

EXMOOR PONY SOCIETY

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Monday, 4th December 2017 at The Forge, Stoneleigh

Present:

Mrs C Bigge, Mr D Brewer (Chairman), Mrs S Burger, Mrs F Dickson, Mr N Hill, Mrs V Lamb, Mrs G Langdon, Mrs C Phillips, Mr R Taylor and Mr D Wallace.

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

Mr David Brewer opened the meeting at 11.00am and then thanked everyone present for attending the meeting. There was a large agenda to cover and a number of important matters to be discussed.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr M Dewhurst and Mrs April Westcott. Mrs J Graham (President) was attending a Horse of the Year Show meeting on behalf of the Society.

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

Mrs Mansell and Mrs McGeever advised that there were a number of additional items to bring forward under any other business.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings held on 11th September 2017

The Minutes of the meeting on 11th September 2017 were approved as an accurate reflection of the discussions. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

It was agreed that in future, the Friends of Exmoor Ponies Ltd AGM should take place at the Society's AGM on the second Wednesday in May.

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

Sweet Itch Project

This project was ongoing.

6. Reports

Secretary's Report

The Secretary's report to the Trustees was taken as read and work was ongoing with regard to DEFRA legislation, the Central Equine Database and Zootech legislation.

The Society was in the process of creating a revised Data Management Document to bring it into line with the new GDPR legislation coming into force in May 2018. A number of changes were being made by Grassroots to enable users to comply with the changes.

The Society continued to attract good PR coverage, a short autumn newsletter had been circulated with the flyer for Dr Baker's book offer and a more substantial newsletter would be circulated to the membership on receipt of the write up on the inspection questionnaire.

It was agreed that the Society would look to at the possibility of appointing a PR Officer whilst a designated Trustee would assist with the writing of articles to reduce the Secretary's workload.

It was agreed that it was not necessary to send a representative to the National Endangered Equine Summit run the Livestock Conservancy in Texas in February 2018 – the RBST would be represented.

With regard to the sale of ponies to the Czech Republic, it was agreed that the Chairman would provide the Secretary with the name of an agent who could deal with the export of the ponies.

Finance

Legacy: The Treasurer reported that the Society had received a substantial legacy with a further sum to be received upon the sale of a property (approx. £250,000). The first tranche of money was in a deposit account and it was agreed that this would initially be invested in an ethical investment fund with due diligence paid to charges levied. The Charity Commission had a list of acceptable investments. The Society would develop a reserves policy given that this sum was not classified as restricted funds.

The Trustees would then allocate the money to specific projects that would be of benefit to the breed over the coming years and in line with the Charity's aims and objectives. It was felt one such project should acknowledge the benefactor who had had a life-long passion for the ponies.

General Finance: The Chairman noted that the Society had made great use of all its Secretaries over the years over and above their paid duties. Whilst it was necessary to balance the books it was also necessary to provide recompense in line with Government guidelines and it was agreed to increase the Secretary's honorarium to £12,280 with effect from 1st September 2017. It was noted that the Secretary provided an office and storage facilities.

The Trustees noted that after many years of service Mrs Ann Nicholls would be stepping down from her role as editor of the Spring Newsletter following publication of the 2018 edition and the Performance Awards – a letter of thanks would be sent and then volunteers sought to take over these two roles. It was felt that the Spring Newsletter could become more self-sufficient.

It was felt that wherever possible a third inspector or scribe should be present at inspections to again lessen the Secretary's workload.

Methods of raising additional funds towards the running costs of the Society would be considered with the possibility of monthly direct debit donations and a 'supporters' membership priced at £10.00.

DNA: With the decision to DNA parentage test all foals from January 2018 consideration had to be given to the cost of sending DNA samples for in-ground mares to AHT. It was agreed that, as for the moorland herds, this cost would be met by the Society out of the Special Projects fund.

Upgraded passports: It was agreed that a charge of £10 would be introduced for the upgrading of any passport.

Breed Show Secretary

The Breed Show Secretary reported that she was awaiting confirmation of sum to be paid to the Society from Exford Show. Entry monies had already been paid into the Society's accounts.

There would be an Exford Show Committee meeting in the New Year to discuss 2018.

Show Secretary/Pony of the Year (Item 11)

The Show Secretary reported that 2018 affiliations would be dependent on the outcome of discussions on Pony of the Year and advised that sponsorship had been secured to provide 1st-6th rosettes for all three sections, champion and reserve rosettes for each section plus a sash for overall champion. Trophies had been secured for each class and overall champion.

The membership had indicated that they would like to see more qualifiers offered than in 2017 but not as many as in previous years.

Shows providing for breed only classes judged by an EPS or NPS judge would be able to apply for POTY qualifying classes. Where EPS areas were not covered by the above criteria, Area Reps would be able to nominate shows where there were good Exmoor entries in mixed classes.

It was agreed that quotes would be obtained for the qualifying rosettes for POTY and the normal Best of Breed rosettes etc. POTY affiliation would cost £15 with the possibility to purchase additional EPS rosettes.

7. Inspections

Inspection paperwork had been updated for 2017 and the Inspectors Guidelines were under review.

Inspections were ongoing with some foal notifications being advised in November although it was hoped that all inspections would be complete by 15th December.

There continued to be a problem with incomplete silhouettes being sent in with passport applications and these were returned to the breeder for completion.

Brands and microchips had been read in older mares throughout the autumn and at the Breed Show. It was noted that a significant percentage of brands could be read whilst a significant number of microchips could not be read. Where a microchip number could not be read, it was the owner's responsibility to have the pony re-microchipped and DNA samples matched to prove identity.

Microchip technology was improving and the possibility of the Society identifying and purchasing microchips to be included with the passport application work at cost would be considered.

8. Genome Project

The Project Officer advised that all the samples were with the University of Nottingham and she awaited contact from Dr Sarah Blott as to progress.

9. Articles of Association

The solicitor had advised that the Society was now able to apply to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and that it would be most cost-effective if this was done in conjunction with the revision of the Articles of Association. It was not known at present if this could be done in time for the 2018 AGM.

10. Show Rules Sub-Committee

It was agreed that a number of amendments should be made to the showing rules and presented to the 2018 AGM.

The main changes would be that:

- a) clipped ponies (except for the legs) would be allowed to be shown in senior in-hand classes (4 years and over).
- b) that tails may be levelled but not above the fetlock
- c) clarification that stallions were classified as 4 years and over and must have a licence. Colts 3 years and under could be shown in youngstock classes provided that they had not been put forward for a stallion inspection and were pending re-inspection.
- d) exhibitors aged 14 years and under must wear a hard hat to current legal specifications.
- e) newly qualified judges should not take on a probationer for the first three years of judging.

11. Pony of the Year

See Show Secretary report above.

12. Area Representatives

No further action required at present.

13. Judge and Inspectors Training

Inspectors

Mrs Vicky Lamb had completed three years of training and was appointed to the Inspector's panel.

Candidates awaiting to start or in Year 1 and 2 would continue with their training.

Judges

Mrs Sheila Dinsdale, Mrs Karen Logan and Mrs Sandy Woodersen had completed three years of training and were appointed to the Judge's panel.

Candidates awaiting to start or in Year 1 would continue with their training.

14. Young Judge's Competition

Mrs April Westcott reported that plans were in hand for 2018 with five qualifiers and the final at the Breed Show.

15. Website/Facebook

The website and facebook pages remained works in progress with updates and posts being undertaken as and when necessary.

15. Exmoor Pony Festival Trust

Mrs Carol Bigge reported that the festival committee had now finalised the calendar of events for 2018 and all information would be on the website shortly.

16. Centenary Plans

Mrs April Westcott would report on progress at the next meeting.

17. Any Other Business

Bloodlines returned to the moor

It was noted that the Society should continue to review the programme and look to ensure that resulting foals were moved into different breeding homes.

Harassment

It was noted that a member of the Society had reported being the subject of harassment away from the Exmoor pony world, the legal advice given to the individual was in line with Society thoughts and all emails had been sent to the police.

Requests from members and owners

A number of requests had been received from members and owners regarding the use of AI, registration of ponies and funding. Each had been discussed by the Trustees and the decisions conveyed to the individuals involved.

Dates of next meetings

26 th February	Moorland Hall, Wheddon Cross
4 th June	The Old Forge, Stoneleigh

Mr Brewer closed the meeting at 4.10pm.