves Policy
GB suggested the draft Reserves Policy be voted on along with the other policies, once drafted, at a single subject meeting.

Annual Conflict of Interest Policy Review
It was proposed by GB, seconded by DW and unanimously agreed that no changes would be made to the EPS Conflict of Interest Policy. It would continue to be reviewed at least annually.

Scale of Charges
GB, MD and NH would meet with Susannah Muir and bring a proposal to the January 2025 meeting for the Scale of Charges to be implemented in January 2026. This would give enough time for the charges to be printed in the Yearbook, giving members notification of any increased fees before mares are put in foal.

Membership fees
GB, MD and NH would meet with Susannah Muir and bring a proposal to the January 2025 meeting for the membership fees to be voted on at the 2025 AGM. These would then be implemented in January 2026.

Requirement for alternative Spring Show 2025 judge (Chair)
It was proposed by SP, seconded by SM and unanimously agreed that Ann Whittle would be invited to judge the Spring Show 2025 instead of considering the Reserve Judge invitation for the Exmoor Pony of the Year Final.

Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) Resignation (Chair)
It was agreed to reply to the SAP's latest correspondence and thank them once again. A handover of any relevant documents should be requested and it should be made clear that the door remains open for them to reconsider their decision. Dr. Baker would also be thanked for her continued involvement in the Gene Bank Campaign, as agreed to in her previous correspondence.

Probationer Judges Scheme
It was proposed by DW, seconded by MD and unanimously agreed that Janet James would be added to the In-Hand, Ridden and Working Hunter EPS Judge panels.

GB was absent from the meeting for this vote.

It was proposed by DW, seconded by MD and unanimously agreed that Katherine Bowling-Hartenfeld would be added to the In-Hand and Ridden EPS Judge panels.

It was proposed by GB, seconded by MD and agreed that Charlotte Matravers would be added to the In-Hand EPS Judges Panel.
For: 5
Against:0
Abstentions: 1 (SM)

The trustees recognised that there were very limited WHP probation opportunities for participants on the EPS Probationer Judges Scheme. Therefore, they suggested that additional WHP experience gained through the NPS Judge Mentoring Scheme could also be considered by trustees in deciding whether trainees were appointed to the WH panel, should any probationer wish to arrange this themselves.

Requirement for project leader(s) for Breeding Programme and Filial Studbook(s)
No trustee was able to take on this position due to high workload in other areas. This was not manageable within the Secretary's available time either, but she felt it was important that this was actioned urgently.

NH would contact Grassroots to facilitate the trustees' understanding of what was required of them.

It was agreed that a meeting with representatives from each daughter society should go ahead in the New Year, with trustees and Susannah Muir also in attendance. The Secretary suggested that the breeding programme document needed to be finalised by this time and was especially important in maintaining the relationship with daughter societies.

Marion Williams Bursary
RT agreed to take on the position of Marion Williams Bursary Co-ordinator.

Member Complaint

It was agreed that punctuality is a standard which should be upheld by all EPS inspectors. The inspector who arrived late had now been adequately reminded of the importance of this.

One inspector had needed a reminder that feet should no longer be picked up. This highlighted the need for all inspectors to remain up to date with current inspection requirements. To address this, the trustees would include a reminder in the Inspection Guidelines and circulate these guidelines to inspectors annually, along with the EPS rules.

The pony's inspection failure had been correctly documented in accordance with the Breed Standard. While acknowledging the issues discussed previously, the trustees concluded that these did not have an influence on the actual outcome of the inspection. The pony was eligible for a single reinspection after six months, as outlined in the EPS rules.

The trustees apologised for the inspector passing on the information about the foal's inspection failure. They concurred with the management committee's understanding that the GDPR only applied to information about a natural person i.e. a human (not an animal, as in this case). However, that did not mean they did not understand why the complainant took issue with the passing on of this information.

The importance of confidentiality for inspectors needed to be reinforced. This would be discussed at the 2025 Inspection Discussion Day and supported by a statement added to the Inspection Guidelines.

It was not feasible to reopen a complaint regarding an inspection that had taken place five years earlier.

A number of factors were considered when deciding which inspectors to assign to an inspection and the trustees were satisfied that a correct decision had been made.

The processes for completing the silhouette/description by a veterinary surgeon and the inspection by EPS Inspectors were separate processes which should not be conflated.

The absence of white hairs on the silhouette was not relevant to the complainant's assertion that the foal should have passed its inspection.

The trustees also discussed how Rule 9(3)(ii) allowed the owner to request the opinion of a Veterinary Surgeon who met certain criteria, but this applied only in cases where the pony was "deemed to be suffering from hereditary unsoundness" or other unsoundness that would disqualify it. This rule did not apply here.

The foal's Section X passport had been correctly issued under the Society rules. If the foal passed reinspection after six months, it would be eligible for registration in Section 1 of the EPS Stud Book.

The EPS Rules allowed for registration of a pony in either Section 1 or Section X under "exceptional circumstances as decided by the committee," provided the other requirements outlined in the rule were met. The trustees were of the opinion that this situation did not qualify as "exceptional circumstances".

Legacy Donations
It was proposed by SM, seconded by MD and unanimously agreed that the EPS would utilise the services of Make a Will Online. They would immediately pre-purchase 10 wills for £300 + VAT in addition to the initial setup fee of £200 plus VAT.

Gene Bank Campaign
The Secretary would email Dr. Baker to confirm the trustees wish for her to continue leading the Gene Bank project. They also wished to inform her that they would be happy to be guided as to which stallions should be lined up to contribute and when.