

The Arab Horse Society
Minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 May 2011 at Windsor House Ramsbury
Wilts

Present: Joanne Lowe (JL)(Chairman), Natalie Meredith (NM)(Vice Chair) Annette Dixon (AD), Teresa Sheward (TS), Sally Wrigglesworth (SW), Jayne Armstrong (JA) Sue Jones (SJ).

In attendance: Marlene Pollard (MP) and Sally Etchells (SE)(for item 8c)

1.0 Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from Madeleine Sutherland (MS), Diana Whittome (DW) and Jane Fraser Brown.

2.0 To approve the Minutes of the Council Meeting 13 April 2011

The minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record. NM proposed acceptance of the minutes and JA seconded. All Council agreed.

3.0 Matters arising from the last minutes

It was noted that following the last Council meeting Heather Averill had resigned her position from Council and JL had accepted her resignation, writing to thank her for all her hard work and contribution during her time on Council.

JL had written to Susan George to thank her for her contribution during her time as President in 2010/11. JL presented MP with the President's chain.

4.0 Secretary

Adam Reeves had tendered his resignation to JL who had accepted this and written to thank him for his contribution.

Under the AHS Articles 5.1 the Society has the power to appoint a Secretary in accordance with the Companies Act. Under the Companies Act 2006 the role of Secretary becomes optional for private companies. If they choose not to have a person in the role then there is a need to inform Companies House. There is not requirement to amend the articles because it is only listed as a power and not a requirement.

A discussion took place about the role and consideration given as to whether an external independent person should be sought to fulfil the duties, but it was agreed that if we wanted external advice, for any reason, this was a separate matter to those of the administrative duties. It was agreed by majority that SW would undertake the administrative duties going forward, but it was recognised that following the changes in the 2006 Act all of the directors are held liable for correct and timely submission of data to Companies House. SW highlighted the fact that this would be a learning curve and a review of the work involved was required. She had investigated free seminars run by companies house in relation to submission of company data and would attend one as soon as practicable.

5.0 Code of Conduct

SW had previously worked with Carolyn Kokta to produce a new code of conduct for Council Members that used plain English and based on recommendations from the Charities Commission. It was agreed by all that this was a more appropriate

version to use going forward. JA raised some queries and amends. It was agreed by majority that with the amends this document would be fit for purpose. SW would forward to all Council to sign and send back to Windsor House.

This form will be adapted for, all direct elects and any co-opted persons on Committees. Governors or the President and any co-opted Council members will be asked to sign if they attend Council meetings.

SW would amend forms and send to Chairs of Committees to enable Direct Elects to sign.

6.0 Complaints Procedure

SW had drafted a Complaints Procedure to cover incidents that did not fall under the AHS Rules for Showing; in addition the procedure can be used in the unlikely event that a complaint is not satisfied under the Rules for Showing.

Council reviewed the document and some minor amends were agreed. There was a majority agreement that following these changes the policy would be adopted and a copy placed on the website for members to access.

7.0 Financial Reports & Budgets

TS had circulated, prior to the meeting, the accounts for April 2011 and gave an overview of the year to date position which shows a small profit primarily due to the number of Imports/Exports and Transfers. One area that is down on the same time as last year is that of membership.

A discussion around membership led to a number of suggestions that the PR & M Committee need to investigate including discounted direct debit only membership for non member's when they transfer a registration or lapsed members of 2 or more years.

TS advised that pension legislation changes mean that the AHS will have to pay employer contributions of a minimum 3% from 2013/14.

Council mileage expense claims. To date Council members have only been allowed to claim for journeys to Council meetings and not Sub Committees or other essential Council business. This was considered inappropriate in view of the significant voluntary time given by all Council and the increase in travel costs making it a financial burden for people and potentially discouraging those that might wish to offer services because they could not afford to. TS presented a revised mileage claim schedule. It was agreed by the majority that:

- Council Members and Direct Elects should be able to claim mileage expenses for Council and/or sub Committees;
- Claims for attending essential business on the Societies behalf were allowed; and
- Where alternative transport was used reasonable claims would be paid provided receipts were submitted and where possible/appropriate preauthorisation gained.

Some Council Members do not claim expenses and it was requested that claims should be submitted, enabling real cost to be established, any member could then donate the funds back to the Society with the added benefit that gift aid can be claimed back on donations.

8.0 Committee Reports

8.1 PR & M and magazine

SJ gave an update on the proposed seminar at Cirencester College in October on breeding problems. It has been difficult to contact John Newcombe who had been proposed as the speaker; alternatives are being considered including Twink Allen from Newmarket and Jonathan Pycock based in Malton North Yorkshire.

SW provided an overview of the magazine. Editorial content has tried to cover Pure/Pb and AA in different spheres. MP was asked if she would like to contribute a "letter from the President" which she agreed she would. Advertising is down and it is realised that in the current economic climate people are cutting back. The magazine will not break even and although costs are kept to a minimum paper costs have also increased over the last 18 months.

8.2 SB & R

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 11 May were reviewed and approved subject to approval of SB & R at their next meeting.

NM provided an update on the Passport Issuing Office (PIO) situation and advised that it seemed that the National Equine Database (NED) whose Government funding is due to run out, is seeking alternative income and it is possible that they may try to become the single PIO. Currently we provide mandatory and voluntary data to NED, the latter being the pedigree information. Should NED become the single PIO then they would have our breeding data which they could profit from. NM was seeking Council agreement to withdraw from our contract to provide voluntary data, which requires us to give 6 months notice and we would save £500 per annum. There was a majority agreement that we should keep control of our pedigree information and serve notice on NED. NM advised that as part of the PIO Steering Committee she would be attending the meeting with DEFRA on 9 June and would update as required.

Work is about to commence on correcting the percentages in the Part bred register. TS advised that whilst there was no provision in the budget for this it had been agreed at an earlier Council meeting that the funds would be taken from the Lady Willingham Fund to meet this cost.

Within the next year the Stud Book Software will have been fully depreciated through the accounts. TS suggested it would be timely to arrange a visit to Wetherby's to investigate what online software was available and whether any enhancements would assist both the office and our members to improve registration etc. JA has an interest in this area and asked to be included. There was majority agreement.

8.3 S & E

The April minutes of the Shows and Events were reviewed and approved.

AD advised that Stewards details had been added to the Judges Book and that it had been identified that there was a need for "Instructions for DCs and Stewards" on conduct to align it with the rest of the guidance in the book. A number of judges had been identified as not having renewed their membership and they will be written to and asked to rejoin within the next 6 weeks otherwise they would not be placed in

the 2012 book. The Small Show Scheme has worked well and several shows have kept classes as a result of being able to use a single judge for in-hand and ridden.

The Committee has drawn up a number of proposals around membership for all show exhibitors, handlers and riders. It was agreed that these should be shared with the other Committees for their input and then brought back to Council for a full debate.

SE joined the meeting.

SE provided an update on the National Show planning which is going well. Entries are a little down and it is anticipated that around 800 entries will be received by the final closing date. The VIP front row tables are already oversubscribed and tables will be allocated to those that have booked and paid.

Council members who were not actively involved in running the show and who are not competing should be prepared to make time to assist in the AHS Tent during busy periods and to relieve staff as required.

WAHO trophy is to be presented to the WAHO winner and SW agreed to contact the winner to tell her the timings and day. SW to liaise with SE.

SE left the meeting.

9.0 Welfare

JFB had prepared an article on euthanasia for the summer magazine and this was circulated. It was agreed that this required further work and investigation before it could be published and should be deferred to the Yearbook.

10.0 Website

JA & SW provided an update. A site has been built and populated and is ready to go live. It is already accessible through the shows and events site but once the domain name registration transfer has completed then it will be visible under www.arabhorsesociety.com and .org.

Access to the website is available to make changes, additions etc. although it was recommended that for the time being that this was restricted to JA & SW as it is quite easy to delete things without realising it and to ensure that the look and feel is consistent through font and layouts.

It was also agreed that it is more sensible that where instructions are provided e.g. how to register a horse, that this guidance is placed on a pdf document that a member can open and download if required; this is more effective than having to scroll down long lists on the site.

11.0 AGM Minutes

SW advised that all amends had been received and if Council agreed they could be placed on the website as a draft copy for members to see. They cannot be considered final/agreed until the next AGM and only then can amendments be made. There was a majority agreement to place the minutes on the website.