

EXMOOR PONY SOCIETY

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday, 6th June 2016 at The Moorland Hall, Wheddon Cross, Exmoor

Present:

Mrs C Bigge, Mr D Brewer (Chairman), Mrs S Burger, Mr M Dewhurst, Mrs F Dickson, Miss S Harris, Mr T Hickman, Mr N Hill, Mrs S Poulter, Mrs D Sykes, Mr D Wallace (Vice Chairman) and Mrs April Westcott.

Mrs S Mansell (Treasurer) and Mrs S McGeever (Secretary) were also in attendance.

Mr David Brewer opened the meeting at 10.45am and thanked everyone present for attending the meeting and welcomed back those who had taken the decision to return as Trustees and Mrs Fiona Dickson who was in her first term as a committee member and Trustee.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs A Western (President).

2. Declaration of Interest/Confirmation of Confidentiality

It was noted that should anyone feel that they should declare an interest in any topic being discussed they would do so and that the business carried out during the meeting would remain confidential unless otherwise decided upon during the meeting.

The Chairman advised that it was again of the utmost importance that all members of the committee respected the confidentiality of the meeting.

3. Notification of Any Other Business on the agenda

Discussion of four items was requested: Grassroots Database, Brompton Regis Show, Friends Unit and the Election of a second Vice-Chairman.

With regard to the later item, Mr Nigel Hill was unanimously elected to act as Vice-Chairman alongside Mr David Wallace.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings held on 29th February 2016 and 4th May 2016.

The Minutes of the meeting on 29th February were approved as an accurate reflection of the discussions by all those who had been present.

The Minutes of the meeting on 4th May were approved as an accurate reflection of the discussions by all those who had been present.

The minutes were duly signed by the current Chair and Chair at the time of the meeting.

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

Friends – Work was ongoing to sell or return the unit to the company who had donated it.

DEFRA/Central Equine Database – The updated (March 16) Minimum Operating Procedures for Passport Issuing Offices were now in place and Grassroots were working towards providing data, a copy of which had been provided to Trustees, for the new Central Equine Database which was scheduled to go live on 1st July 2016.

It was noted that considerable emphasis was being placed on the PIOs to ensure that their database was accurate.

Zootech Legislation – A further draft version of the latest proposed legislation had been received and it was felt that implementation would be the end of 2017. The Trustees would be kept informed of any significant changes.

Marketing Questionnaire – Some 130 responses had been received to the 1600 questionnaires sent out which at under 10% would not provide any meaningful analysis. A reminder on Facebook and the Newsletter as well as extending the deadline to 31st July 2016 was agreed.

Sweet Itch Project – Ongoing.

Patron – A letter had been sent to the Countess of Wessex and a response was awaited.

Companies House/Charity Commission – The review of Society policies was ongoing.

6. Annual General Meeting/General Meeting

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting and the General Meeting together with the notes from the Open Forum were reviewed by the Trustees and approved for circulation to members in the 2017 AGM Booklet where they would be ratified.

Following on from the General Meeting, it was agreed that following each committee meeting a short report would be posted on the website and facebook page. The minutes of the meeting would, following ratification, be published on a member's only section on the website.

It was further agreed that a review of Memorandum and Articles of Association to bring them into line with current Charity and Companies House legislation would take place with a view to taking Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) status when applications from smaller charities were accepted in April 2017. For the sake of uniformity, the Society would liaise with other native breed societies.

7. Inspections

It was noted that inspections took place in the autumn and that this timing was linked directly to the Inspection Guidelines.

8. Exmoor Pony Society Stud Book

The criteria for entry into the main section of the Exmoor Pony Society Stud Book would remain in place until such times as the membership requested/voted for change.

The EPS would continue to promote its charitable aims of maintaining the breed standard and registering ponies on known parentage in line with current EU/DEFRA legislation. The need to breed responsibly in the current equine and economic market in line with advice from equine and welfare organisations remained essential.

It was agreed that the two appointed Trustees would continue to liaise with those moorland breeders who felt a Supplementary Register was required alongside considering the views of those who did not and the feelings expressed by the membership.

9. Genome Project

The Genome Project was in its infancy with many details including funding and the protocol to be used to be decided.

The scientific importance of the project with regard to the genomic analysis of the breed, identification of rare genes, assisting in the identification of veterinary conditions and research into such subjects as coat colour, should not be underestimated.

10. Reports

Secretary's Report

The report was taken as read by the Trustees.

It was agreed that finance should be made available to assist with the Society's present at the Horse of the Year Show and Your Horse Live and that further pop-up banners should be purchased to distribute to those attending events on behalf of the Society. Event attendance was normally co-ordinated with Friends of Exmoor Ponies Ltd.

It was further agreed that a marketing strategy should be put in place.

Finance

The Treasurer's report was taken as read by the Trustees.

It was agreed that consideration should be given to identifying permanent sources of income to maintain Society funds and that there should be a review of costs.

The Horserace Betting Levy Board grant may cease due to changes in legislation and the Treasurer was investigating alternative sources of income for such projects as the DNA parentage testing of moor bred foals.

It was agreed that one further access copy of the Grassroots Database would be purchased.

Show Secretary/Breed Show

The Show Secretary function had been undertaken by the Treasurer and Secretary in 2016 and they were grateful that a Trustee stepped forward to take over the role in 2017.

The Breed Show Secretary had advised that she was liaising with her predecessor to ensure the smooth running of this year's show.

Projects

The Treasurer reported that there were no ongoing projects at this time.

Review of Secretary's honorarium

It was agreed that this would be held in abeyance until such times as further permanent income sources had been put in place. In the meantime, it was hoped that the workload could be decreased by volunteers taking over specific roles such as the Photographic Competition.

11. Area Representatives

It was felt that wherever possible Area Representatives should look to hold an Area Show, a social event and an educational event each year.

Two Trustees were appointed to liaise with the Area Representatives.

12. Young Judge's Competition

It was advised that the competition had been organised for 2016 with the final once again being held at the Breed Show. Regional qualifiers began mid-June.

13. Pony of the Year

In 2016, the Treasurer had been responsible for collating the information with regard to qualified ponies, a Trustee agreed to take over the role in 2017 and this together with amended qualifier criteria would be circulated in the Autumn Newsletter.

14. Website/Facebook

It was advised that the website with a member's only area should be up and running by the end of June. It had taken longer than expected but hopefully the end result would be worth the wait.

15. Exmoor Pony Festival Trust

This year's festival theme was 'From Gather to Glory' and was designed to showcase moor bred ponies who had left the moor either to take on the role of a ridden pony or conservation grazer.

There would be events around the country and special rosettes had been commissioned to be given out at Area Shows including the Swedish Show at the end of August.

16. Any Other Business

Monitoring of brands – it was agreed that microchips and brands would be read at the Breed Show.

Request for information on DNA parentage testing – it was agreed that where retrospective DNA parentage testing provided new information pertaining to the registered sire or dam, the Society would advise the breeder, the owner and, where appropriate, recall passports.

EPS leaflets – it was agreed that a Society specific leaflet would be designed.

Trustees Training – it was agreed that all Trustees would keep themselves abreast of the guidance available to them on the Charity Commissions website and could request copies of the Training Documents held at the Society's offices.

Complaint against the Secretary – it was agreed that the basis for the complaint was a misunderstanding between the individuals involved and no further action was required.

17. Dates of Meetings

It was agreed that Trustee meetings would normally be held on:

1st Monday in June (Exmoor)
2nd Monday in September (Stoneleigh)
1st Saturday in December (Exmoor)
Last Monday in February (Stoneleigh)

The next four dates would be

12th September 2016
3rd December 2016
27th February 2017
5th June 2017

There would be a committee meeting after the Annual General Meeting in May 2017 to elect the Chair and Vice-Chairs.