

**THE WELSH PONY AND COB SOCIETY**  
**CYMDEITHAS Y MERLOD A'R COBIAU CYMREIG**

**Minutes of the Council meeting held at 10.00 am on Monday 12 October 2015  
at Bronaeron, Felinfach, Lampeter, SA48 8AG**

**Present:** Tom Hughes (Chair), David Blair, Elgan Evans, Stewart Franklin, Elizabeth French (President-Elect), Ed Gummery, Dai Harris (President), Angela Kember, Dania Leyson, Peter Morgan, Jeff Parry, Jo Sheil, Colin Thomas, Gilly Thomson

**Attendance via  
Teleconference:** Ann Bigley, John Kirk (Vice-Chair)

**Apologies:** David Roberts

**In Attendance:** Andrew Johnstone (Secretary)

**Minute Taker:** Jayne Willis (PA)

**Welcome & Apologies**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, with apologies as noted above.

A minute's silence was held in respect of the following Life Members - Mr M LI Williams of the Bron Stud, Mr & Mrs T. Powell of the Rumsey Stud, Mr M. L. Jones, Loftwen Farm, Powys, Mr M. D. McGarry of the Toberdoney Stud, Mr A W Jones of the Penchwintan Stud and all members recently departed.

**Action Points**

**9598 a) MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**It was proposed by Colin Thomas seconded by Gilly Thomson that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting. All in favour.**

**Matters Arising**

**p.4 /5 9585 AOB - Ceredigion Open Forum** - Dai Harris reported that he will be unable to attend the open forum, with the Chair adding that whilst he is not nominated as the team of four Trustees, he will do his best to attend if possible.

**b) CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES (1) OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**It was proposed by Stewart Franklin, seconded by Elgan Evans that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting. All in favour.**

**c) CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES (2) OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**It was proposed by Colin Thomas, seconded by Elgan Evans that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting. All in favour.**

**9599 CHAIR OF COUNCIL UPDATE**

The Chair reported that at this year's Cob Sales he has asked the President, Dai Harris to present a framed copy of the letter to Dr Wynne Davies received from Her Majesty The Queen, following the receipt of his new book.

**Colin Thomas proposed, seconded by Elgan Evans that Council congratulates Stewart Franklin on the success of Sarum Rembrandt, bred by him, being named Supreme Pony of the Year at HOYS 2015. All in favour.**

Following the recent resignation of the Society's Assistant Secretary Bethan Jones after 22 years of service, the Chair suggested Council might consider a gift for her. It was agreed that trustees would individually contribute to a gift to be sourced by Jo Sheil.

**JS to action**

## **9600 SECRETARY'S UPDATE**

*Minutes recorded in agenda order*

**a) Staff Review** - Following questions from Council the Secretary reported on the staff review progress to date, noting the difference between an annual individual appraisal, and a full staff review which was first mentioned to him at his interview.

Council will be updated at its next meeting on 7 December 2015.

**AJ to action**

The review will essentially determine whether the Society has the right staff doing the right jobs and more specifically whether an individual is doing everything listed in their job description (some of which are totally outdated) and any extra duties not listed.

**b) Meetings** – The Secretary had met with Andrew Mitchell MP, and more recently The Rt Hon Stephen Crabb the Preseli Pembrokeshire MP and Secretary of State for Wales. Mr Crabb was very interested in learning more about the Society and keen to get AMs from all parties involved. Meeting to be followed up.

**AJ to action**

Rachel Evans of Countryside Alliance Wales agreed to place a 1,000 word article in their next magazine on the back of the new WPCS video press release.

**c) HOYS** – Contact was made with a number of breed societies with discussion on various topics and the possibility of working together in the future.

Discussion ensued regarding the Society's display at HOYS at the weekend, with a number of Trustees noting their disappointment with the size of the stand compared to last year, and the general standards.

Comments were made regarding the smallness of the stand. The Secretary noted that Horse & Hound had a stand twice as large and BHS three times as large. The Society can have a larger stand, but it will cost more money. He did think that the video worked very well, and the photographs were very eye catching. Other stands had space to sit down and have a chat which worked well, and a big TV screen at the back of the stand to show videos would be effective.

There were ponies in the native breeds' area, which could be an option for the future.

To Promotions on 16 November 2015 for further discussion with the Chair to attend the meeting.

**To Promotions  
TGH to attend**

9601 **REPORTS FROM THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF 21 & 22 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**a) Education & Welfare**

**b) Judging & Showing**

**c) Members Services**

*Copies of the 2015 Young People's Group proposal for a new Young Ambassador election procedure were tabled (attached to the minutes)*

**Young People's Group** – Ed Gummery reported that it is very clear that the description for the role of Young Ambassador was and is available. Both Gareth Watkins and Eleri Evans said they had not seen it, and this cannot be explained.

**Discussion ensued regarding the new proposal from the Young People's Group and it was proposed by Ed Gummery, seconded by Colin Thomas that Council vote to accept the proposed new system from the group, with Members Services to support and work with them over the coming year. For: 8. Against: 3. Motion carried.**

**It was counter-proposed by Jo Sheil, seconded by Gilly Thomson that if there are no applicants this year Trustees should mentor the Young People's Group, with one as chair for the year and revamp the role to make it more visible which in turn will draw applicants to apply the following year. For: 2. Against: 8. Abstentions: 1. Motion not carried.**

When the role is next advertised Jo Sheil suggested that the responsibility of chairing the group, attending events and the care of the Young People's Fund should be emphasised as a plus point for anyone's CV, with the possibility of re-launching it at the 2016 Royal Welsh Show.

Targets were not updated. Ed Gummery to address.

**d) Promotions**

**Website** - Promotions are responsible for the content, but other committees can be involved.

**Exhibition Unit** – Elgan Evans, John Kirk and David Roberts to look at the viability of it, and an alternative – to report back to Promotions.

**Magazine** – Angela Kember did not think it was a good idea not to have a spring edition of the magazine. The Chair noted the decision was made in 2014 and would have been in the Promotion minutes. It was suggested that Trustees did not receive minutes of all meetings in 2014.

It was generally agreed that to have a spring magazine and the Journal out at the same is a lot of work for the office, and the Journal content would end up in the magazine – duplicating information and costs. David Blair noted that the feedback was that members do not need a spring magazine. Editing and proof reading the magazine took a long time on top of the Journal and office preparations for the AGM.

**HOYS** – Peter Morgan wished to note that staff worked very hard, and money has to be put into such events to provide a good impression.

Next MS meeting

EG to action

Council cannot complain if it decides to cut costs. Angela Kember suggested the Society attends Olympia too.

**AJ to action**

#### **e) Finance & HR**

Stewart Franklin noted that a VAT audit has been authorised. Arrangements have been made for staff to receive independent financial advice regarding the new workplace pension scheme, which will come into effect for the Society in 2016.

Tom Hughes wished to note a couple of points –

- If anyone receives a donation which some Trustees currently have, they should ensure that a gift aid declaration is completed which will give the Society an extra 25%.
- The Society should be going to tender for all services.

Colin Thomas reported that at the recent Brecon Sale a member had asked why Brightwells do not have to tender to run the sales, and that the society should be tendering under charity law.

### **9602 REPORTS FROM THE WORKING GROUPS**

#### **a) HILL PONY IMPROVEMENT SOCIETIES MEETING**

##### **p.2 9591 Selection of Premium Judges**

Colin Thomas requested Council's approval of the names put forward in minute number 9591.

**It was proposed by Elgan Evans, seconded by Jeff Parry, that Council accepts the Premium Judges put forward for selection by the Hill Pony Improvement Societies, and recommended that Dennis Price and Tom Roberts be selected for 2016.**

**Office to action**

##### **p.3 9594 Welsh Government Management Plan**

Colin Thomas requested Council's approval of the decision that if a Hill Pony Improvement Society fails to return the Welsh Government Management Plan by the stipulated deadline, they should be removed from the Premium scheme.

**It was proposed by Gilly Thomson, seconded by Jo Sheil that if a Hill Pony Improvement Society fails to return the Welsh Government Management Plan by the stipulated deadline, they should be removed from the Premium scheme. All in favour.**

**Council/office to action**

### **9603 REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORTS FROM OTHER SOCIETY MEETINGS**

*None on this occasion*

*Minutes recorded in agenda order*

*11.05 am Ann Bigley and John Kirk joined the meeting via teleconference*

### **9604 PAVILION**

*Two papers were tabled, one written by Ann Bigley and the second listing the Pavilion responses from 20 society members (attached to the minutes).*

Discussion ensued regarding the unsigned lease, with some Trustees wondering if they could be personally liable and suggesting that the Society's solicitor investigates the issue. The Secretary noted that Trustees had seen the advice from Geldards at the last meeting.

**It was proposed by Dania Leyson, seconded by Ed Gummery that Council members receive a hard copy of Geldards advice regarding the lease. All in favour.**

AJ to action

xxx

**It was proposed by Angela Kember, seconded by Jeff Parry, that a fire risk assessment is carried out on the Pavilion. All in favour.**

AJ to action

Provision of food at the pavilion was discussed given that the demountable units may no longer be sited next to the Pavilion, and it was noted that there are many options for food and drink on the Royal Welsh Showground.

**It was proposed by Stewart Franklin, seconded by Elgan Evans that Christina Nixon Catering be approached to see if they can provide a limited catering service with prepacked sandwiches and drinks.**

AJ to action

The Chair allowed each Trustee to voice their suggestions as to the way forward, with the majority agreeing that the possibility of purchasing a freehold property would be a better option as a new base for the Society's registered office, is a positive move

*12.10 pm John Kirk left the meeting*

It was generally agreed that the lapsed lease was an oversight by both the WPCS and the RWAS, and falls into the category of a rolling lease, with the Society renting the space on a yearly basis.

Colin Thomas wished to record his dissent, noting that Council should seek advice from the Charity Commission.

Council can now positively respond to Steve Hughson at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society with today's decision.

**It was proposed by Colin Thomas, seconded by Jo Sheil that the Secretary writes to, and meets with, Steve Hughson, Chief Executive, RWAS, to report today's decision, that the Society is not in a position to fund a new pavilion as per its architectural drawings. The decision was reached because a few days use per year is not enough flexibility for the Society to get the best capital return on its investment. Majority in favour.**

AJ to action

**The Secretary to report back at the 7 December meeting.**

AJ to action

*12.30 pm Ann Bigley left the meeting*

## **9605 JUDGES CONFERENCE**

David Blair updated Council on progress to date for this year's conference to take place at Stoneleigh on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2015. Noting that numbers currently stand at 300, up on the previous year. The Judging & Showing committee will be in attendance on the day.

## **9606 CORRESPONDENCE – none on this occasion**

**9607 ENROLMENT OF NEW MEMBERS & RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIPS**

Due to a technical issue the list could not be produced on this occasion, but will go forward to the December Council meeting agenda.

**Office to action**

**9608 AOB**

**a) Judges Conference letters** – A number of requests had been received requesting dispensation to miss this year’s conference. Council agreed as listed below but noted that all must attend the next one.

- 1. Mr C T Davies – proposed by Elgan Evans, seconded by Jo Sheil. All in favour.**
- 2. Mrs J Price – proposed by Colin Thomas, seconded by Jo Sheil. All in favour.**
- 3. Mr D B Lewis – proposed by Elgan Evans, seconded by Stewart Franklin. All in favour.**
- 4. Mr D M Evans – proposed by Jo Sheil, seconded by Ed Gummery. All in favour.**
- 5. Mrs D E Collinson – proposed by Angela Kember, seconded by Stewart Franklin. All in favour.**
- 6. Mr T M Barron – proposed by Colin Thomas, seconded by David Blair. All in favour.**

**NT/office to action**

**b) XXXX**

**c) XXXX**

**d) Staff Lunch and Christmas Opening Hours**

Staff had submitted a request that the office be allowed to close from 12.30 pm on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2015 for their Christmas lunch.

**It was proposed by Jo Sheil, seconded by Dania Leyson that the office be closed from 12.30 pm on Friday 18 December in order for staff to attend their Christmas lunch, with the necessary notice to be placed on the website and the ansaphone message. All in favour.**

**AJ to action**

The Christmas opening hours were confirmed as:

**Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> December 2015 – Open**  
**Christmas Day Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2015 – Closed**  
**Bank Holiday in lieu of Boxing Day Monday 28<sup>th</sup> December 2015 – Closed**  
**Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015 - Open**  
**New Year’s Day Friday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 – Closed**

Normal opening hours will resume from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016

**e) Animals In War Remembrance, London** – The 2015 event will take place on Friday 13 November and it was agreed that the Secretary and the President should represent the Society, with the office to ask John Kirk if he wishes to attend again this year.  
Mrs Jackie Kirk has kindly offered to supply the Society’s wreath free of charge again this year.

**AJ to action**

f) XXXX

g) **Access to Information** – Gilly Thomson tabled an undated email response from the Charity Commission as a result of her request, which confirmed that all trustees must have access to relevant documentation, including correspondence, bills, reports and invoices. The Chair asked Mrs Thomson what the purpose of her contact with the Charity Commission was and to provide some factual examples to support her comments.

h) **Ceredigion Open Forum** – Elgan Evans reported that the forum is not advertised on the Society’s website. The Chair confirmed that it will be published on the News section. He also wished to note for the record that three emails have been sent to all Area Associations over the last six months, all resulting in a very poor response with only two forums confirmed to date. The issue will be addressed further by Members Services.

i) **RBST** – Colin Thomas asked if the requested information had been sent to Tom Beeston at the Rare Breeds Survival Trust. The office confirmed that it had been sent by Bethan Jones, but will be followed up.

**Office to action**

j) **President-Elect** – Mrs French wished to note that she will be attending the Judges Conference on 31 October 2015, but offered her apologies for all other meetings until the New Year.

**Office to action**

**The next meeting will take place at 10.00 am on Monday 7 December 2015**

**With no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 3.50 pm.**

*This report is prepared solely for the purpose of Council. It is private and confidential to members of Council. They must not be reproduced or disclosed to any other individual. The remarks made by any specific members of Council as reported in these Minutes are their personal views and not the views of the Society unless ratified by the Society.*