



A note from the Secretariat.

Members who attended the General Meeting will be aware of the poor acoustics in the building, which made it very difficult for the professional minute-taker to capture the content of the meeting accurately. The decision was taken to create these minutes from the high-quality digital recording of the meeting. They are therefore very detailed as transcribed.

This again highlights the importance in future meetings that speakers should always wait for the microphone before speaking and to identify themselves clearly for the minute taker to enable accurate attribution.

Thank you / Diolch

D. Merion Davies

27. February 2020

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

Minutes of the General Meeting of members of The Welsh Pony and Cob Society held at 13.00 pm on Saturday 31 August 2019, at The Clwyd Morgannwg Hall, The Royal Welsh Showground, Llanelwedd, Builth Wells, Powys, LD2 3SY

Present:

The President, Mr Brian Foster and 228 members who signed the attendance register.

In Attendance:

Auditors Baldwins - Claire Thompson and Heidi May, taking the minutes.

1 Opening remarks from the President

The President welcomed everyone and declared the meeting open.

The President thanked all members for their questions.

The President noted that the meeting will be audio recorded and asked if there were any objections; none were noted. He asked if any member was intending to tape the meeting? Tracy Hook (TH) declared her intention to do so. He noted the venue's housekeeping matters.

The President explained why the meeting had been convened as a result of members concerns.

The President asked for all members and council to stand for a minute's silence to remember all members who had passed away recently and passed on the Society's sympathies to the families

He proceeded to note some of the highs and lows of his term as President noting the Performance show and the Performance awards as highs. He thanked Euros Llyr Morgan for his efforts with the Young People of the Society and his work with the Welsh Cob Sculpture. He noted that the high point for him was to be presented to H.R.H Prince Charles and H.R.H the Duchess of Cornwall. He noted his opinion that the number of Council are too few. He thanked the staff for their hard work during a difficult time. He also thanked the Trustees for working hard as volunteers. The fact that the Society was making a loss was mooted and that this could not continue. His view of the future was that the Society needs to do more promotion and invest in its young people and noted how important the Gelding has become for the Society. He requested that all members present signed the attendance book.

The Trustees: The Honorary Veterinary Surgeon, President - Elect and Past-President introduced themselves to the meeting.

2 Apologies

None, taken as read

3 To receive the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on the 7th April 2018 and to consider matters arising

Elizabeth Russell noted all the pages of the minutes individually and asked if there were any comments. On Page 3 Nia Roberts (NR) wanted to make a statement regarding the tape recording and the fact that the recording was incomplete and felt that the minutes could not be accepted as a true reflection of the meeting. Chairman of Council noted that the minutes were typed up by Rob Allen from an enhanced audio tape. It was noted that he no longer worked for the Society but could be asked to verify this if required. No other corrections were noted. Elizabeth Russell called for the adoption of the minutes. A proposer not named from the floor proposed, was seconded by Stuart Franklin, The Auditor counted by asking those in favour to stand, followed by those against. The Proxy vote was counted and included.

Result: In favour by 122 for, 120 against, 66 abstained. The adoption of the minutes as a true and correct reflection of the Llandudno meeting was carried.

Matters arising

Dr Wynne Davies (WD) raised that on Page 5 - item 8 from the minutes (The Miss Brodrick Memorial Trophy) A letter with a photograph of the Inscribed trophy was sent and received with delight by the last surviving daughter of the Mathrafal farm - Elaine Rymer from Bicester. No other matters arising.

4 Opening report by the Chair of Council (Colin Thomas)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the General meeting.

He advised the floor that for General meetings trustees need to have the opportunity to prepare. The Chair advised this was the reason for asking members to both put forward topics for the agenda and A.O.B by a set date. The Chair confirmed the Trustees met earlier in August 2019 to discuss the content based on the items received from the members.

The Chair informed members that a Trustee resigned in February 2019 and Mr Dilwyn Roberts (DR) agreed to join the board; resulting in bringing the number up to 10 and enabling the board to carry out their duties under the WPCS Articles of Association.

The Chair advised they were aware of rumblings about the Board wanting to abolish DNA, he confirmed there was absolutely no truth to this. But in his capacity as the new line Manager to the Deputy Company secretary he immediately ordered a full audit of the system.

The Chair confirmed he was given a comprehensive report which stated that there were approximately 80 passports over a period back as far as 2016, he ordered a recall on all these passports and to date there are still 22 outstanding and this is being dealt with by the Office staff.

He advised the Hon Vet will deal fully with items related to the DNA discussion under agenda item 5a.

The Chair informed the floor that Brexit is continuing to rumble on. However, because of the concerns of the Society and Overseas members of the Society,

they have been advised that the UK Government cannot guarantee that the EU commission will act promptly and proceed to list UK breed societies.

The Society has lobbied Assembly members including Lesley Griffiths AM and requested a meeting at the earliest possibility.

He advised the floor that the Society is also a member of the ESA, a highly qualified organisation that are representing a host of breed societies regarding Brexit.

The Chair informed the floor that the Society received 29 applications for the Company Secretary position, of which 4 were shortlisted for interview. Mr Meirion Davies has been appointed as per the press release and will take up the role in early October. Identified training will be provided.

Members will be consulted with a questionnaire and this is progressing and will be managed by the Company Secretary.

He also confirmed he was aware that the board has been asked to recruit a Liaison Officer. Currently the Company Secretary and Deputy Company Secretary are the liaison points for any correspondence if it is addressed to the Chair or Chairs of Standing Committees, they are advised, and it is tabled. On occasion the Chair advised that the Chairs would delegate to a member of staff to respond and deal with the matter arising without going to a meeting.

He reiterated the Society has a well-established feedback and comments policy (page 29 of the current Judging and Showing handbook), which states that correspondence should be acknowledged within five working days and a response made within an additional ten working days. If the matter is complicated or if relevant staff are absent, then any delay will be explained, and members will be kept informed. Ensuring that this process is taking place is a priority for the Council and senior managers.

The Chair addressed a member query regarding a 'whistle blowing policy' and confirmed there is a policy in the staff handbook and this procedure is designed to give individual's the opportunity and protection to raise concerns.

The staff handbook also describes the dress code, which states that an employee must present a clean and professional appearance whilst conducting business.

Trustees do expect staff at shows to wear branded clothing and at events should wear a name badge.

The Chair shared that he and Council could not praise Gemma Bassett Burr highly enough or the staff, the improvements and efficiency of the Office recently has been remarkable which is earning compliments from members and creating more stability for the Society.

The Chair invited the Deputy Company Secretary Gemma Bassett Burr (GBB) to say a few words to the floor.

GBB introduced herself to the floor and advised she joined the Society on the 3rd September 2018, as a Registrations Officer latterly covering for the Deputy Manager whilst she is away on Maternity leave. She advised it had been a busy time but enjoyable. She continues to manage the registrations along with her colleagues. GBB advised they have moved towards training staff with different roles to minimise difficulties and any interruptions with the service to customers and members. This is still an ongoing process on development for all staff. GBB

also advised they are currently in the middle of the annual appraisal process where they are reviewing current performance and creating individual Personal Development Plans for the following 12 months. GBB informed the floor if there were any matters they felt were not working, to feel free to contact her as she may not be fully aware, and the quicker matters are raised the quicker they can be resolved. GBB also thanked the members of staff for their hard work during a difficult 12 months.

Members from the floor complained about the acoustics in the building.

5 Members Agenda Items

a) DNA Testing

The President explained to the floor that the DNA testing conversation was to gather an agreed consensus if members wish this to be carried forward to the AGM. No decisions are required from the meeting. He asked if the floor felt there was a need for a sticker in the passport that evidences the animal being tested? The President introduced Roland Michell (RM) to the floor to speak further on the matter.

RM advised in his opinion the present protocol is not fit for purpose. The DNA testing is not currently running smoothly, and staff are still fielding a lot of questions. This was following Council's announcement in 2018 that the DNA testing was not a parentage exercise. This led to confusion amongst the membership. He noted that a maiden mare must have her DNA taken before her foal could be registered.

Steve Everitt (SE) contested the statement, correcting that it referred to mares producing their first pure bred foal and 'profiling' never referred to previously as 'testing'. For 20 years the Society has been profiling stallions at licensing - the mare's scheme is just the corresponding opposite of the stallion which will lead to the scheme ensuring that every mare will be profiled in time thereby ensuring the ability to parent test every animal.

RM noted that the Council recognises that whilst desirable; the collection of DNA from all animals would be prohibitive from the point of cost. He had been asked by the Council to look at the current policy. He informed the floor that in conjunction with the Aberystwyth University report by Dr Matthew Heggarty - that they both concur the same conclusion.

The factors that were not properly considered is the storage of DNA, who is to pay for it? Under the present scheme the integrity of the same and its security and the ability to compare profiles from different laboratories, which render it unsustainable? RM and Dr H advise Council that they have to do something.

One option would be to scrap the scheme because a microchip is in the foal and it is possible to retrieve the DNA at any point in the animal's life.

Or profile all filly foals as well - or monitor the authenticity of the studbook by random testing. These options and expert advice should have been taken at the inception of the current scheme.

Christine Phillips (CPh) from the floor pointed out that the Microchip does not hold a DNA profile, and if the animal is by parents who are dead there is no way to link the parent and offspring. She advocated DNA profiling of both colts and fillies.

John Kirk (JK) felt that for the integrity of the stud book that DNA capture is the only way forward as a global organisation. This was also in light of the Society's PIO status.

RM brought to the floor the consideration of using Microchipping as the central recording source. The DNA stays in the pony, and is then collected when required, therefore spot checks would work.

Ann Bigley (AB) suggested that the society should come 'in line with other societies' It was in light of some high-profile breeding 'issues' that it was brought into action during her term as Chair of Council. The export market demands DNA profiling and Overseas societies are light years ahead in their use of DNA. The only reason that all foals were not covered in the initial inception was the cost, reasoning that the scheme adopted would avoid including those filly foals who will not be bred from, who are purely performance animals. The Society should be leading the way.

SE felt that if the original policy was stuck to then Dr Heggarty would have no issue with the effectiveness of the scheme - it is the opening out to allow use of multi - laboratories since 2016 which corrupts the scheme; and allowing members to harvest the DNA. The Council has spoilt the scheme. If it was to revert to the original understanding there would be no problem.

Ricky Perry (RP) questioned how many Section A breeders would be happy to carry on with a scheme which costs approximately £100 per foal in the current climate.

Ed Gummery (EG) noted that as an ex Trustee and Welfare Officer he advocated that the Society continue with the DNA profiling. The society should be more robust and avoid loopholes to be challenged in future.

RM pointed out that he was asked for his opinion by Council - it was not Council's opinion.

TH questioned what would happen if the animal died? The Microchips migrate.

RM pointed out that in the UK only Veterinary Surgeons are legally allowed to implant chips.

TH stated that she and another trustee had attended a conference in Germany where it was stated that Microchips do migrate.

RM believed that they do not, if properly implanted by a Vet.

Adrian Bowen (ABn) noted that in Europe it was a 'qualified person' not a Vet who can microchip and under the skin which is why they migrate.

Betty French (BF) noted that she had experience of a chip migrating in a pony she had exported.

Lady Evans Bevan (LEB) Advocated that people should be encouraged to breed from young mares and that microchipping them should be sufficient as the cost was prohibitive.

Margaret Williams (MW) commended the Society on going to an outside expert for his report and suggested the Society accepted his recommendations.

RM again re-iterated that it was for the Society to decide.

RP raised the concern that currently it doesn't work as testing is stored in different labs. It should be agreed that members use a Society agreed lab. Similar to the discussion with Microchips; only to be used which are those issued by the WPCS. There are some 220 types of microchip and six types of readers - this is problematic.

RM when Microchipping was first introduced, he advised the Society that the WPCS only use their own Chips so that the first three numbers would identify it as one registered with the WPCS - unfortunately this was not adopted.

Barbara Green (BG) believed that colt foals should not be DNA profiled - the Society should test fillies DNA as colts are done at licensing.

Brian Mcdermott (BMc) felt that the discussion should be about DNA not microchipping. Although costly a deal should be struck with a laboratory.

SE 'There is no need to do the colt foals. The mares are DNA'd before they enter the breeding herd. If doing away with the DNA profiling the mares; the Society might as well do away with the Stallion profiling, as it is pointless doing only half the equation.'

Nicola Davies (ND) concurred but wanted geldings included in the scheme as the DNA and breeding of the Geldings is important from a performance point of view.

Peter Jones (PJ) felt that the cost is the problem. He advocated returning to the original scheme reverting to all records being processed by the Animal Health Trust. He also confirmed that microchips migrate. If the AHT store all the data, we should be able to accept the data. Members pay £50 for the processing and have nothing to show for it. He proposed that the DNA profile be sent out as a sticker to the Owner to add the information to the passport.

Rosie Wilson (RW) referred to Brexit and questioned what information DEFRA and the requirements of governments overseas needed as regards DNA, moving forward. She asked what information the Society had gathered? in order that the Society be approved?

Chair - noted that a hefty document was received from the ESA the day prior to the meeting. He could not comment at the time.

The Council advised that this matter was not brought to the members today for a vote on a decision, but for a discussion as to whether it should be taken forward to the next AGM. Generally, the Council are in favour of DNA profiling.

AB noted that other countries would require DNA profiling. There would also be problems when exporting. There could also be a problem retaining the Society's Mother status as the Dutch Society are keen to establish themselves in first position within the EU. She illustrated how quickly the Dutch Society respond to DNA queries, a request for a profile was answered in less than 24 hours. She noted that the Society needed to differentiate between policy and Office procedure and a policy to deliver the Society's needs should be implemented.

JK expressed his feelings that the DNA policy should stay as it stands, he proposed to leave it alone for the time being. Members should be encouraged to use the Society's kits.

Yvonne Small (YS) expressed she was surprised members did not want to invest in DNA for colt foals. If breeders were not willing to invest a £100 in a foal, then it was a bad job. However, she suggested members should be allowed to choose for colt foals, and that it not be mandatory.

RM noted that it was possible for members to elect to DNA profile their colt foals at the present time.

SE seconded JK's proposal.

The President informed the floor this was just a discussion; no decisions are being made or votes taking place.

Geraint Davies (Adfer Stud)- noted that he had two mares stolen where the chips were removed, and they were taken out of the country. He felt that both DNA and Microchipping had not helped his position.

Matthew Howells (MH) stated that the meeting should move to a vote noting the etiquette of a meeting.

The President said they would in a minute and advised the floor nothing is being changed it's for the members of the society to give direction. The President invited the Chair of Finance to speak.

TH - there is a benefit that Society microchips are updated when a change of ownership takes place whereas other companies do not update unless the seller informs them and as such, she supported the Hon Vets' advice regarding using the Society's chips.

Geraint Davies (Chair of Finance) (GD) noted that the trustees were fully supportive of continuing with DNA profiling. The Society is sponsoring the current scheme - the cost to the breeder is £50 but the actual cost to the Society is £72.18p. This cost is absorbed by the Society. He confirmed to date; 2384 DNA profiles had been collected with a cost to the society of approx. £52,000.

The President re-iterated that it was the Society's choice to make. There were three possible resolutions which the membership can change

1. To amend the DNA scheme
2. To improve the scheme with spot checking
3. To put something else in its place such as DNA profiling of all filly foals.

Liesl Mead (LM) noted that the meeting needed to be clear on what was being proposed. She felt that everybody using the Animal Health Trust was the way forward. That should be the proposal. She also wished to raise the size of the Microchip needles which the Society used and asked if the society could look again at the size of the applicator.

RM noted that it was not possible to change the size of the chip. The Thoroughbred industry had a small gun to implant the chip. No vets have contacted RM over the size of the needle.

MH queried Mr GD's statement regarding Council's position regarding the DNA scheme referring to leaked emails back in the spring which noted that Trustees did not back the DNA scheme

CTH asked Mr Howells if he did not believe the statement issued by Council at the time.

MH quoted the content of the email

CTH asked whether MH believed the author of the email's assertion rather than the official Statement issued by Council?

MH Confirmed that he believed the content of the email.

Wyn Jones (Vice Chair) (WJ) Asked whether Mr Howells could produce his proof to substantiate his allegations against certain Council members on Facebook and quoted verbatim from his reply regarding Dr Heggarty " his spiel probably is correct" Mr Jones asked whether Mr Howells was a genetics expert? He also repeated what the Chair of Finance had shared; that the DNA issue was costing

the Society thousands of pounds and went on to read Mr Howells Facebook statement regarding Serving Trustees, insinuating that they wished to get rid of the DNA scheme and were using the report by Dr Heggarty to do this. This implied that Mr Howells was calling him a liar. He noted that he had never mentioned scrapping the scheme, at a full Council meeting 'how to better the scheme' had been discussed. He requested a public apology on Facebook or noted that they would be meeting in court.

MH asked whether the Chair would retract his comment in his statement?

WJ stated that he wanted a public apology on Facebook

MH responded with the word "Pathetic"

Paul Harper (PH) Requested a breakdown on the DNA costs to the society.

GD expanded on the actual cost breakdown to the society. The DNA kit itself cost £40.50, the postage was £5.00, and the Admin cost was at £17.79 an hour as assessed by the Society's Auditor. The total thus added of £26.28, making a final total of £72.18p. If someone wished to query it, they should contact the Auditor as the accounts have been passed.

TH Asked for confirmation that a percentage of the fee to the Animal Health goes to research

GD confirmed that this was correct

Emma Edwards (EE) felt quite strongly that the full cost should be passed on to the members - especially if the policy is kept as it is.

EG expressed that there are other issues to consider such as sealable/resealable bags. Without this integrity any sample could be tampered with. Council had decided that the bags should be tamper-proof and requested that this practice be continued?

RM advised that some individuals may take DNA themselves, this is not correct or legal, it should be a VET and then it is posted so there is no break in the chain. It should not be passed to the Owner.

EG felt strongly that the integrity must be protected.

The President asked the floor to confirm which recommendation they would like to take from this meeting regarding DNA to the next AGM. He asked for a show of hands.

Liz Hampson (LH) intervened and asked the floor whether they wished the trustees to take the proposition which had just been mooted from the floor to the AGM?

JK noted that he had put a proposal to the floor which was seconded. He offered to repeat the proposal – 'To keep the DNA scheme as it is and that AHT holds the profile'.

LH Suggested that this involved a change to the current procedure

JK noted that Council had allowed the use of other laboratories, and that practice was their fault.

LH made the point that she was not on Council when that was actioned.

JK responded that he was on Council and would take responsibility for the action.

A member expressed that identifying by microchip isn't a fool proof approach, as it doesn't hold the profile, so there would be no connection of the animal to its parentage. Plus, she wanted to raise the concern regarding microchips failing.

RM said he understood and took her concerns on board but explained that the Microchip would show where to go to get a DNA test.

Janice Parry felt it a matter that requires a show of hands as the members need more clarity from the Council as to what they are proposing. Also, with so many costs involved its almost £100 per animal to continue breeding. She also expressed that registration information can go astray. But in her case, she had the microchip so could source the reg documents from the Society, but this was not always the case if Society chips were not used.

Tracey Middleton (TM) expressed that DNA highlights the breeds and Society importance of parentage.

The Chair requested that the meeting bring the discussion back to point, by advising the floor there had not been any proposals, the item was brought to the meeting today to be discussed and understand if there was an appetite to take it forward.

Steve Jones (SJ) asked if the 'horse colts' could be left until they were 3years old?

Eric Davies (ED) asked if it was the floors decision or the Council's to discuss at a later date? Would the proposals go back to Council for an executive decision? He asked for clarification on the proposal. It needs to be clear if it is a proposal today or something to take back to Council.

Catrin Reed (CR) - asked if the Passport should go back to the office to be over stamped? Otherwise there is no proof that the there is a DNA profile for that animal.

SE then re-iterated the principle involved, regarding the initial purpose of DNA profiling.

He suggested returning to it as originally proposed in May 2013. Profiling not testing, not maiden mares but mares producing their first purebred foal, and AHT doing all the processing, that is the proposal.

Roger Davies (President-elect) stated that Microchipping and DNA profiling would not produce better animals. It was our ancestors that produced the animals we have today.

Ceri Fell (CF) Agreed with Steve Everitt and requested that a sticker illustrating the profile be placed in the passport so that everybody knows what the profile of their animal is.

There was some confusion as to what the proposal contained until the Chair asked for clarification. He asked the floor what they wanted to do about DNA?

Steve Hayes (SH) referred to the way the meeting was run as if by the 'Chuckle Brothers'

Stewart Franklin (SF) noted that corporate law states that you take the proposal and vote on the proposal.

There was more confusion and the President asked for quiet.

Brian Webster (BW) stated that the proposal from the Chair of the meeting stated that it was to be left as it is - he noted that the proposal made was making a change.

The President asked JK to repeat the proposal.

JK then referred to the action taken in 2014 - it was set out that DNA was taken from mares producing their first purebred registered foal and that AHT would hold those profiles. It was confused, when people looked for cheaper options, and the Society should have had the guts to say no - rather than keep looking for loopholes - that is the failure and the society's problem in his opinion.

LH asked if it would be a good idea to park it and raise it at the AGM? She asked the floor if everybody knew which 2014 document was being referred to as she did not?

The floor responded in an affirmative tone.

The Chair then stated that he would take a vote on that proposal. SE was the seconder to JK's firm proposal

CF added an amendment that we needed a sticker in our passports.

Chair **accepted** that amendment and asked if there was a counter proposal from the floor? He was going to ask the "no's 'to stand - and stated again that it was not possible to hear the floor and asked for quite once again?

Lisa Reed (LR) asked for Mr Kirk to explain clearly the process for harvesting the DNA from start to finish?

RM read out the criteria as currently laid down by the WPCS

1. Purchase an AHT DNA kit from the Office at Bronaeron
2. Arrange for the Vet to pull the hair sample
3. Confirm the identity of the horse by comparing the microchip with the passport and sign the accompanying Society form with the DNA kit
4. Send kit to AHT - in his opinion it should say 'Vet to send kit to AHT'
5. Send the completed form to WPCS
6. The AHT will forward the DNA profile to the Society and retain a copy. The DNA profile is available to the owner on request. He also stated that it is possible to download the form from the WPCS website. The DNA must go directly to AHT from the Vet

Paul Harper – Expressed that for progress the society should move further with this, for improvement.

The Chair asked again whether Mr. Kirk was happy with that information in regard to his proposal?

PJ wished to correct RM on the procedure as they have moved on since that one read out - now the hair samples are actually sent to the Office and they send them to the AHT. That is the current practice

LH Agreed

RM stated that that practice was wrong.

PJ pointed out again that this was the instruction he had received.

GBB Explained on behalf of the Office that the process was changed to the DNA kits being sent to the Office as a result of members purchasing DNA kits and a number going missing in the post to AHT, which resulted in members having to re-do the Vet process. It was discussed and a new process put in place. All samples are recorded at the Office and sent by 'Special delivery' to the AHT to prevent this happening.

RM stated once again that this practice was wrong.

The Chair asked for those against the proposal to stand?

It was unanimously agreed from the floor that Council consider carrying on with the current practice but use AH Trust only, for profiling and that stickers be added to the passports. This was backed unanimously from the floor.

ED wished to confirm that the proposal goes back to Council to take a decision as regards procedure.

CT confirmed that it was the case and that he would be recommending that the Council take the feeling of the meeting on the topic of DNA.

The President invited Trustee Dilwyn Roberts to address the meeting under Agenda item 5.

Dilwyn Roberts (DR) Thanked the floor for the discussion and felt that the Society is not far from achieving its goal of what is best for the future of the breed. He thanked Mr. Roland Michell and the University at Aberystwyth for the work to bring this presentation to the meeting. He noted that as Chair of Welfare and Education for the Society, he was keen to promote discussion on topics such as conformation, soundness, acquired faults, nutrition - all of which will be discussed at the Judges conference in September. He thanked Euros for all his work as an enthusiastic Young Ambassador, as is the current YA Catrin Reed. He requested that Euros show some of the videos he had produced during the year. This was not possible, and DR apologised - but that was the information he had.

He noted that where welfare was concerned that the Council advised the floor that the Society has limited powers in relation to court cases, until the case has been

resolved. That privacy and confidentiality is respected as the membership would want. The floor was informed of the policies and procedures that are available on the website.

They were advised that an Education and Welfare seminar would be held at Aberystwyth University. The Chair mentioned that they had hoped to show a video by Euros Llyr Morgan but it was not possible to play it with the equipment available.

Euros Llyr Morgan (ELLM) informed the meeting that a presentation had indeed been sent to the Office

The Chair responded by apologising that the recordings were at the meeting, but that the technical equipment available was not suitable. ELLM stated that he had offered to assist if needed.

DR handed back to the President to discuss the General concerns regarding governance

The President then asked CT - Chair of Council to invite each standing committee Chair to speak on their strategic plan.

Liz Hampson LH (Promotions) advised the floor of that which the society wants to achieve in 2020. She noted that since her election from the floor to Council at the AGM in Glasgow it had been a baptism of fire. As Chair of Promotions she outlined the targets they aim to achieve.

- The New website is the priority. It is not fully up and running but John Welsh would speak about that later.
- A strategy to promote the museum has been put in place and they are looking at holding an Open day. The contents of the Museum have been valued.
- A development of 'members only' part to the website.
- The fourth target for 2020 would be to issue regular press releases for example on Brexit and Equine flu. Generally, to update the membership of what is going on within the society
- The fifth is to develop a long-term strategy for the WPCS aimed at developing new markets for Ponies and Cobs and attracting new members. She requested that members contact with ideas.

Pauline Lloyd (PLI) voiced a concern about where the Pedigree Database had gone from the website and wanted an explanation. She felt that the website was 'hopeless with the stud listings out of alphabetical order'. She noted that the pedigree database had vanished, and that the Society is years behind with the Stud book.

CT Noted that the CER (Central Equine Register) are looking at the full update of the IT system but the society has been having trouble contracting them, but it was his belief that it was finalised on Friday of this week.

PLI noted that it did not answer her question which was “what has happened to the database? that was very good and efficient.

CT noted that Mr. Peter Cooper withdrew his services when another IT company was contracted which left the Society in the mire and so that is why they have had to go to the CER who are doing a full up to date system for the Society.

John Welsh (JW) Trustee explained that the website was basically run by one person named Mr. Peter Cooper, who decided to give up, unfortunately he was not allowing access to the information stored on the system. He noted that he joined in March and ‘attended my first meeting it was obvious we were losing the website and together we were in danger of losing the passport and all other information would have disappeared and we would have not been able to produce passports or anything. We have now got a new IT company which is Equine Register who are going to do the website. They do the Arab Horse Society and if anyone wants to see this, they can log on their website. Unfortunately a lot of the database due to GDPR has taken months to go through it all, to try and make sure that all the information which is on the website will be correct, it cannot be wrong because the Society could be sued, so when it is done the Equine Register will be there, and finer detail was given about an App on the phone to extract detail of animals registered. This will reduce a lot of the work for the office. It will all come back - it is just a matter of extracting the detail at the moment.

TH - A message for yourself, so can we assume that all the news articles, statements etc. that have been in the archive that we have lost them?

JW - potentially yes.

TH - weren't they backed up before the system went down, because when I was still a trustee in February our system was still live, we knew then of the issues coming forward, so weren't they backed up then?

JW - As far as I am aware the provider wasn't willing to work with the Society and the CER are doing their best to extract that information.

TH - So what I am saying is did we not back-up everything that was on the website.

JW - you couldn't back it up, I am not sure of what was wrong with the old problems, because I only come on in March, all I knew was that the website was going to go down, and there was nothing in place to recover it.

TH - so nothing was saved on a memory stick, because everything on the computer could be saved to memory sticks.

LH - it isn't that it couldn't be saved, but the provider had the rights to the data, whoever signed the contract off with him was wrong

Correction 1 Peter Cooper was contracted to the Society and he did work with the Office, Hashtag and CER.

LH (cont'd) so we have no access to that, so I don't know what went wrong in the past.

Lauren Bailey (LB) - I just wonder whether the Society thought that it was prudent to have legal advice on the property rights for the website, given that the information contained it was so important, and did the Society find out who owned that information before employing the provider to make the website?

LH - Good question, this is before me and John comes on board, so we can't answer that.

LB - so I can assume from that the answer is no?

Chair - the only answer I can give you to that we have Boyns backing our system up and the CER are trying to extract the data, everything through the previous providers files and that has been a massive task, but they are extracting files. Gemma perhaps you as a member of staff who is dealing with the CER, could you fully inform that lady of where we with IT?

GB-B - we have pulled all the information off that we have got, and we are ready to put this on the new data-base, so we won't lose any information from the data-base.

Catryn Bigley (CB) - I think there is confusion here because you are talking about two different things, the website is obviously a promotional thing and then you are talking about a data-base of the CER, so yes I know that they are interlinked, I think Pauline wants access to pedigrees etc., but the Website is one thing, the Data-base is another, and are you saying that one person is responsible for both?

Chair - no, the website is run by a company called FANATIC but to operate the pedigree system we have to link up with the IT system, so we are just going back to the website that Liz is talking about, it's not the same thing as John is talking about, because John is talking about the 'Pedigree data-base' and it will come through eventually.

The only thing that I can say is that we have had problems with extracting the files from the previous IT provider.

CB - which is data-base, and nothing to do with the website, I believe Tracy is asking about the website data.

Chair - we are looking at updating the website fully; I have spoken to John about it and we will get everything we can back to normal.

CB - as long as things move forward that's the way - thank you.

Amanda Harris (AH) Tydi Stud - just a question, do we own the copyright of all of the WPCS content and therefore it does belong to us as a Society.

Chair - Yes, we do have the copyright

LH- Thank you Chair; some Council members are saying we don't own the copyright; it is ok for the Chair to say that we own the copyright, but do we own the copyright?

Chair - I think Liz is getting things mixed up, yes, we own the copyright, and it is registered. I can assure you, because I actually did it for the Society.

Stuart Franklin (SF) – 'Ex-chair of Finance back in the day of John Russell, we had a contract with Peter Cooper which give us the intellectual copyright on all the work he did for us, has that been looked at?

Chair - I couldn't answer you on that, because I didn't deal with Peter Cooper at that time

SF - this is a contract that John put in place, when we started with Peter; that should give us the intellectual property rights on everything

Chair - we received quite threatening remarks to us and I can't go into detail on it, because of confidentiality, he was quite robust about this matter with the staff.

Ed Gummery - Peter Cooper had us over a barrel, because the contract that had been raised many years ago. I understand that he built the software for the pedigree data-base and he modelled that on the Welsh Black Cattle Society who he previously worked for. We own that data - it is already on the computer in the office, if there is no way of getting the intellectual property rights from Peter Cooper, is there any idea of us building our own system and putting this onto the website?

Chair - the CER are extracting all the files, but it is a huge task to do it.

EG - so in the future it will be an index for us to access on the website to get the pedigree the way Peter Cooper's system was.

Chair - Yes hopefully.

John Kirk - Ladies and Gentlemen all I can say, please bear with the Society regarding this IT problem, I was there at the time, you wouldn't begin to imagine the problem that Peter Cooper has caused this IT business moving forward, so all I would ask you as a member, and you as my fellow members to bear with the Council at this present time, because it has been a complete and utter nightmare.

Chair – invited the Chair of Member's services to address the meeting:

Gwyn Jones (GJ) - our target is to encourage events with the Young Members and the Area Associations twice a year if possible, at the AGM and in the autumn, to arrange and run a non-competitive 'Family day out' to promote the breed. Also, to carry out annual maintenance of the Pavilion, thank you.

TH - I would like to ask the Chair of Member's Services, does the Young ambassador still come under the umbrella of member services?

GJ - yes

TH - In a recent strategy and targets statement that was put on the WPCS website I believe 48 hours ago, there was a paragraph there about encouraging events which will involve young people including pre-teens, promoting bursaries available, and the role of the Young Ambassador and Young Achiever . Our own President said that our young people being our future, may I ask why there were no trustees at the Young Judges competition at the Welsh National, not one.

GJ - I will speak for myself

TH - with all due respect, you should be speaking about your standing committees and others.

GJ - I can answer for that, I couldn't I haven't been able to attend the Young Judges up in Malvern for a few years, we are always on the harvest and I don't know about the other Trustees I can't speak for them .

TH - may I ask through the Chair why he or his Vice-Chair or any other Trustees were not present at the Young Judges competition?

Chair - I can answer you, I have had two deaths in my family in one month, I have had extreme difficulties and I have fought my way through this and attended every Council meeting and that was the reason why I wasn't there.

TH - with all due respect Chair I appreciate that, and I know that you have had some family difficulties, and myself, I know it hasn't just been this year, but why didn't none of the other trustees attend?

Chair - if I can just add, my commitment to the Society has been 100 per cent, to bring something up like this I think it is being very disrespectful, asking me while you know what I have gone through.

TH - with all due respect Chair I am not asking you, because Chair of Member Services only gave his reasons for not attending, he said I cannot answer for the rest of Council, so in order to address the rest of Council I am going through the Chair, not at the Chair but through the Chair.

Chair - you asked the Chair to give an answer of why he wasn't there.

TH - I asked through the Chair; not why you weren't there.

Chair - yes you did.

TH - should I play back the tape I said, 'through the Chair could you possibly and tell us why there was no Council members there at all, not one'.

Chair - does any other Council member want to comment.

Elgan Evans (EE) - I will say something (**interrupted**)

LH - with all due respect Colin just said why he was not attending, he did put it out a couple of days before to see if Trustees could go, unfortunately none of us could, myself, Debbie and Sharon had already committed to go on Friday and because of his own health reasons and the death in the family.

TH - with all due respect Liz, I was not questioning the reasons of the Chair, it just didn't look very good of the Society, that there was not one trustee attending and our Young Ambassador worked hard alongside everybody else, and where was the mentor to the Young Ambassador?

The Chair of Education and Welfare addressed the meeting:

Dilwyn Roberts (DR) – 'Ladies and Gentlemen does anyone wish to ask any questions?

Nigel Burton (NB) - I am slightly confused; we have an agenda we have dealt with 5a. DNA testing, and we seem to veer away from the Agenda, I thought the next item on the agenda was B) Governance Concerns, then C) Changing the Structure of Council, then D) Area Associations and Overseas, then E) AGM recommendations, followed by F) Promotions can you please explain where we are on the Agenda?

Chair - it has been verbally agreed that DNA has been passed that it is going back to Council and I apologise for going off the Agenda and we should have dealt with the item Structure of Council and we revert to this.

NB - can I remind you we have dealt with item A and the next item is B on the Agenda?

President - We are going according to the Agenda, it is just that all the questions have been condensed, so if you bear with us, what you are talking about will come up later, we are going through individual Chairman of sub-committees.

SH - I have been holding meetings for over thirty years for multi-million purpose businesses and we follow that Agenda, it just seems that at every corner there is a delay, if you want to finish this by 5.00 pm there is a hell of a lot to go through, so please get hold of this meeting and drive it forward.

Chair - Chair are you all happy to go back to Governance Concerns? and I apologise for not following the Agenda.

B) General Concerns regarding Governance:

Chair invited members to speak on the subject.

Liesel Mead (LM) - you said this Agenda was formed from feedback from members concerns?

LH - read the names out of persons - that had raised issues you have all raised concerns with Governance does anyone want to speak?

Isobel Clutton (IC) - I would like to make some comments, first there have been big issues with the way Disciplinary matters have been handled, I would like to suggest drawing off a new committee separate to Council to deal with all Disciplinary matters, now we have Chairmen and Chair women of all our Area Associations and I would suggest the drawing up of a committee to deal with the Disciplinary matters with the Chair people of our Area Associations, so they could draw up Articles as to how they would be run.

I would also like suggest forming a President Committee where all former Presidents of the Society are invited onto that committee. The purpose of that committee that all honours awarded by the Society, are awarded by them, after all who is more senior in the Society.

I would also like to ask when elections are coming up to serve on Council; this is a very big ask, and I admire people who come forward for nothing to serve the Society, we would not have a Society without them, but I would ask the Society to draw up a job description, that people can look at; and consider when they are thinking about standing themselves. At the moment we are asking people to go blind into the situation and it would create a wider pool if we did have a proper job description for what is required of people when they are on Council. I would also like to suggest that in their first year, that new trustees should have training, I have just had a quick look on the internet and the National Council for Voluntary Organizations has a Trustee training on "Foundation of Good Governance", online training; and that shouldn't be too difficult to put in place, if that particular package was deemed to appropriate. The Charity Commission also has documentation on Trustee Recruitment / Selection and Induction.

I think if people felt there was proper training available in order to enable them to fulfill the role on Council in an adequate manner that would take us forward and we would get far more people interested in standing for Council.

The last thing I want to say is last Thursday we buried my father in-law; he was a very old gentleman - he was nearly ninety and very often when people are very old there are not too many people around to attend their funeral, well 250 people turned

up at his funeral, because he was very decent, a well-liked man and the one thing that everybody says about him was the he never ever said a bad thing about anybody and I think that we can all maintain some lessons from this - the only way forward for our Society is for all members to look forward and to be able to disagree, but not fallout, we do not want to be the generation of members who take this Society down.

I have been a member for thirty years and my family have bred Section A and B's and been associated with this Society for 66 years and I want to see this Society move forward for pleasure and promotes the breeds and makes us all friends, now I don't know any of you, and you don't know me, but I actually represent the vast majority of members of this Society for that very reason of five and half thousand people, I am sure we can do better together - thank you

Chair - thank you for those constructive comments.

NB - As an ex-trustee I would like to make some suggestions. I will go through the suggestions quickly, first and foremost can I remind Council that all trustees should have a full understanding the Nolan Principles, Honesty, Integrity, Openness, Leadership, Accountability, and always conduct themselves accordingly. I think then for me the AGM in Glasgow and the meeting today so far has showed a great deal of incompetence. A Council that publishes an Agenda and cannot stick to it, rips off to me and I come from a professional background.

I think one of the things Council needs to do is increase the numbers but that is on the Agenda. I think Council needs to establish the skills required by Trustees to carry out their duties. You need someone with legal skills, with people skills, marketing skills, as well as skills with ponies and about judging, skills so I suggest that Council carry a skills analysis of Trustees to establish of what additional skills may be required and then encourage new trustees who have those skills to stand for election and insist that candidates set-out in their election papers how they match those skills.

I also suggested that you recruit a Chief Executive but was pleased to see that you announced yesterday that you had actually done that, because I think having appointed a Chief Executive you should allow them to run the business of the organization. In all the organizations and companies that I have been involved with, the rule of the Board, Council, and Trustees in this case, is to set the strategy, a business plan and then to instruct the Chief Executive to implement it, make the Chief Executive responsible and not to interfere on a day to day basis trying to control him.

Other things I suggested which would help Governance enormously would be to publish on the website a summary of Council meetings on the morning afterwards - we did this when I was Vice Chairman; it is not rocket science. We also managed to publish the minutes of the previous meeting as soon as they had been ratified; again, it is not rocket science, it is very easy to do. We also agreed when I was on Council that minutes of Council meetings should set-out decisions taken, actions agreed and how each trustee voted or abstained.

We thought it was important that members should know, how their elected representatives voted in order they could then decide whether they elect them or not. Two other items also on Governance, I think Council should review the confidentiality clause, I don't think Council members can hide behind the confidentiality clause, the only thing, the only matters that should be treated as 'confidential' are anything that

is commercially sensitive or anything that is involving members of staff such as salaries, disciplinaries, and finally I think Council members should not actually be judges at any show during their term of office - thank you.

Dania Leyson (DL) - fellow members I just would like to make one point a lady at the back who I don't know, she made a point about Disciplinaries; we have rules and regulations covering the Disciplinaries that is all we need to is follow the rules as they are written, that is all we have to but we don't, and I am very sad here to say this, that people here are hurting here today of what has occurred in the last two years - thank you.

SH- I got to thank the gentleman behind me he actually spoke 100 per cent sense also I would like to thank the lady over there, because disciplinary is a big big thing. I was involved in an incident, probably about 18 months ago with one of the Trustees sat there now, today, and it is horrible. When I came home, I nearly sold all my ponies, I couldn't be arsed with anymore to be honest with you. I was horrified that person could speak to me in that way. I wrote in, I have documents, you guys did not discipline that person therefore you guys - every single one of you because I have it in here in writing 'unanimously'!

LH - please don't say everybody

SH - I have got a letter here 'unanimously' that means every one of you.

Chair - Mr Hayes you are out of order

SH - I am not out of order

Chair - Warned again that this was out of order, let me come across you there Mr Hayes, you are wrong to say that we didn't discipline, we did go through the procedure and you know very well we did, we went through the procedure and I am very sorry you are making wrong remarks.

SH - I have evidence, that you guys have set a precedence now, so if anyone abuses judges or anyone in this room and they are brought forward to the WPCS for disciplinary, precedence is law and therefore if I am judging and someone abuses me and I report it to the 'Welsh Pony and Cob' they can do nothing – this goes back to the gentleman's point; it's about naivety and understanding – if we are going to move forward – we need to move forward because everything on Facebook still 18 months now, I am asked about that day, Guys - you need to be open. You need to do it.

Chair - We have dealt with it under the procedure of the Society Mr Hayes and for you to make remarks that we haven't, you are totally wrong, and I take offence to it.

SH - No! You may take offence to it – but I asked you for information and I have not got it.

Chair - because at the end of the day, Mr Hayes, I explained to you when you rung me six or eight weeks ago.

SH - It was longer than that; it was the beginning of the year.

Chair - I explained to you, it went through a full independent, we sent the investigation to a lady in London, then it went to a disciplinary panel, and the panel

was recommended by the WCVA in Cardiff, and those panel I went in to see them, and not one of them had any interest or any ownership of Ponies and Cobs so for you to say that it wasn't done correctly - that is wrong.

SH - I beg to disagree, and if you are to move this on, you need to get integrity; honesty – well I question it?

Chair - I'll put up with criticism, but I don't like my honesty questioned

SH - What about my honesty? I'll tell you what, ever since that day my own personal honesty has been brought into justice.

Chair - I wasn't in that event that you are relating to, so I can't comment, but at the end of the day I did my duty; it went to an investigation and it was done correctly.

SH - It must be a WPC thing because in industry out in the big wide world they wouldn't have followed them procedures.

Chair - There's a lady up the back of the room

PLI - I've never met or spoken to Steve Hays before today, I haven't spoken to him now. I had the pleasure of judging at Machen show this year, a lovely show, well organised, really hard working committee and they are absolutely reeling about what went on there last year – we've got two Council members who have been kicked out of the Society for three to five years, for very very minor offences to my mind, and we've got someone sitting up there on Council who behaved abominably that day with foul language in front of women and children. There might have been an investigation, but Machen show are not happy at all; they were even threatened they would lose their medals if they didn't shut up.

Chair - I'll take the lady over there – she's been on her feet for ages then John I'll take you.

Catherine Rees (CR) – Horeb Stud - I can agree with what Pauline has just said, a few weeks ago myself and my husband attended a meeting with you and some other Trustees, and you told us in that meeting that procedures didn't have to be followed because Mr Steve Hayes had written directly to the Trustee in question; and that was incorrect. You had given us false information. Mr Steve Hayes had written to the Society, both e mail, and a hard copy so can you please explain why you misled myself and my husband saying you didn't have to follow procedures, when in fact you did?

Chair - I am not prepared to discuss confidential matters – I'm very sorry, there are confidential matters to both sides in this, there are three sides – there's Mr Hayes, there's Machen show and there's Mr Elgan Evans... I cannot break any – I cannot. ...It's getting totally out of hand.

JK - Ladies and gentlemen – let me just put the tin hat on this for you – I was Chair at that present time when the Machen show problem came about. I want to be honest and open with every person in this room, and I will leave here today and may lose a few friends over it but I'm going to be honest and open with you and it's about time the truth was told.

The Machen show problem was dealt with – unfortunately I have had a few words with Mr Hayes here today, Mr Hayes wrote in and asked the person involved for an apology which he did, he did apologise. Mr Hayes should have taken the correct procedure by sending it in as a complaint. If Mr Hayes had have sent it in as a complaint, the said person would not be sitting there today, I'm afraid to say. If he'd have sent it in as a complaint but he didn't, he asked for an apology and an apology he got.

Machen Show was out of time with their money – their complaint, the proper procedure, and I used the Chair's discretion to send it to investigation. It went to investigation at my cost ladies and gentlemen, and this is one of the reasons I'm not on Council today; I am going to be honest with all of you, because Council members turned on me for sending it to investigation and disciplinary and it cost me – nobody else, and I lost respect from Council on that day for doing the right thing for the credibility of this Society and I am being honest an open with you. I think Mr Hayes is wrong to be quite honest with you, and I feel very sorry for our current Chair being dragged over the coals like this – but what is right is right, at the end of the day. Machen show was never threatened by myself and when Colin and I went for mediation they was never threatened to have their medals taken away. I want to say that to you all. I would not conduct myself in that manner and never have done, but the reason I left Council was because they turned on me for doing the right thing for the credibility of this Society, and now you've had it from me, that's the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth

LH Thank you John

TH – Can I just say in addition to John's statement where he said he lost the respect of council; can I just say I personally, he didn't lose my respect and I know there was others that - who he didn't lose the respect by, so it wasn't all of Council and can I just say in support of the Council that was there when I was doing my term when this issue was taking place – Council was not kept informed of what was happening with the complaint. It was dealt with by the higher members of Council and the senior ones, we only knew what had gone on with the Machen show issue when a conclusion had come to a head – I am right Chair – yeah?

Chair - Yes, and that is the way all disciplinaries have happened.

TH - Yeah, so all of Council was not involved in it and as I say I know myself and one or two others, we did not lose respect for John, whilst I know that respect was lost from others.

SH – Thank you John, you know I've known you for a long time and fully respect you, and have every faith that you've done the right thing – the only thing I will slightly add is that I have documentation here from the WPC that states “complaint” even the – your right, the apology letter has complaint written on it.

Chair - Can we move on? - this is not an agenda item; this is a confidential item.

EG - President, Chairman and fellow members, this rolls on nicely on some of the things I wrote about in relation to suggestions. It is important that we roll back to say why we are here really, because what has just been talked about has resulted in the

resignation of the Chair, and four or five respected Council members, and at that time if we are talking about Governance and rules at that time, Council went down to under ten members (Trustees) and according to our rules and Articles and to be consistent with them, Council then co-opted Mr Dilwyn Roberts. I have no axe to grind with Mr Roberts, but what I would say is that Council made a decision to co-opt Mr Roberts where actually there is a default system that has been for many years, and it was suggested in Glasgow - it was suggested it was dysfunctional and got rid of; and it meant that the candidates had run which included me in the 2018 AGM and me being the 7th member on the list proposed and seconded and voted by the membership, once Jeff Parry resigned off Council; should have come back on default not on a quorate of six because it hadn't reached six, and should have invited me back on Council. Now I am not saying I could do any better job than Mr Roberts, but what I am saying is that it is important that Council follow Governance and the Articles as they are laid down, and doesn't appear to have happened, you may might turn around and say what does Ed know? I am not a lawyer, but I consulted with a lawyer who is a specialist in Company and Charity law, and he says that is what Council should have considered. My point is about following consistency and following the Articles, they have worked for many years to protect our members, to make sure we all have a level playing field to run on and on that basis and John (Mr Kirk) talk's comments about a Trustee given an independent hearing about complaints made about Mr Hayes.

EG (continued) One of the causes that has created bitterness and there are bitter people in this room, talking about this suspension of membership of Mr Roberts; a well-respected Council member who had worked hard for the Council, and it would appear on the outside and I have worked on Council, and there were rumours then and stories sometimes against Council, but on this occasion David Roberts and all the membership knows he has been suspended, when rules clearly say that an independent panel says that 3 people should have been looking at his case. That doesn't appear to have happened. It is very sad that the membership is becoming bitter, because of a decision made by yourselves doesn't appear to be consistent, and therefore one of our members has been dealt a wrong card.

Chair - I will answer Ed on Dilwyn Roberts's appointment. We took legal advice, you know yourself - you have been on Council, and we have top quality solicitors and we carried out the advice given. If it is challengeable you can send it in to the Office and we will refer it on to our lawyer, if it is anyone's fault it is them, and not us.

EG - I would like to say I have no axe to grind with Mr Roberts. I am sure he is doing a very good job, and I am not saying I could do any better, it is important that the rules are followed; and we have questioned before, the advice given from Geldards, and I remember this distinctly when I was on Council and there was some suggestions on Geldards being retained as they were not giving us the advice or product we wanted and this was flagged up. It is important to know, we respect what you do there, you are volunteers. You don't get paid and it is a hell of a job, I and other people in this room know how difficult it is, however it is important when a mistake is made that we put it right, resolve and learn from it.

Chair - Ed we have nothing in writing challenging Mr Roberts appointment. It was brought up in the AGM and nobody has furthered it from there. We have the advice from our solicitors, and we have done it correctly, if it is challengeable, we would have a claim against our solicitors.

DL - back again - you made a point the way things were run. I will quickly refresh on the Glasgow AGM where I brought it forward that the correct procedure would have been for the next person to be on the list to take the place of vacancies or whatever at that time I was then told that it was altered in 2017, actually 1st April 2017 and we actually look at the minutes for the special resolution, it didn't actually cover that, and there are people in the room that will verify that, because they were on Council at the time, but can I make a point here please? if that's the case and that rule was omitted or taken out in 2017, I recall that a trustee resigned in December 2017 and as for the rules they were following that they were able to run without that one, until the following year's AGM which would have been 2018; and then in 2018, you actually returned to the rule that you said that was taken out in 2017 because you used that one in the list correctly.

Chair - what I recall in Glasgow - Dania you used the 2014 Articles.

DL - I am afraid not, and there are people here that will verify that.

Chair - I also have a lot of people that will verify that you were using the 2014 Articles.

DL - that's fine; I have taken legal advice as well, and there is lots here who will want to speak, we don't want to lie, we want to be open and honest. I can remember the Nolan Principle and having to sign it. Tell me how you can take in 2017 and then use it in 2018, you can't take them out as you want and if you look at the special resolution, off the top of my head, bear with me please, Article 22, you did alter, it was about the successive terms and this wasn't touched, but then you refer to it in 2018, quite rightly took the resolution off the person in 2019, obviously you had enough to run, so you did follow the rules. You can't revert to rules that you took out in 2017. Can I ask is there anyone here that can verify what I have just said, that in the period of time in 2017 the only part of it was altered was the successive years - is there anyone here?

Chair - to be quite honest with you, we have taken nothing out of the Articles; they have been approved at an AGM.

DL - OK is there someone here? okay I see it is Ann Bigley. I think that she actually put this through, and she can shed some light on this. I will wait for her to speak, because it is important.

AB - I can't say what or when, all I can say is that in 2014 we set-up a new set of Articles and it went through at EGM / AGM and that was passed, when we were on Council. I wasn't Chair at the time. A member of Council brought forward a solicitors letter saying it needed to be tweaked, because effectively a Trustee could stay on for three terms which wasn't intended, so therefore it was an EGM held at the AGM. I believe in Cardiff I believe it was in Cardiff, but I am not certain, and it could have

been in 2016/2017? I am not sure of the date and that was brought back in to amend the Articles, and that was the only thing amended, so you could not stay on for three terms and that was all that was amended.

DL - Thank you Ann, that proves that rule was taken out, where it is a now default situation where you still have to go back to that rule, where you did take the sixth person that didn't get elected the previous year, and that is perfectly right and you should have done, then you said you took it out, the next person on that list shouldn't take the place at the time, when we were only nine trustees.

Chair - the only thing I can say is that these Articles were adopted on the 1st April 2017 by an AGM.

DL - With respect if you just listened to Mrs Bigley said...

Chair - You will have to write in, and we can deal with you and Mr Gummery.

DL – Well, I am afraid we have already done that, and I am giving you this opportunity, because you need this opportunity, in all honesty and fairness - you need the time to answer what the complaint has been written in about. I don't intend to bring that up today, but what I am saying is how can you take it out and use it the following year.

Chair - I haven't taken anything out.

DL - it doesn't make sense to me.

Chair - to be honest with you I find your argument very weak, because I don't know where you are going? this has been adopted by an AGM, I haven't taken anything out.

DL - but it wasn't under the special resolution. Ann is that what you said, or have I got confused?

AB - All I can comment on, is that as far as I am aware the amendment came in to change the Articles in 2017 did not include any change to the default position.

DL - Is there anyone else here. Ed was you one of those people that understood?

Chair - what I understood is that you wrote in through your solicitor under Article 25 changed.

DL - No if you can bear with me, please I am entitled as a former Trustee and a member and a shareholder to have the question answered.

Chair - We have to move on, we are pedalling backwards, we are not going to get the business done - there will be complaints when the meeting will close at 5.30 pm. You have an option. You can write in, if you think it is legally wrong, write and we will deal with it

Sandy Anderson (SA) - Mr Chairman I am sorry this goes to the whole of integrity and Council as a whole and the membership, you have to answer this question. I

believe you have not legally appointed people and therefore you have to reply, you just can't brush it under the carpet and 'let's deal with something else'.

Chair - with all due respect we are not brushing it under the carpet, we have had legal advice to say that we have appointed correctly. I have said before we can only go on the advice of our solicitors and clearly if they are wrong, they become accountable.

SA - I am afraid it doesn't work that way, you have Articles. You have to follow that procedure, you therefore have to prove to the members that you were correct to that and I remember having a conversation with you in Glasgow where you were going forward with fourteen and you confirmed that you were doing that. I do not think that you should have gone ahead and you as Chairman, having it brought up to you, should have accounted for. That is all I have to say.

MW - still on the point of Governance and Procedure and it is laid down in the Complaints Procedure - if a complaint relates to a Trustee or former Trustee, that the Investigating Officer will be an independent person who may or not be, a member of the Society. Will it be possible for anyone on Council to confirm that my husband's disciplinary panel was an independent panel?

Chair - We cannot discuss that

MW - It is okay- I am not going to ask for names, I just want you to confirm whether that investigation was done according to our rules and procedures, and it was an independent person or persons.

Chair - we took legal advice and it was followed.

MW - So the fact that the Trustee was investigated is by fellow trustees. I may as well say it, you were quite happy with whatever is written in any procedures in the Articles, or whatever - you take legal advice and you can carry on as you wish.

Chair - what do mean as you wish? we followed the legal advice - I said.

MW -You must have gone to the solicitors and asked them do we have to follow procedures, can we investigate them ourselves. Why would you go to the solicitors? is it written down in black and white, the procedure is quite clear - to appoint an independent person why would you go to a solicitor to follow procedure?

Chair - We have followed our procedures through our solicitors and the matter was closed, and we never had any appeal through our findings.

MW - No, because my husband would not spend a legal penny, so the Society saved a lot. Had there been an appeal it could have been really expensive for the Society, but I am glad to hear that none of you can confirm that you followed procedure.

Nia Roberts (NR) - Following on from that, I would like to talk about my husband - you as a Council have taken my husband's membership for three years. You did not afford him a Disciplinary and we asked for the appeals process. You said there was no appeal process. How are you actually following any procedures whatsoever?

Chair - I am not prepared to discuss confidential matters. Council followed the procedures; we took legal advice, and we have it in black and white.

NR - You just said Mr Thomas, that there is an appeal procedure, my husband asked you for the appeal procedures.

Chair - No

NR - I have it documented in a file here stating there is no appeals procedure.

Chair - Not under Article 13.

NR - so in any Court of law, if anybody committed murder, they could assassinate fifty people it wouldn't make any difference, there is no appeal process.

Chair- Article 13 we followed - there is no appeal procedure in that and if you think it is wrong...

NR - Can you explain what Article 13 is? I would like to know and the membership, could you explain Article 13 please?

Chair - There are various points on it.

NR - you should know it; you have used it against 2 ex-trustees

The Chair read out Article 13

(1)

1. *Termination of Membership*

2. *(i) Membership is terminated if:*

3. *(a) the Member dies or, if it is an organisation, ceases to exist.*

4. *(b) the Member resigns by written notice to the Society unless, after the resignation, there would be fewer than two Members.*

5. *(c) any sum due from the Member to the Society is not paid in full within two months of it falling due.*

6. *(d) the Member is removed from membership by a resolution of the Council that it is in the best interests of the Society that their membership is terminated. A resolution to remove a Member from membership may only be passed if:*

7. *(1) the Member has been given at least twenty-one days' notice in writing of the meeting of the Council at which the resolution will be proposed and the reasons why it is to be proposed.*

(2)

the Member or, at the option of the Member, the Member's representative (who need not be a Member of the Society) has been allowed to make representations to the meeting.

NR - so can you explain why it is in the best interest of the membership of why my husband's membership was terminated?

Chair - we invited your husband or a representative to attend a meeting with Council.

NR - no my husband was invited to attend Council; a kangaroo court, in front of people who had taken a grievance against him, so basically you banned him

because he told the truth and you didn't like what he had to say. Can I ask as well, is there any representative from Geldards here today that would be able to confirm that the legal advice you are telling us here today because when we asked for the legal advice you have refused to give it?

Chair - the legal advice we are given is privileged and we are advised that this must not be given out.

NR - I think when we are talking about a member who you are taking the membership and not just taking their membership, you have taken his dignity and respect and you have been an absolute disgrace as a Council and you question his integrity.

LB - a solicitor's legal advice is only as good as they are asked to advise on. What I would like to know who is instructing? who provides Geldards with the instructions on the relevant subject? who gives the instructions? is it you or Council?

Chair - it is Council

LB - is it provided in writing, because it seems to me that everybody is hiding behind it, because none of the legal advice is given to anyone in this room.

Chair - the decisions we took were fully endorsed by Council, we followed legal advice. I was not in the Chair at the time, but I was Vice chair of Council.

LB - can Mr Kirk comment on this?

JK - Thank you for putting that in my lap. I think that all of you in this room know that I am not a legal person, just a very ordinary guy everyday person. All I am is a very honest and open person. Please believe I have the best interest for this Society at heart. I was appointed into the Chair of this Council and there has been a lot of things gone on that I totally disagree with 100%. I am not a legal mind and if you phone Geldards today and ask who is John Kirk? they would say he is the bloke that delivers the papers, because they never spoke to me. I have never spoken to Geldards ever, so I have to put the ball back in Mr Thomas's lap because he dealt with Geldards. I am afraid I have to be open and honest. I am standing up in this room - I am standing up everybody. I am not hiding under a hedge. I am here to be counted. Please believe I am not afraid to say anything, I will not be intimidated by not one man in this room. I don't get intimidated. I am only being honest and open and that's what I want. It is about time that we had this meeting. It is about time that the truth was spoken. It will be a breath of fresh air for our Society to move on and that is what we are here for today as far as I am concerned, and I am being open and honest with you - Geldards don't know me.

LB - I think you need to clarify.

ADDENDUM (A statement of Clarification from Mr J Kirk received by the WPCS on Wednesday 12th of February 2020 follows at the end of the Minutes.

Chair - it is time we moved on.

LB - I asked for clarification not to move on, Geldards have not spoken to the previous Chair, who have they spoken to?

Chair - I can only say at the time I was not Chair at the time, John has spoke and if John will speak the honest truth and he has we handled the case on Councils authority and Council endorsed the legal advice - that it is the clarification on it and we have it in black and white.

CF- you have Articles, you have policies, there is no need for legal advice, the legal advice is to hide behind. I for one do not believe half the stuff that is being said and I also think that you need to answer Mr Anderson's question.

BMcd - Colin you seem to have wrapped two particular points up within the section, the first one is a clear and concise procedure - Disciplinary, you read up in rule 13, is there a printed Disciplinary procedure, because it is quite obvious what is being said before (I have dealt with a lot of Disciplinarys when I was in work) you had procedures and stages to go to and the final one was an appeal, but the procedure should have been independent from day one, they shouldn't have been, I am not trying to say they were right or wrong of the accused, but you shouldn't have had Council members sat in, on other Council members, that is totally wrong, so what I would like to know is there a clear disciplinary procedure printed? either not attached to Article 13 but I think there should be.

The next item is co-option, we have agreed for years where there's a member with speciality they can be co-opted on to committees, they don't have voting rights but they can be co-opted for their speciality, and I hope this can happen again, because of the scarcity of names being put forward and this will become a lot clearer after this meeting. I think if you get to a position of a Councillor being co-opted, he/she can only be co-opted until the next election, but other people can be co-opted as and when.

Chair - Council can ask a member to assist at any time...

BMcd - I accept that but is a different kind of co-option

Chair - the way we co-opted when the Board was not functionable was different; I think that is what you may be saying? When we were in this position, we had no option but to take this action.

BMcd - I understand that and I hope that situation won't arise again. What I am saying is that you do have the right to co-opt people with speciality onto Council and you can co-opt them on when it suits you, but this co-opting of a Council member, it has to occur when you go below 10 and it should only occur until the next election.

Peter Rutherford (PR) - there seems to be a lot of disgruntled people, in this room, in relation to these disciplinary issues and those members rights; would it be an idea at this stage to move on, is to appoint an independent panel who are members of the Society but not trustees to review those particular cases given the Articles as they stand and then to make recommendations whence they have reviewed them cases to Council for them to make a decision? I think that maybe a way out of what seems to be an impasse, otherwise we are never going to move forward, as the trustees are

being put in a very difficult position and we certainly have to move forward and that may be a preferred way. We need to propose it, if members think it is a rational way to go? I think it is rational and it may solve the problem. Maybe four or five people, or independent people?

PLI - I fully endorse the lady in white about rules, regulations Articles. If they are followed why do you keep running to the lawyers? It is costing us - the member's money, there is no need for it, it seems to a lot of us that some have protected status, some members on Council. It must stop.

ED - Council members this is advice from experience. When an official organisation is given legal advice, you may not all be responsible, but you are all held responsible and when solicitors advice came I always asked for a copy of the brief that the solicitor had, because believe me or not some people can manipulate advice to get the answer that they want.

Chair - in answer to Eric, every Council member sees the advice that I send and when John was there.

TH - when I was on Council and other Council members will back me, we were always told that it was confidential and we never saw, and I will stand here and do an affidavit that I never saw anything that was sent to the solicitors.

Chair - Tracy you must take that up with the Chair at the time, as I understand it - since I have been in the Chair and I think Council members will support me on this, and all Council members see the advice.

LH - Tracy may I respond, for those of you that don't know me and what I do for a living, I face people who are facing disciplinaries and grievances. I work for a Trade Union – yes? and that I believe is my speciality.

I have got to say we have procedures in place, but are they really fit for purpose? I don't think they are; I don't think they are but what we have got is a situation if it is a member I think if it is a member it is quite straight forward.

I have been to Disciplinary myself. I have sat in front of three Council members and I actually think as a member that procedure is fit for purpose, there should always be an investigation, there isn't in our rule and regulations, so we need to look at that, because not everything has to go to disciplinary. So in the first instance we need to look at a full and fair investigation, if someone raises something with Council, what I will say to you is, and I have had experience of this - if you are presenting something to Council and you put your money up; whether it is a grievance against another member where there potentially is going to be disciplinary, get your evidence together; a lot of stuff is coming in without evidence and we can only react to what evidence is put in front of us.

Regarding the disciplinaries, investigation first, taken to disciplinary , members wise I think it works okay, but when it comes to a Trustee it is more difficult, now the processes at the minute is, that it is sent to an independent person or persons. You are quite right Tracy when you say, that information that goes to that independent people, we don't see. What we don't see is all the file as well, so that has got to change as well and I am not just talking about current Council, I am talking about

past Councils as well, this is just not broken with these guys, it is broken completely, I think as members we need to agree a way forward with this. I am not going to be able to fix what's happened in the past, you know I have read some of these files, Nia I have read your husband's file and I have read that and it is not in order - it is not in order, but how can we put this right? We can't carry on this backwards and forwards blaming current Council we all have to take responsibility; we need to fix this together.

NR - therefore Liz you have just said that you have read my husband's file and it is not right, so therefore it is not in order and it needs rectifying; rectifying immediately, it needs reviewing immediately.

LH – What I would say Nia, Colin has offered you an opportunity to appeal.

NR – No, no Liz, David asked for the appeal process, we were told and I have it here and I have it in black and white there is no appeal process under Article 13

LH - Again that needs fixing and there needs to be an appeal process.

N R - In any Court of law, if you committed murder you would still be eligible for an appeal and David was never given that opportunity Liz

LH - I think one of the things I have found, speaking openly and honestly here; one of the things I have found is that the process that's' in place doesn't specify that, so what we have got as well, is members continually raising things because they believe that they have not been dealt with, instead of the processes being clear and objective, it isn't - so we need to fix that.

NR - so therefore we do need to review all the disciplinaries over the last two years, I would suggest, I would propose.

LH - ok

President - I am cutting it here and moving the meeting on; time is of essence here – (resentment from the audience). We have to move on due to time and we are moving on to C) which is changes to the structure of Council, can you speak Chairman?

Chair - we have to move on we will be on Facebook again that we are knocking the microphones off early, so let's move on and get the business done today, as far as I am concerned the disciplinary matters can be challenge them in Court if they want to, we cannot go back on old ground it has been done so let's move on

Member A. (Who did not say her name) - During the last two discussions a gentleman over there proposed an independent panel be put together, we didn't take a vote on that, well I don't remember anyway; and we have just had another proposal – the disciplinaries due to the nature and due to the procedures wasn't followed that the last two years be reviewed again, you didn't take a vote on that and members are just being shut down at this point? I pay my membership annually as everyone else, to have a voice here.

Chair - I am sorry we can't go back over old ground again.

Member A - I am sorry it is not going over old ground Chair there was two proposals and we haven't taken a vote on it

Chair - we can look at new ways

Member A - The members are here today, and we have put two proposals and you have shut us down, I think it is very unfair against the membership.

JK - please Council I implore you get yourself some brownie points, stand-up and be counted, let these members say what they have to say, do yourselves a favour you are belittling yourselves now - please don't belittle yourselves, you are Council members for God's sake, let these members have their say.

Chair – the lady at the back

IC -Thank you. I am a just totally practical person by nature, a gentleman down the front there in my mind gave us an excellent way forward, and that is what we have to have a way forward, he suggested that we have an independent panel; independent from Council - that was behind my suggestion together that we put a completely separate Disciplinary committee putting together an independent group of people who would look again at these issues, they might come to the same conclusions I have no idea or they might say that there are holes in this and we need a rethink. This is not going to be put to bed until this has been looked at again, and we might be looking at the last supper, you might be the most honest people in the world, but nobody will accept your judgement. This has to be looked at by independent people and then whatever the outcome we have to accept it – we have to pledge to accept it thank you.

Julie Evans-Davies (JED) - Hello I would like to second Nia Roberts proposal.

MW - Further to the proposal about the review can I just sort of a seek a slight amendment, that the panel should be totally independent, not be Members or Trustees to look at the disciplinaries and hopefully, possibly, probably, someone could be legal representation on the panel to look into the procedures and outcomes

Member B (No Name) I second that.

Chair - we go to move on to Governance, this will go back in front of Council, alright then we will have a show of hands.

Chair - The President will speak about the minutes.

GBB - Can I have everyone's attention for five minutes so we still haven't got a firm proposal to the minutes on whether these have been agreed or not and to allow us to complete that before we go on to any other proposals and voting - can Andrew Thomas, Sue Hardy, E.E Tudor and E.P Gummery please stand up because we don't have your proxy votes to be able to finalise the decision. (Mr E Tudor was called for again).

The 2018 Llandudno AGM minutes were voted on (proxy votes)

Elizabeth Russell (ER) - Ladies and gentlemen could you please return, I will wait for some of you to come back and be seated, we have the results of the Proposal to approve the minutes of the meeting of the 7th of April, 2018 and they have been approved by a majority vote, thank you, so, many of you will appreciate that I come from a long way, I came down specifically to forward these to you the members because it was not possible to do so in Glasgow. With that in mind I am afraid I am leaving, because I have a long journey. I would like to say that we have a lot of common sense and good thought and passion amongst our members and our Council so please let's come together and be rational, be fair and be respectful, thank you.

(A request was made by an unnamed person for actual numbers in the voting *for* and *against*.)

The President - asked for the auditor, I am very sorry I will leave her give you the information:

Claire Thompson (Auditor - Baldwins) - The votes were 122 for; 120 against, abstaining 66 - therefore the minutes were approved.

Chair - I am going to take the proposal off that gentleman there

PR - I am going to formally propose for the independent body to review the cases and also to review your present system and procedure

Chair - it has been seconded the minute taker has that. Who is *against* please stand-up? Everyone who is *for* please stand-up please so we can get a General picture. The vote was carried.

Auditor Claire confirmed

C) Changes in the Structure of Council

Chair - We are going to move on to structure of Council, it is the feeling of the Board and members out there that we increase from 15 to 21 - is there anybody against this?

The Chair put to the floor and invited comments

SE - I have no objections to the increase, but I disagree with the method if there is six to added it should be added at once, and they be decided by votes on whether they serve 1, 2 or 3 years and two at a time won't solve the problem have the six on and move forward.

EG- I don't go with twenty-one I would like to stay with fifteen I think with fifteen selected members with the right attributes and a properly functioning office and a new CEO in charge to implement the plans adequately. Fifteen is adequate too many cooks spoil the broth and I think it should stay at fifteen because of those reasons, you could meet with fifteen and a good CEO.

Jeff Parry (JP) - I would like to go with twenty-one, the reason being that each Council member could be on Council plus one of the sub-committees. It would make

the work a lot lighter for each member of Council, but I would like you consider a proposal that we did a few years ago, where you only have two representatives from anyone area, looking back at the lady who did the report for us we didn't implement all the recommendations that she made, and I want Council and the membership to consider that for the future please. The recommendations were that we only have two members from any one area; and we would have greater names or many more names from other parts of the country - thank you.

AB - I worked with the Council of fifteen and that is plenty of people - you just got to work. I understand the issue about committees and whatever but it is possible to organise it and by increasing it to twenty one, you are still going to have people who do less work and others who will do considerably more I agree entirely with what Ed has said.

SA - I haven't got a view on the fifteen or twenty one, however I fully support Jeff Parry's idea of having it regionalised, we have got in to these problems because of too many from one area, and I think we got to recognise here now that this is a worldwide Society, it is not a Wales Society and we are a Welsh Pony Society and these people should be coming from where the animals are, and therefore we start to think of having some from North East, some from London or wherever and also if we could have some foreign people. Because one of the things that was interesting in the DNA conversation earlier on was, that nobody actually mentioned what was the foreign societies doing and we've got to stop burying our heads and we are going to do this, we got to take account of what Australia is doing, because that is where our markets are, and everybody thinks that they are going to buy their ponies in Wales. We are in a dream world. So I do think we give consideration into a wider spread of Council and people then have a situation who don't want to go on Council at the moment , because there are too many from one area, they know they will get out voted on everything and therefore you are not getting the good people and I have to say from where I sit here, there are far too many good people come off Council and quite a lot of people on top who don't contribute a lot, I very sorry to say that but that is facts.

JK - I totally believe we should have fifteen and have area representation across the country. I have worked on Council with twelve people and we got the job done, if you got fifteen good people, honest, open transparent people, the worlds your oyster.

CF - Hello again I was on Council with thirty three and again with fifteen, I think it should stay with fifteen, and I think we should think about is that with a new CEO in place, Council does not need to micro-manage anymore and I think fifteen is enough and I agree that there should be area representation.

BMcd - Colin I have given this a lot of consideration and I put it forwards as one of the points I made, could we not hold an exercise on post codes to determine how many members was under a certain post code? and then allocate that as a percentage of overall of people in those areas to nominate and only vote for people that they are voting for in their area? I understand that in a lot of big areas like Newport, Cardiff or Cardigan; there would be a lot of smaller membership who would

have to amalgamate to do the same thing, but an exercise could be carried out on post codes so that we know of the number and different areas.

Chair - We have a couple of proposals, I think Ann Bigley has seconded Ed Gummery, I think Sandy Anderson seconded Jeff Parry, I don't think anybody seconded Steve; I couldn't see anyone, so do you want to put proposals up now for voting is that the feeling of the meeting - so we will put:
Ed Gummery's first?

Chair - Ann Bigley are you happy to second? so that we can have the correct minutes.

Chair - Jeff Parry - proposed that we have twenty-one and area representation and Sandy Anderson seconded.

EG - can I amend mine to say fifteen and area representation?

LR - Can we have more confirmation on how the area representation and it didn't last, I think it needs to be more concrete before we make a decision here it is impossible to do that it is all very either 15/21 or Area representations - but we need to have a better discussion on this.

PJ - As a person who has served on Council for the best part of 30 years, when there was 33 on Council and then I came back for 1 year and 15 is far too small, the reason being that there aren't any backbenchers, you are all in the cabinet the minute you arrive, you are pushed into committees before you know how the Society is run, and what it is all about, when there was 33 members on Council and it worked and it held the Society. For all those good years the golden years I can tell you for sure that 33 members was far better than 15, somewhere in the middle would be 25 an optimum number, to be honest with you, you need to be on Council for at least 2 or three terms before you realise the complexity on how the Society is run, the rules and regulations, when you come on Council to start with, the first thing you are put on a committee and the next thing you are Chairman of a committee and so on and so on - now Ladies and Gentlemen I can assure you that from experience there is safety in numbers, and it is time that people did their apprenticeship before they move on to be in the cabinet - thank you.

EG - I will be quite happy to say on the proposal that the concept of Area Associations and then a working party with new Council members with the Associations and the new CEO come up with a plan as to how the Area Association would work.

Jane Weller (JW) - I sat on the Area Association, no it was the Advisory Committee some years ago, and it didn't last very long, our own area put forward proposals to Council. They very often didn't take any notice of us, and it was disbanded, but that would be another thing to resurrect as Lisa said.

Chair - Could we now put Ed Gummery's proposal and seconded by Ann Bigley which is for 15 Council members and area representation to a vote?

ND - Chair with all due respect Mr Gummery has proposed two different things, initially the 15 from what I understand, and the second was to look into Area

representation. You have put forward that we are voting for Ed, Chair yes? Well I am not sure what I am voting for because it is not made clear

Chair - I said, please stand up for Ed Gummery's proposal which is for 15 Council members and area representation

ND - There are two different votes, Chair I am sitting here and to be honest, I am feeling a little bit frustrated, I do feel that when you are making a decision on 15 / 21 /33 whatever; area representation, you really need to look into great detail on how it is going to work, we can't be in a position of forcing a number or area representation. I am quite open to all of them, but we need the information. We need facts, we need figures membership numbers, you as a Council should be sitting down and giving us the options for us to vote on that we have asked you to do, and that is what should be happening Chair and in line with what Mr Gummery has said he has actually mentioned if I recall, setting up a working party to look at the different options available. Why don't we have a working party, take on Board all the options that have been stated here today the 15/21 and Area Representations have an open group look at all the options and bring forward the options forward for the members to consider in the right and proper manner.

LH - can I just add to that as well? we have got the meeting on the 18th September we would need to give some consideration on how that would pan out, if this is what you are proposing.

PR - if I might just add a little element to that, I think Nicola's idea is a really good idea and all the options need to go to the members, but I don't think that is possible to do today, without all the information. You could appoint a sub-group from amongst yourselves and consider all the options, 15 members only? 15 plus Area Association? or whatever, 21 / 25 plus so there are four or five options probably and put that at the next AGM.

Chair - I think it would have to go to an AGM. If we take all the proposals and seconders and then we come to a vote, we can take the recommendation to the AGM. Ed could you stand up and give your proposal clearly as the minute taker is not quite sure.

EG - I think the most important thing to consider today, that it goes forward in some way, so that my proposal was 15 with Area Association and that goes back to Council with a working party to finalise and look at the options for the selection of Area representation and that may be a way forward. Now whether that goes forward to the AGM, goes forward to Council to make a decision from that, it would seem right to go to the AGM after a lot of research.

ND - Chair - in line with what Mr Gummery has said, could I propose officially that a working group is set-up to look at all the options proposed here today, the 15, 21, the area representation, the mixed representation between voting and the area, Council sit down and work at it and look at all the options the pluses and minuses, it is quite easy to look at the proposals of the pros and cons of each one. I personally don't feel you make decisions without enough information you might be back here in a year's time because you have made the wrong decision; you need to make decisions on

information and facts, without that as a member I don't feel that I can vote for any option the 15, 21 area representation or combination. My personal opinion is that a proposal is that a working party is looked at to look at all the options by every member here today, take everyone's view into consideration and bring it back and we can discuss it again that is my former proposal

Chair - is everybody happy with that?

EG - can I just clarify that area representation is geographically and not with Welsh Pony and Cob Area Associations that are already formed.

LR- Can I second that? we have a new Chief Executive on board; I think he should have an input as well to see if we can find the best way to move forward.

AB - I entirely agree, I would just add that it might be wise for Council to co-opt from outside on to committee, it might be helpful to co-opt some members.

JP - Chair do I need to formally put my proposal forward or is it afterwards that we consider all the options of where, what or the best way forward for the Society.

Chair - if we are going to form a working party, we can take your views on board Mr Parry; I know that Sandy Anderson has supported your previous view.

JP - I take on board what other people have said, I think their ideas are very good and I think we should have all these before we implement these, numbers areas etc.

DL - Can I make a suggestion that the final decision be made in an AGM so that you have a proportion of all the members present and not what we hear today, it should be an AGM, what decisions, or what requests are very good but they should be put in front of an AGM to make that decision where all the membership has a chance to vote.

Chair - there won't be anything decided here today because it has to be put in the Articles and what Nicola has suggested that a working party so something can be set-up so that it can go to an AGM and everyone can have their say.

DL - taking on board what you are saying, why don't we do it that members can put forward the working party to put proposals to the AGM.

Chair - Nicola's proposal is for Council to do it.

DL - I am saying it would be better that we decide who is the working party and then it goes on to the AGM and fairer for all those members who are not here in attendance today.

Chair - I will put Nicola's proposal up, Lisa you have seconded that we form a working party and we take these views forward and we put it out to the whole membership.

TH - I propose that Chair puts forward the working party- Council sorry.

LH - do you want any members on that as well, are you suggesting any members as well.

TH - Yes

ND - my proposal was for Council to undertake a working party from my recollection from that Ann Bigley suggested that co-option should be added to that working party. I don't know whether the proposal was seconded or not, but I believe that is what she suggested; if that is the case you could have a combination of both if Mrs Bigley's proposal was seconded. I certainly believe that Council should be part of that group.

MW - Could I also moot the suggestion that the working party look at how these meetings are held, because of the technology that is about that not everyone has to travel down to Bronaeron you would probably open Council up for more diverse people if you embrace technology, so could the working party look at that of an alternative way of meetings.

SE - just to clarify that we have a vote on the principal of area representation, to see what the feeling here is on that and then leave it up to Council to decide, I don't know how many people it needs to achieve area representation.

ABn - we have just had a proposer and seconder for a working party can we have a vote on that and we can move on.

Chair - can you all stand-up if you are for if you are for Nicola's proposal and Lisa Reed seconded – Yes, it is carried.

President - we will carry on

D) Area Association and Overseas Society Engagement.

The President asked Gwyn Jones to address the meeting.

GJ - The second Area Association meeting will be offered down at Bronaeron and an Open Day. It is a suggestion from the young people that we will have an Area Association meeting with Council and also an Open day at Bronaeron in October. Catrin Reed is going out to the International Show in November on behalf of the Society and there has been some suggestions come forward from the young people to have some extra Gold Medals at the Royal Welsh which we will be putting forward when we meet up in October / November asking them if they approve. I will now ask Catrin Reed our Young Ambassador to address what we are going to put forward.

CR - Mr Chairman trustees and fellow members good afternoon, it gives me great pleasure of giving you a brief update of what we as young people have been up to and have got planned we have held very successful young people's meetings at the Royal Welsh Show, where we had 25 members present varying between ages of 15 to 25 the following and other ideas, that our mentor Mr Roger Davies took back to Council for authorisation. Following the meeting it has now been passed that the Champion Young Handler at the Royal Welsh will receive a gold medal as long as the Royal Welsh Society approves. For those of you here on 21st of September the same day as the Judges Conference, the young people have been invited to attend. If there is enough interest shown. The age group has been increased from 25 to 30 years of age and the Young Judges competition as also increased from 21 to 25

years of age, the winner of this older category will also receive will also receive a £100 bursary from the Welsh Pony and Cob Society to go towards a deposit for them to apply for the Judges panel. We are also going to be working alongside the Trustees and staff members to improve and review the museum at our office. When this is completed there will an Open Day at Bronaeron which will give the young people a chance to visit our facilities as I understand the Area Associations will also be invited to this day. The young people have decided that funds raised within this year will be used for designing a new sign for Bronaeron; for those of you have visited it will be situated just above the double doors as you walk towards the building. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the current Trustees and for allowing me to travel to the International Show, held in Australia to represent the Welsh Pony and Cob Society. This will be a very memorable experience and a chance for me to meet fellow breeders from down under. A date for your diary 26th of October a fashion show will be held at the Marine Hotel, Aberystwyth, tickets will be available in the next two weeks; I hope to see a lot of you there. I would just like to thank our mentor Mr Davies, all the trustees and office staff for their guidance, assistance and support on my journey, no matter what the question or issue is, each and every one has been very approachable and thank you to all. I am also looking forward to working with our new Company secretary Mr Meirion Davies and I wish you well in your new role - 'rwy'n edrych ymlaen i weithio gyda chi Meirion, Diolch yn fawr y iawn.'

The Chair invited Daniel Morgan to address the floor

Daniel Morgan (DM) - we held the International meeting in Llandovery, prior to the Royal Welsh, just to tell you that the International Show is out in Australia on the 23 and 24th of November and we wish all the British judges going out there a good journey. The International show in 2021 will be in Aachen, Germany. The main concern at the meeting was we will be going out of Europe and what is going to happen. We are having a second meeting with our overseas friends in October during the Fayre Oaks or Cob sales, so if anybody has got any issues - please say now.

President – thank you Daniel.

Moving onto AGM Recommendations I hope today has been successful for you? I know we have gone off piste a few times, but the Society will continue to support Area Associations and always try to avoid clashing with major shows.

E) AGM Recommendations

The costs of the AGM means that often the dinner is held in the same room as the AGM, and as regards to a suggestion that members hold a forum in the morning of the AGM, the Council wishes to continue with the existing Association meeting, followed by a young person's meeting. We have a promotions strategy which Liz Hampson will speak to. Sorry Nigel I missed you.

NB - If I can go to the AGM issue, could Council consider removing the awards ceremony from the AGM, a AGM is really a business meeting, where members have the opportunity to consider the annual report and accounts, the chairman's report, the re-election of the auditors, clearly that is all that is required and any other business, from a business point of view that is all required, that would then give much more time to deal with any other business, if I can say was rather rushed foreshortened at the AGM, you could hold the awards ceremony in the morning and that itself would give the AGM much more time so that the important bit the AGM business is not rushed.

President - thank you Nigel that point is very important.

DR - Nigel some very important points there something I did bring up myself and what we are going to work on next year, because we don't want to lose the meeting in the morning with the Association, because we think it is a very important part of the day, but what we are going to do is to streamline the awards session, because they are all in one area in the front as a lot of the awards could be grouped together, where it is done and streamlined more professionally and at the moment that is what we are working on for the next AGM, and if you bear with us hopefully that will work and also give the award winners the prestige they deserve as well.

F) Promotions Strategy

President – invited Liz Hampson to talk to the Promotions Strategy

LH - I will let you know a few things that have been discussed in Council regarding Promotions, and then I am going to go over some of the questions asked. On a positive note the social media coverage and a big thanks to Euros and the videos he has provided, I am sure that you will agree, that the gelding one was a massive success. In 2020 we are going to concentrate on some events; we are going to look at the promotional video of riding, driving and the performance of the Welsh ponies. The Society feels there should be representation at HOYS; the cost of taking a Welsh pony to HOYS is quite minimal and it was something passed at Council previously, but unfortunately due to staffing issues because obviously if you are there you are there for the duration, the pony is there for the duration and just staffing it proves difficult and with Council members and staff there as well. So I am going to approach to Sandy in regards to us doing that in 2020, we have also agreed that the use of the exhibition unit should be more in partnership with Education and Welfare as well, at the moment we have agreed in principle on six shows to be attended with mobile unit and also the two sales and we welcome people to put forward suggestions of which show we attend taking into consideration we are talking about promoting the ridden side of it next year. Members have put forward of trying to promote we will be trying to promote the Welsh breeds up in Scotland and again I would ask for your participation of how we do that, what the way forward is on that? When we are looking at the exhibition unit going to the shows costs need to be considered as they vary drastically from 1K a show for a stand for day to zero, so if anybody has a suggestion of where they would like it to go I am happy to take that

on board, but obviously we have to take costs into consideration and of officers going as well. The Society will be taking members queries around the annual sales. It is my first time on committee, and we meet with sales teams of how it is done etc. Another mention of an Open day in the Museum and I think that needs promoting more and certainly more accessible for the membership. Now going on to some of the questions raised, forgive me I am not sure who raised these and if you are the person who have raised it and want to respond please do so. The first question I have here is sufficient attention given to the ridden and showing and the showing of geldings? - no response. We have promoted with a video at Cheshire Show, which went down extremely well, however it is something we have in mind for future events. As well we have put forward a Gold medal for the champion gelding at the Royal Welsh, so again it is positive promotion. The second question, we need to encompass all disciplines? Do you agree we are doing that?

TH - the Gold medal that is being awarded at the Royal Welsh for the geldings I was under the impression that the gelding classes at the Royal Welsh were not affiliated?

LH - that is a conversation we need to have with the Royal Welsh, if it went forward it would have to be affiliated:

TH - it is only two classes in each section, when I put forward the presentation forward at the beginning of the year on behalf of Council in order to get three years and under four years and older, I managed to get sponsors for those classes, I was one of them, but I know they weren't affiliated, so we are looking to affiliating them are we?

LH - that is correct.

TH - that will be good.

LH - next question is from Elaine and Rachel Price about representation at HOYS? again we have taken this into consideration. We have seen these questions prior and we've taken action on them. Again, a conversation with Sandy on how we go about that. Another question - positive use of social media is a great tool if you use it in the right way and one of the things is are you members, not only is there Facebook there is other things as well, which I don't know anything about, but younger members are looking how they can promote the Welsh breeds on social networks that they use, anyone want to suggest or add to that?

SA - we offered the Welsh Pony and Cob Society an opportunity to come to HOYS and they turned us down, it is about £250 for the week at HOYS, you don't need to bring ponies and you don't need to have a number of staff, I am sure you he wouldn't like the job but Meirion will be there quite a few days so he could sit at the stand, so you know won't get a space this year, you have been asked and your asked every year and it is Council that decided not to come

LH - I appreciate that Sandy, but as Head of promotions I will be supporting that.

Kitty Bodily (KB) - It is good to hear that you are looking to promote the Horse of the Year Show, I offered last year to take a pony of my own back for free to the Welsh Pony and Cob, sit there free all the week and I was turned down, that offer is still open and it always will be. I have won at HOYS and if it wasn't for one young lady, I would not have had no recognition from the Welsh Pony and Cob at all, now there was a Section A that won and there was a Section C that was reserve, now for me that is massive, we are at the forefront of the ridden, at the top of the but Welsh Pony and Cob didn't want to support and that for me is really sad.

LH - in response to that I will make assurances about that and I will speak to you and Sandy about that again - someone has also put forward about reinstating the magazine through advertising. At the moment we are speaking with people about putting the magazine on the internet, so that is where we are going at the minute and we have to finalise that.

Sarah Hayman (SH) The Native Pony magazine has offered two free pages.

LH – Good I will speak to you about that Sarah. The Stud directory needs to be kept up to date. There are problems with GDPR. Someone has raised from the floor that we try and encourage members in Scotland and Cornwall, and I would appreciate anybody's input on that and how we can do that. Any suggestions? Just remember anything we do and I speak with openness and honesty, one of the things is managing the books, we can all come up with these suggestions of what we can do, but everything has a cost to it and we have got to stop haemorrhaging money like we are, the Society cannot sustain it. We have to make sure what is coming in is what's going out now and stop dipping into deficit what we have got, so again suggestions of positives things we can do to get that up.

LM - you talk about costs, but promoting the breed doesn't need to cost much, we have got a website and Facebook page, it is about people being passionate and thinking outside the box not being narrow minded you need to be looking at all the achievements of the Welsh breeds, you want to looking at outsiders not people that are members now, membership numbers have declined significantly over the last number of years that is the real issue as to where the money is going, we have got to try and get people back in and that is keeping information on the website promoting the breed, we don't want to see the negativity that has been happening the last few years, people have got to push the breed to outside markets, we the members see that you are not a trade body but should be promoting our goods

LH - I totally agree there, I have to say Gemma and Jess have been instrumental with the ideas that are coming up, they are looking at things outside the box, for instance Gemma has come-up with a suggestion of buying a jump at putting that out to pony clubs with the Welsh Pony and Cob Society logo on it because we are looking to go out to pony clubs events ourselves.

LM- Someone in the office or a Trustee somebody needs to be dedicated to the promotion side engaging with publications to the media and other breed Societies and pony clubs. Abroad as well you have got be concentrating on the positive side

on why the breed is the best in the world which it is and we are all behind that and you have to convince everybody else that, we also have to convince everybody else why it is a good place to be a member of the Society.

LH - I couldn't agree more. Any further questions?

SA - it is not to do with your question Liz, what was the logic by putting the young people's age up to 30 that is totally out of synch with the BSPS, NPS etc. and I just would like to know why because I think by 30 you are not a young person anymore.

LH - Sandy I will get back to you on that I am not sure of why it went up, there was a couple of things that went up when we were looking at increasing the ages of the young judges, because there was void where they can't do anything. I am not sure about young members age increase, do you know Catrin?

SA - I think you have to look at the outside market and see what is happening, there is no point in being out of synch, there is no point in running junior classes when no one else does, the BSPS found that out, I am not against it, they can do what they want, but I am just saying that I would like to see the accountability for it, because it doesn't sound logical to me.

LH - I think it was proposed to us by the young members themselves.

CR - I would just like to say that a couple of a young people coming to our meetings, that they go away to university at 21 and don't come back for 5 or 6 years and therefore they could gain experience and moving it up to 30, they have that couple of extra years for experience and this suggestion came from the young people.

President - something that is not on the agenda, but I am sure you wouldn't abandon us and I notice that Dr Wynne is still with us, you do realise Dr Wynne is the oldest surviving male member of this Society and I wonder if he wants to say a few words while we are here. Dr Wynne would you like to say a few words of how you feel, it gives me a chance to plug his DVD about Dr Wynne and there is still some here, if you want to buy them there are few left and the proceeds are all for charity

Dr Wynne Davies (DrWD) - hello the acoustics in this building are terrible, I have this hearing aid, and it hasn't worked all afternoon and I have to admit I haven't heard a word of what has gone on!

(Much laughter from the floor.)

President - thank you Wynne, you have never lost your humour, moving on there are only two items of Any Other Business.

Geraint Davies(GD) - we have had a request from Kevin Morris is he here? It is about the procurement of the website, that occurred in September 2017, A specification was written, 23 Companies showed interest and we had 7 responses, Evaluation was made by the Company secretary at the time resourcing the system, Chair and Vice-chair of Council a report was written and recommendations were

made to Council, the Company who won the tender was Fanatic. He also asked about what procurement is going on at present - we have put out tenders for the Journal and we will be looking during the course of the year of putting other services out to tender, because we realise we need to get best value for the Society, hopefully with the new Company secretary on board there will be more vigorous in the numbers of tenders that we put out in the year.

6. Any Other Business.

He informed the meeting that items for AOB should have been sent in to the Society by the 5th August, if you have any other business just send it in to the Society. Sorry I am not taking any questions on AOB. Sorry it was impossible at the AGM last time you were out actually in the hall doing something with proxies, but I did allow you to put a question.

President - is it going to be quick?

TH - can you confirm that all documents sent out by the office or on behalf of the Welsh Pony and Cob Society are legal and binding documents.

President - Tracy I can't hear you honestly.

TH - Can you confirm that all documents sent out by the office or on behalf of the WPCS the office are legal and binding documentation? If document are sent out on behalf of the office with our signatures are they legal and binding documents

Chair - Nothing is sent out that's legal - it is privileged information which is held in the office.

TH - so the forms that we sign for anything at all, then really they are not legal for anything, so we can't be held to account for anything if we sign something.

Chair - you are on about forms for judging.

LH - just say what you are referring to, because we don't know what you are talking about

TH - well I am on about in general, all the forms that we sign, whether we are judges, members or anything else, are those forms legal documents.

Chair - they are written by our lawyers.

TH - so they got our signatures on them so they are sort of legal documents yeah?

Chair - they are overviewed, they are put down by relevant committees and then they are overviewed by our solicitors and touched up wherever needed.

TH - so when those signatures are on them we have signed the document - ok thank you.

Caroline Nelson (CN) - just one quick point on behalf of your Welsh Pony and Cob Society regarding the Joint Measurement Board, for many years you have paid your membership to the JAB. We have had very good eloquent and helpful representatives from the WPCS in the past Paul Wilding-Davies, Jeff Parry, Ann Bigley, since Ann Bigley retired from Council a representative from the WPCS has not come forward to the JAB meetings, so there is an opportunity that you are missing because with ridden classes A, B and C's you have two free measurements a year, the opportunity to attend three meetings a year, if you have problems during the show season and the JAB secretary has regularly submitted pre meeting notices to your office and nothing has been responded to, I mentioned this to Liz Russell when she come into her Presidency, and two names were put forward and neither have ever come to a meeting, the next meeting will be on the Tuesday 24th of September and I can assure you that a representative would be very welcome, if you would care to send one - thank you

7.President's Closing Remarks

President - I am going on to my closing remarks if I may, we are obviously all aware of a recent petition, which has been signed by a certain number of signatures, because, this is my personal feeling that this petition is not in the spirit of our Society Articles, which is very damaging to the Society which is 118 years old, there has never been such a previous action like this not to my knowledge, I think it is disrespectful to the present trustees and it is also disrespectful to me and also our President-elect and breeders founded your Society for the registration and integrity of their stock, this objective seems to have got lost along the way, you the members have been handed this legacy, we have without question the best equestrian breed in the world, our section of ponies and cobs cover all the needs of equestrian enthusiasts, we now also have to hand the powerful medium of the internet to inform and promote to the world of our pony and cobs and share the pleasure and achievement, but it seems to me the medium of the internet is not being used for this purpose in the main but is used for self-promotion and various comments, that at times can be very damaging. I recall the words of one of our late and very prominent breeder, he was also a past President of your Society the late Mr Dick Swain in a long past AGM, when troubles were afoot "don't change for the sake of change" - thank you all for coming have a safe journey home and I now declare the meeting closed.

ENDS

ADDENDUM

A statement for clarification by John Kirk to the membership of the WPCS in response to his statement at the WPCS General Meeting at Builtth Wells on 31st of August 2019.

“I would like to make it quite clear to the membership that as Chair of Council during the period 2016 to 2019 I gave my authority to the Vice-Chair to act on my and the Council’s behalf to deal with the Society’s appointed solicitors – Geldards.

During my period as Chair, whilst having no direct contact with the solicitors, I was fully aware and copied in on all the correspondence between the Society and our legal advisors at the time.

It was not my intention to mislead the membership at the General meeting in any way. I hope that this explains my position and experience clearly.”

Signed J Kirk.

February 7th, 2020