

**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 7th December 2015
at Bronaeron, Felinfach, Lampeter, SA48 8AG**

Present: Tom Hughes (Chair), Ann Bigley, David Blair, Elgan Evans, Stewart Franklin, Ed Gummery, Dai Harris (President), Angela Kember, Dania Leyson, Peter Morgan, Jeff Parry, David Roberts, Jo Sheil, Colin Thomas, Gilly Thomson, John Kirk (Vice-Chair)

Apologies: Elizabeth French (President-Elect), Andrew Johnstone (Secretary)

**In Attendance &
Minute Taker:** Jayne Willis (PA)

Welcome & Apologies

A minute's silence was held in respect of the following Life Members, Mr D Dobbs (Llangattock), Mrs P M Egerton (Treharne), Mr J E Evans (Caeglas) and all members recently departed.

9756 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2015

It was proposed by Elgan Evans seconded by Jo Sheil that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting subject to the following corrections. All in favour.

p.5 first para, 9604 Pavilion – delete “regarding the lease”.

p.5 sixth para, 9604 Pavilion – delete “registered office”

p.7 AOB f) Welfare Confidentiality – delete “an additional”

Matters Arising

p.2 9600 Secretary's Update, a) Staff Review – The Chair noted that an additional Council meeting will be required for a staff review update.

p.3 9601 Standing Committees, d) Promotions – Mrs Kember was of the opinion that it was a very bad idea not to have a spring edition of the Society's magazine. Mrs Thomson noted that the decision had already been made but the committee could look at it again at the Promotions meeting on 18 January 2016.

p.4 9602 HPIS Meeting, Welsh Government Management Plan – Mr Thomas reported that plans had been received within the deadline from all Hill Pony Improvement Societies.

p.4 9604 Pavilion – John Kirk asked when the fire risk assessment would now take place, with the Chair reporting that this would be after the RWAS on-site meeting, date to be confirmed.

p.7 9608 e) Animals in War Remembrance, London – The Secretary, Andrew Johnstone, attended on behalf of the Society, with Mr Kirk offering his apologies at not being present on the day as agreed by Council. Mr Kirk wished to note that in future if any Trustees attend they should not expect to claim any expenses from this society.

9757 CHAIR OF COUNCIL UPDATE

Action Points

Office to action

To Promotions

9758 SECRETARY'S UPDATE

9759 REPORTS FROM THE STANDING COMMITTEES 16 & 17 NOVEMBER 2015 & WORKING GROUPS

a) SALES COMMITTEE – 10 November 2015

Mr Kirk spoke to the minutes, noting that there have been rumours regarding Brightwells expenditure and they had agreed to provide a statement of their current costs for the society's website as noted in paragraph six on p.2 with an action point for Brightwells.

b) EDUCATION & WELFARE

Minutes were not available on the day as Mrs Leyson had refused to pass the draft minutes emailed to her on 2 December without receiving a copy of the recording on disc. It was confirmed by the Chair that copies of recordings do not leave Bronaeron, and should Mrs Leyson wish to listen to it she should do so at the office.

A letter had been received from Brinsbury Campus, Chichester College, noting that it had been a pleasure to meet Niki Brewer at their educational visit on 9 November 2015, adding that if there is any way that they may be able to support the Society to contact them. Mrs Leyson wished to propose a vote of thanks to Niki for all her work.

A vote of thanks to Niki Brewer was proposed by Mr Thomas, and seconded by Jeff Parry.

Mr Kirk asked if votes of thanks were going to be made for all staff members that do their job.

The Chair asked if anyone present was conflicted before Mr Thomas spoke to the next agenda item. No response.

6 b) i) Education & Welfare - Mr Thomas spoke to the previously supplied paper, regarding letters to be sent to those that have not been charged by the RSPCA for welfare issues. Mrs Bigley added that if no action has been taken, then this society should follow suit.

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Mrs Bigley noted that it is relevant to a principle, not an issue and could put the Society in a difficult legal position. Trustees added their general concern that if legally challenged would the rule result in the society losing a case.

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c) JUDGING & SHOWING

Trustees were in receipt of the minutes and Mrs Bigley updated Council on the meeting's actions and the draft 2016 Judges Handbook, the main change being the opening up of medal shows to those that meet the criteria with entries on the day. This will be for a five year trial, with a review in the third year.

A letter will be enclosed with the handbook noting the updates and changes for all judges, and copies for all members as last year.

Mr Gummery reported a difference in description for the Welsh Mountain Pony and it was agreed that he should email Mrs Bigley.

EG to action

Following a discussion it was agreed that Mrs Bigley would email the draft handbook to all trustees.

MAB to action

It was proposed by David Roberts, seconded by Peter Morgan that Council accepts the social media policy, and all changes to the rule book. All in favour.

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Mrs Bigley reported that a letter had been sent to Mrs Berryman-Horne removing her from the judges' panel as she had not attended a conference since 2008 and she had replied appealing. The Chair noted that it does not have to go before Council, but back to judging and showing.

To J&S

d) MEMBERS SERVICES

Angela Kember wished to note that she did not agree with the minutes. Colin Thomas, the chair on the day, added that he had passed them as correct from memory.

The Chair noted that there will be a new process for the role of Young Ambassador.

e) PROMOTIONS

Mrs Thomson was disappointed that minutes of the 16 November meeting were not available as she had been told by someone that they would be done in five working days.

Council were updated on progress with the Journal, the DVD and a report received on the exhibition unit. HOYS had been well attended with good results for the Welsh breeds. David Blair suggested that the Welsh awards should be celebrated and the awards listed.

To promotions

f) FINANCE & HR

Mr Franklin noted that registrations are currently down on last year, and that the cash recently borrowed from the Investec fund was not required. The solar panels are beginning to pay with £1,300 received and free electricity during the day.

Harmonisation – David Blair suggested an audit of the harmonisation paper trail regarding Welsh Belgium. The Chair reported that the office, notably Andrew Johnstone and Natasha Thomas, are addressing the issue with a report to follow.

AJ to action

Mrs Kember noted that WPCV Holland have not received an invoice.

AJ to action

WPCS Performance Show Cover - The Chair had received an email regarding the WPCS Performance Show insurance cover, noting that whilst with the NFU they had a blanket cover policy but this is not the case with the new Greenlands policy.

Mr Franklin noted that the society needed to be careful as the performance show had tried to include more cover in the new policy. Having already spoken to Greenlands Mr Franklin noted that and they will be attending the next finance meeting at Bronaeron on 19 January 2016. SFF & TGH to discuss the matter outside the meeting.

SFF/TGH to action

FHR Minutes p.4 9754 AOB i) Members Services - Angela Kember wished it recorded that she took offence to the statement in the finance minutes, which noted that she should not have raised international and council issues at a meeting, as Welsh Belgium has members.

Mr Thomas reported that he had raised it at the meeting because he was of the opinion that it was a concern.

9760 WPCS REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS FROM OTHER SOCIETY MEETINGS

a) BHS Horse and Pony Breeds Meeting 29/10/15

Angela Kember had attended the meeting and noted that an agenda item was thought to be a genuine item for discussion, but turned out to be a selling opportunity by a company touting for the “passport job” which the BHS did not take lightly. Is the WPCS still pursuing this line, as this company is?

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Mr Franklin noted that there is something in computer law that prevents people from copying another’s system – i.e. Intellectual Property Rights. Mrs Kember noted that she has spoken to Peter Cooper about it and copied him into all emails. He shared her concerns but it will only come live if BHS etc back it.

Mr Gummery noted that Defra have to introduce the national equine database under EU law by June/July 2016. They do not have the facility to do so and are talking about building an interface between all PIOs in order to gather the information. It was discussed with Peter Cooper at a recent Members Services meeting that the WPCS is very well equipped to deal with a national equine database.

It was proposed by Ed Gummery that it should go to Peter Cooper for his comments on the Society’s ability to tender for the option of hosting the national equine database.

To P. Cooper

b) National Stallion Association (NaSta) Meeting

- The Secretary attended their Council meeting on 6 November 2015
- Discussed closer working with NaSta, especially with its “performance test”
- Inclusion of Welsh ponies and cobs in Performance Test would position and rank them with all other breeds in a set of disciplines giving breeders an indication of the performance ability of a particular stallion against a uniform standard
- Test focuses on athletic ability predominantly under saddle
- Details passed to Jo Filmer of the Performance Show to liaise with NaSta to investigate opportunities
- Will ask Jo to produce a report on this once she has discussed it further with NaSta

Mrs Bigley added that there are a number of Welsh stallions registered and the large part-bred horse group could supply further information. NaSta information to be forwarded to Rob Jones.

AJ to action

9761 THE MISS BRODRICK MEMORIAL TROPHY 2015 (Equine)

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Office to action

9762 ELECTION ON THE NOMINEES FOR:

a) Honorary Life Member 2016

With 75% of Council's vote the following were awarded Honorary Life Memberships, with the awards to be presented at the 2016 AGM at The Vale Resort, Hensol Park, Vale of Glamorgan.

- i) xxx
- ii) xxx
- iii) xxx

Office to action

b) Honorary Vice President 2016

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Office to action

9763 THE KENTCHURCH TROPHY FOR WELFARE

xxx

Office to action

9764 CORRESPONDENCE

- a) **2016 Trustees Training Induction** – Trustees discussed the cost and relevance of future training. With Geldards estimate for 2016 coming in at £2,250 + VAT it was generally agreed not to proceed with their quote this year. Mrs Thomson noted that voluntary organisations such as the WCVA (Wales Council for Voluntary Action) can provide training seminars at a much reduced rate.

AJ to action

<http://www.wcva.org.uk/training-and-events/trustee-seminars-2015>

It was proposed by Gilly Thomson, seconded by Jeff Parry that the Secretary investigates financially beneficial alternatives for the next Council meeting. Majority in favour.

AJ to action

- b) **Mrs S J Page, White Markings** – Mrs Page had written suggesting “*Council considers removing the paragraph banning ponies considered to be piebald and skewbald from registration, and the detailed breed descriptions altered by adding something like “excessive white markings undesirable...”*”

Mrs Bigley referred to Jo Sheil's white markings paper which was discussed and welcomed at the Judges Conference, with positive feedback from 80% of attendees. Jo Sheil noted that piebald and skewbald are physical not genetic issues, and there is a large enough gene pool to fix it. David Blair added that it was a fantastic presentation at the conference.

It was noted that Rowland Michell, the Society's Honorary Veterinary Surgeon, had made the point at a recent Education & Welfare meeting that the Society should enforce it or do away with it.

It was proposed by Ann Bigley, seconded by David Blair that the Society supports Jo Sheil's paper, and replies to Mrs Page. Majority in favour. Abstentions: 1. Motion carried.

Office to action

- c) **WPCS New Zealand** – New Zealand had written to request that they start the process of harmonisation. Office to thank them for their email, noting that it is a work in progress and will be in touch early in 2016.

Office to action

- d) **IG Welsh, Germany** - The next Equitana will take place in Essen, Germany in 2017 and IG Welsh had written requesting support to cover a third of the costs.

It was proposed by John Kirk, seconded by Colin Thomas that the Society donates £1,000. For: 8. Against: 1. Motion carried.

Office to action

It was counter-proposed by Angela Kember, seconded by Peter Morgan that the Society donates £1,500. For: 4. Against: 7. Not carried.

- e) **WPCS South Africa** – Sue Cook, Acting Secretary, had written requesting that this Society gives no further recognition to Gustav Karlsson’s newly formed “*Welsh Pony and Cob Society, Southern Africa*” given that their society has no legal recognition either from the Department of Agriculture in South Africa or the South African Studbook Association which is the body mandated by government to issue registration certificates. It was suggested that the WPCS cannot stop Mr Karlsson’s group existing.

Following further discussion it was agreed that the Chair and Secretary will look at previous Council minutes and bring it back to the next meeting.

TGH /AJ to action

- f) **Dr E W Davies** – Had written adding his congratulations to Joe Parry, Eyarth Stud, on the national award of Agricultural Student of the Year 2015 at the British Farming Awards. Correspondence received.
- g) **Mrs C E Reed, Ceredigion Forum** - The Chair was present at the forum and updated council, noting that it was very well attended and a report would follow and points raised will be distributed to the relevant Standing Committees.
- h) **Mr A S Everitt, White Markings** – Mrs Bigley wished to note, in defence of the judging and showing committee, that this issue had been leaked from a council meeting.

Mr Everitt had written noting his concerns regarding the defensibility of the Society’s rulings regarding the “Marmite” subject of white markings, and the changing of the previously proposed breeder’s conference to a judge’s conference. Mrs Bigley noted that the society has a legal requirement to hold a conference

Discussion ensued and Mrs Bigley reported that there used to be a resolutions book and the criteria set out by the previous WPCS Honorary Veterinary Surgeon, Emrys Bowen and passed by council at the time would be recorded in it. This decision has never been revoked by Council. In addition WPCS staff confirmed that they still use the Bowen Line and it is the same as that used in 2000.

It was proposed by Ann Bigley, seconded by Elgan Evans that the White Markings Committee be disbanded and all issues dealt with by the office, with the option to send to Council anything they are unsure of. All in favour.

Office to action

Office to send Ann Bigley a draft response to Mr Everitt’s letter.

Office to action

Colin Thomas proposed a vote of thanks to the Judging & Showing committee.

i) **Defra - Minimum operating standards for UK approved passport issuing organisations (November 2015)**

Peter Cooper updated council on the compulsory changes to passports from 1st January 2016, notably –

- New page order which cannot be changed
- Passports have to be riveted, but WPCS will not make the deadline for this
- Front page to be laminated
- Colour markings section will now have seven new boxes
- A designer will be required for the pages
- “remains the property of the WPCS” to be added to passports

Angela Kember raised the issue of the report by Stewart Everett of “The Equine Register” made at the BHS meeting of 29 October 2015. Mr Cooper noted that he is happy to attend any meetings.

It was proposed by Ann Bigley, seconded by Stewart Franklin that Peter Cooper attends any future BHS meetings, in addition to a trustee representative. All in favour.

Office to action

9765 ENROLMENT OF NEW MEMBERS & RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIPS

It was proposed by Jeff Parry, seconded by Angela Kember that Council accepts the 107 applications and renewal of memberships. All in favour.

Members accepted

9766 AOB

- a) **Gift for Bethan Jones** - Jo Sheil had purchased an engraved crystal bowl for Bethan Jones as a gift from Council. Office to arrange when convenient for Mrs Jones to collect it. The Chair expressed his thanks to Jo Sheil for arranging the gift.
- b) **University of Wales** - The President reported on an enjoyable and well received educational visit to the university.
- c) **2016 AGM** – The President noted his wish to end the AGM with tea and Welsh cakes for the members as done in previous years. John Kirk agreed it was a very good idea and that the society should pay for it.

Office to action

DH / office to action

In order to accommodate this, the Council meeting immediately after the AGM would need to be put back by half an hour. All agreed.

Office to action (AGM)

Mr Harris asked about photographs from the 2015 AGM, and the office confirmed that they were available and would email copies to him. It was confirmed that a photographer would be in attendance for the 2016 AGM.

Office to action

The issue of security at the dinner on the Saturday night was raised and the Chair noted that this should be discussed with the Secretary upon his return.

AJ to action

- d) **Legal Advice** – Stewart Franklin requested that all trustees receive copies of all legal advice received.
- e) **Welsh Belgium** – Angela Kember again raised the issue of a further international meeting. It was pointed out that that the matter is in hand. The Chair asked David Blair if he had any information on the next international meeting.

AJ to action

Mr Blair noted that Ms Willis is correct, there have been no requests for a meeting and there are no agenda items. It is a very expensive to hold these meetings and it is essential that there is a relevant agenda. Harmonisation is in hand and it is not an issue for an international meeting. When the revised process is available they will be notified. How many agenda items have been forwarded to Angela? None had been submitted but they had told Mrs Kember that they were feeling left out. Mr Blair asked who "they" are. Mrs Kember replied Welsh Belgium and one of the Holland groups.

The Chair asked Mrs Kember to specifically name those overseas people that have requested a meeting, and have agenda items so that the office can respond to them. Mr Blair added that he has links with overseas associations and he has heard nothing about requests for a meeting.

- f) **The Showing Council** – Mrs Kember attended a meeting and with less than 50 people in attendance, she did not think it was something the WPCS would want to get involved in.

Mrs Bigley spoke to the issue noting that Andrew Johnstone is well aware of it and contacted them in late November. They replied that there is no further meeting scheduled at the moment and the group is in turmoil.

- g) **Complaints** – Mrs Leyson requested an update on all complaints received and acted on. The chair noted that there have been two complaints, one was addressed via mediation and the second is to go through the complaints procedure.

- h) **Meetings** - Colin Thomas reported that he will be attending a Cross Party Assembly Group of the Horse meeting on 8 December; a meeting with Aberystwyth University, the National Parks and Andrew Johnstone on 14 December.

Gwent association had requested attendance by trustees at one of their meetings on 29 January 2015. Ed Gummery to liaise with the office.

EG to action

Mr Thomas had asked the office to place an obituary for David Dobbs on the website as he had done for others. It did not appear and he was disappointed that it hadn't. Chair to check with the Secretary if an acknowledgement of his passing can be placed on the website.

TGH to action

Office note: The family had indicated to the office that they wanted an obituary in the Journal only, if this has changed it can certainly be placed on the website.

- i) **Social Media Policy** – Following a request from the chair it was **proposed by Stewart Franklin, seconded by Jeff Parry that council accepts the social media policy. All in favour.**
- j) **Financial Procedures** – It was noted that the financial procedures would be adopted at the next FHR meeting and then to Council.
- k) **Today's meeting with Royal Welsh Agricultural Society representatives** – It was noted that this morning's meeting went very well with the suggestion of a long term lease.

Office to action

Mrs Bigley added that it would need further discussion at an additional Council meeting, which may very well take a full day.

Following a discussion it was proposed by Stewart Franklin, seconded by Ann Bigley that John Kirk and the Secretary agree a date to meet with Royal Welsh representatives at Llanelwedd to discuss issues and short term costs of current pavilion. All in favour.

JK & AJ to action

- l) **Trustee Re-election** – The Chair noted that a valid point had been raised regarding trustee re-election, and voiced a report of the journey to date. A trustee asked whether or not they could stand for re-election and as a result of that Andrew had sought legal advice and the initial response was that they were unable to do so. Mrs Leyson raised the point that the office had received a letter from Mr Jacobi that our Articles (25) clearly states her entitlement to stand for re-election which subsequently Geldards laterally agreed with.

Further discussion ensued regarding Geldards costs particularly that they were involved in formulating our articles.

Mr Franklin noted that was his reason for asking to see all the legal advice and it turns out it is not the first time, but we are paying for indemnified advice. What would happen in this case if we had gone with their indemnity – are they going to say we are not indemnified?

Mr Kirk noted that he was getting a little bit concerned as to how this manifested itself, that we have gone to the solicitors, with the chair noting it was because Mrs Leyson asked for clarification as she stands down in 2016.

Geldards had a hand in drawing up the new articles, and Mr Franklin added that if their advice is wrong the society should get its money back.

Mrs Bigley suggested that the society should refuse to pay the legal bill.

Mrs Leyson noted that she had investigated it.

- m) **Declaration of Confidentiality** - The Chair raised a second issue regarding Trustees requirement or duty to sign the declaration of confidentiality as there are two current Trustees who have not done so and believe it to be legally unnecessary to do so. Mrs Leyson noted that she was one of the Trustees that had not signed the declaration as she believes that this is already covered within our Nolan Principles. Mrs Thomson wished to note the reasons that she did not sign the Confidentiality Statement was due to the fact that it has never been passed in Council as a requirement and was also not legally standing, in addition, to the fact that as a Company Director of a Charity that you have already agreed to Confidentiality in Company Law.

Further discussion ensued by a number of Trustees who disagreed strongly on this issue on a matter of moral obligation and principles.

The Chair noted and captured opinions, however, believed that consistency on this matter is imperative as a team of Trustees.

- n) **Patron's Lunch – From Secretary's update.**
As advised in October, this is on 12th June, 2016.
In honour of the Society's Patron's 90th birthday, open to people involved in organisations where HM is patron. Seats available in pairs at £150.00 each. Ideally, we would book four or six tickets: the president, the young people's group ambassador, the secretary and one other, or if six, adding the father and mother of the Society. Tickets can be transferred after purchase. First round of ticket sales has opened; decision to be made today.

Following the success of presenting a copy of *From The Horse's Mouth* to HM, and that the Queen was "...glad to renew her good wishes to [the Society]", have commissioned Mr M Daley to make a stick to present to HM. He has made some preliminary sketches. Stick to feature the WPCS badge and an engraving in brass in English and Welsh

Chair – doesn't have to be decided today.

- o) **Staff Christmas Lunch – It was proposed by John Kirk, seconded by Colin Thomas that the Society donates £100 towards the staff Christmas lunch. All in favour.**

Office to action

- p) **Trustee Appraisals** – It is done anonymously so 14 trustees will mark myself under attendance (by office), behavioural contribution, collected and all I will receive is the collective feedback from everyone in this room. Collective feedback of the team which would give the training needs if there was some real significant weaknesses.

It was proposed by John Kirk, seconded by Ann Bigley, with the suggestion that it is done in January. All in favour.

The form is on the website

<http://wpcs.uk.com/files/1213/5152/0770/TrusteeAppraisal.pdf>

- q) **Council Elections** – Mr Parry noted that he had been told that a council nomination form had been received on the wrong form. Mrs Bigley asked how he knew, and Mr Parry noted that someone had told him. The Chair noted that if it had it would be addressed by the Scrutineers. Mr Kirk wanted to be clear, a form came into the office and someone has told Mr Parry, I don't know, but you know that the form is wrong. Mr Franklin reported that he had told Mr Parry following a phone call from the Secretary

The next Council meeting will take place at 0930 on Monday 18th January 2016.

With no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 4.35 pm.

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