

Minutes of the meeting of Studbooks, Breed Societies and Passport Issuing organisations who were members of the BHS Horse and Pony Breeds Committee, BHS HQ, Abbey Park

Friday 27th October 2017

Present:

Gemma Stanford	The British Horse Society
Catherine Burdock	Sport Horse Breeding (GB)
Iola Lloyd-Hughes	Welsh Pony and Cob Society
Philippa Cole	Sports Pony Studbook Society
Ruth Staines	Caspian Horse Society
Anne Vestey	BHS Welfare
Sandra Lawrence	British Skewbald and Piebald Association
Natalie Meredith	Arab Horse Society
Karin Swanson	Arab Horse Society
Geth Tillin	British Connemara Pony Society
Eva-Maria Broomer	Anglo-European Studbook
Jane Murray	New Forest Pony Breeding Society
Bev Beresford-Batten	British Palomino Society
Mary McBryde	The British Association for the Purebred Spanish Horse Ltd
Karen Coleman	American Quarter Horse Association UK
John Shenfield	
Gina Dent	Central Prefix Register
Lorraine Amor	Coloured Horse and Pony Society
Judith Harris	Eriskay Pony Society
Celia Clarke	WBSUK

01.01.17 Apologies for absence

Tikki Adorian	International Miniature Horse and Pony Society
Lyn Moran	Fjord Horse National Studbook Ass of GB
Caroline Turnbull	Thoroughbred Breeders Association
Jo Ashby	Dales Pony Society
Sandra Mansell	Exmoor Pony Society

02.01.17 Consultation Review

Gemma Stanford gave an overview of the consultation review that had taken place with regards to the BHS Horse and Pony Breeds Committee. The consultation questionnaire had been emailed to all existing committee members on 7th February 2017. Following an extensive review, the outcome was given to members on 18th August 2017. Gemma thanked all of those organisations who had submitted a response. At the time of the consultation, there were 34 active members of the committee and 18 responses had been received. Gemma thanked everyone for their patience and understanding whilst

such a review was conducted. To Gemma's knowledge this is the first time the committee had ever been reviewed.

An overview of the consultation response given to active committee members was as follows:

Of the organisations which responded to the consultation, most are very longstanding members of the committee with membership spanning several decades. The main reasons for originally joining was to liaise with fellow studbooks and breed societies, keep up to date with legislation and have a stronger voice in policy making as a larger body. Along with these reasons, many also find the EU/DEFRA legislation updates to be the most helpful parts about the meetings. We asked what you would like to see included in future meetings, many excellent suggestions were put forward, such as the impact of the Central Equine Database on breed societies, information about breed society administration, Brexit and the effect on breed societies.

Gemma explained that having carefully considered all consultation responses received we believe the interests of breed societies and the future direction wanted from the committee are more appropriately represented by an independent body with representation at The Equine Sector Council Meetings. The Equine Sector Council is the primary link for the horse industry to Government. Its mission is to maximise the equine sector's effectiveness in identifying and managing issues and work-streams cooperatively and coordinating the use of its resources, expertise and effort, using a risk based approach, encouraging partnership working wherever possible.

The BHS Horse and Pony Breeds committee in its current form is ceasing and a new independent body will be established with support from The British Horse Society. The new independent body is for Breed Societies, Studbooks and Passport Issuing Organisations. Only individuals who are formally nominated to represent their organisations are able to attend together with individuals who may not represent a specific organisation but who have specialist knowledge – for example welfare, legislation etc .

03.01.17 Discussion of Proposal

Gemma thanked everyone for their continued support of the BHS Horse and Pony Breeds Committee and reported that she has received overwhelmingly positive feedback about the new direction communicated. The formation of an independent body with representation at Equine Sector Council meetings is a positive and welcome step forward for the future of Breed Societies, Studbooks and Passport Issuing Organisations.

The British Horse Society attends ESC meetings and the Breeds Committee is just one of several areas it formally represents – along with topical issues such as business rates, road safety campaigns, equine welfare issues to name just three key areas. By having direct representation of an independent association at the meetings will give the breed societies and stud books a stronger voice and keep them more up to date with fast moving legislation affecting them and issues they should be aware of. Another very key point to be remembered is that BHS is an ID-only Passport Issuing Organisation.

This does not make BHS best placed to effectively represent the needs and requirements of stud book and breed society PIOs.

Gemma explained in the meeting about the structure of the ESC and also listed some of the stakeholders – key ones being DEFRA, BEVA, NEWC all in attendance. Gemma also explained how the ESC feeds into the Animal Health and Welfare Board for England. The ESC meeting takes place twice a year and is held at DEFRA's offices in London. Gemma also said that perhaps a new association should probably have been created when the ESC was first created, and whilst the BHS has been doing its utmost to represent its committee members, a new independent association with direct representation on the ESC would most definitely be a positive step forward.

Gemma gave the organisation representatives an opportunity to ask any additional questions about the review. One comment was that there was concern that breaking away from the BHS and forming an independent group would give a smaller voice and they could be more at risk. Gemma reiterated that currently, the representation of the breeds is just one thing that BHS represents. By creating an association in this way will give a louder voice at ESC level. Catherine Burdock also spoke in favour of having a new independent group. Another comment was that it was hoped that BHS would still stay involved with an independent association in some way.

All attendees were in agreement that the proposal was a very positive step forward. All voted unanimously in favour of the creation of an independent association to replace the BHS Horse and Pony Breeds Committee with immediate effect.

Gemma reminded the group that the next meeting of the ESC is 18th December and it would be preferable to move relatively quickly drafting a constitution. A new name for the association was suggested as 'British Association of Equine Studbooks'. Gemma added that it is often difficult to use 'British' or 'National'. It was suggested that the association is the '826 Studbooks Association' in line with the UELN prefix.

It was suggested that the draft constitution is created by a small group from within the attendees as it may prove difficult to get all those attending today's meeting together again. It was suggested that the previous 'Equine Legislation Monitoring Group' met to discuss the constitution. This motion was formally proposed by Sandra Lawrence and seconded by John Shenfield. To confirm, the ELM group was made up of Celia Clarke, Natalie Meredith, Sandra Lawrence, Catherine Burdock, John Shenfield and Gemma Stanford.

It was discussed how two meetings a year of the new association would still be preferable. It was also suggested that a secret/closed group on Facebook was set up to ease communication – email chains can soon become difficult to follow.

04.01.17 Feedback on the recent DEFRA consultation on forthcoming Zootechnics legislation

Celia Clarke circulated a short questionnaire asking stud book representatives for their reactions and comments on DEFRA's recent Consultation on 'Forthcoming Changes to Rules on Animal Breeding: Equines' which had been recently circulated to Studbook PIOs. Prior to the meeting it was Celia Clarke's understanding that there had been some concerns raised that for studbook PIOs to respond it would need to provide commercially sensitive information. There was also the suggestion that DEFRA appears to be unaware that studbooks neither buy nor sell equines or their germinal

products themselves, nor have they ever been asked to keep records of exported animals for DEFRA to consult.

It became obvious from the discussion that none of the studbooks present had been able to provide any information on export procedures or the monetary costs and income involved, nor of the numbers of animals or germinal products being exported either now or in the past. Several speakers expressed concerns that DEFRA must be unaware of what studbooks actually do in order to be able to draw up a consultation document that asks about operations – and economic and financial information – that studbooks have never been concerned with and it was agreed that if possible the inappropriateness of this survey should be raised at the next Equine Sector Council meeting. Many of the studbooks present then completed Celia's questionnaire and these will be used (anonymously) to form the basis of the comments that will hopefully be able to be made at the next ESC meeting.

05.01.17 Closing Remarks

Catherine Burdock gave a huge vote of thanks to Mrs Pat Campbell for all her hard work over the years chairing the BHS Horse and Pony Breeds Committee. Catherine also gave a huge vote of thanks to Gemma Stanford for all her hard work organising the committee business and for pursuing the future direction of the breeds societies and studbook representation at ESC level. These two votes of thanks were greeted with great applause from all present.