



EQUINE STUDBOOKS ASSOCIATION

Representing Horse and Pony Studbooks of the UK

Chair: Celia Clarke (WBSUK), Vice-Chair: Natalie Meredith (AHS), Secretary: Jane Murray (New Forest), Treasurer: Sue McGeever (Exmoors)

MINUTES

826 Equine Studbooks Association Meeting No 7 including 2021 AGM

2.00 pm to 4.00 pm Tuesday 23 March 2021 via Zoom

Present

Committee: C Clarke (Chair, WBSUK), N Meredith (AHS), S McGeever (Treasurer, Exmoor), J Murray (Minutes Secretary, New Forest), S Cooper (Weatherbys), C Burdock (SHBGB), S Shaw (NPS), S Lawrence (BSPS)

Observer: J Shenfield, G Dent (CPR), Lady Anne Vestey, J Nixon MRCVS, E-M Broomer (AES), A Kirby, G Stanford, S Cookson (all BHS)

Studbooks: C Herrick (AQHA), L Simpson (AES), K Swanson (AHS), M McBryde (BAPSH), K Eaton (British Hanoverian), J Everett (Palomino), R Staines, B Smathers (both Caspian), J James (Dales), V Brown, T Brown (both Dartmoor), C Morse, R Clarke (both Donkey Breed), J Harris (Eriskay), K Wilkinson (Fell), V Knapp (Friesian), M Williamson (IMHPS), P Cole, L Sheldrake (both SPSS), A Thorne, K Sands (both APHUK), M Davies (WPCS), V Manders,

Defra Zootech: Rachel Davis, Amelia Greenham

Defra Equine ID: Simon Waterfield, Rebecca-Jane Joyce, Frances Adeke, Debbie Bailey

Apologies for absence

S Attew (Trakehner), E Brimble, F Glansdorp (both Icelandic), M Green (Friesian), S Mansell (Exmoor), E Hoare (CHAPS), R Truelove (NASTA), P Moon (Donkey Breed)

A moment of silence was held for all friends and colleagues no longer with us, and especially remembering Pat Campbell who did so much for the studbook societies, and also Robert Oliver who had showing connections with many societies.

Minutes of the Meeting held in November 2020

Correct the spelling of M McBryde's name. The Minutes were then approved.

There were **no Matters arising from the Minutes for the last meeting** not covered by other agenda items.

Chair's report

Celia Clarke read out her report, in which she highlighted the problems caused by Covid-19 and Brexit, and the current concern about the EHV-1 outbreak in Europe. A lot of time had been spent on Third Country studbook listing and keeping members updated on import and export regulations post-Brexit. The Committee had looked at insurance and auditing requirements for the association, and also the need to update the constitution to cover electronic meetings. Representatives had attended the online British Horse Council meeting and the National Equine Forum and NEF Great Weight Debate webinar, and the association had supported as a Friend, the Just in Time NEF webinar. Some problems persist with updating of passports to the CED, and work on this with CED and Defra will continue.

Election of officers and committee members

This has been deferred to the 2022 AGM because the current Covid-19 restrictions make voting difficult.

Treasurer's report

Sue McGeever presented the accounts for 2019 and 2020, noting that £840 had been received in subscriptions for the current year and she will shortly follow up those that are outstanding. The bank had reimbursed the Association for £167 on account of the time it had taken to set up online banking. She had suggested to the Committee that, given the scale of the Association's financial activities, an independent examination of the accounts was more appropriate than having them fully audited, and recommended approval of the motion in the next item. A considerable amount of time had been spent looking for a suitable insurance policy and recently a Small Community Organisation policy with Zurich Insurance had been taken out at a cost of £211.11, which gave a suitable level of cover for legal and public liability.

Committee motions

The following motions were all approved with no votes against.

Committee Motion 1: To amend the present Constitution by the addition of the following to Clause 5 Annual General Meetings

5.1 Online and hybrid general meetings

A general meeting (whether an Annual General Meeting, members meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting) may be held that allows attendance in person or by suitable electronic means agreed by the Executive Committee in which each participant may communicate with all the other participants either directly or through the Chair. Where the Executive Committee decides that a general meeting is to be held using electronic means such a decision shall be included in the notice of general meeting sent out to members, consultants and observers together with details of how a member may participate in such meeting.

Where the committee decides that a general meeting is to be held by electronic means only, such a decision shall be included in the notice of general meeting sent to members, observers and consultants along with an explanation of the exceptional circumstances which require the general meeting to be held by electronic means only. For the purposes of this clause "exceptional circumstances" means circumstances which in the reasonable opinion of the committee render it impossible to hold an effective general meeting in person or by a combination of meeting in person and through electronic means.

Where a general meeting is to be held in person, the Executive Committee may if it deems it appropriate, set out a procedure in the notice of meeting which allows members to attend electronically if they so wish, and in such circumstances both members physically present in person and members present by electronic means will be considered present in person and will count towards the quorum for the relevant meeting.

Proceedings at a general meeting held by electronic means or a physical meeting at which procedures are put in place to allow members to attend electronically), will not be invalidated due to technical issues which prohibit members from joining such meeting electronically, so long as a sufficient number of members to form a quorum under clause(15ii) is able to join the meeting successfully.

Voting via Electronic Balloting

Where a meeting is to be held by electronic means, or where procedures are put in place to allow members to join a physical meeting by electronic means, the Executive Committee may put in place an electronic balloting mechanism to allow members present at the meeting by electronic means to vote as if they were present in person. Where such a voting mechanism is to be used for a meeting, the notice of meeting will set this out.

Committee Motion 2: To amend the present Constitution by the addition of the following to Clause 10 Executive Committee Meetings

An Executive Committee meeting may be held in person or by suitable electronic means agreed by the members of the Executive Committee in which each participant may communicate with all the other participants.

Committee Motion 3: To amend 3rd para of Section 13 'Finance' of the Constitution

Change 'An *audited* statement of annual accounts will be presented by the Treasurer to the AGM of the Association for members approval' to 'An *independently examined* statement of annual accounts will be presented by the Treasurer to the AGM of the Association for members approval.'

DEFRA, MOPs, Equine Register and BREXIT updates

Brexit

Simon Waterfield (SW) (DEFRA) - gave a report on the latest Brexit situation and import/export updates highlighting movement requirements, particularly between Great Britain and Ireland. Movement of horses from Great Britain to Northern Ireland has to follow third country rules. Entry into the EU must be through an equine-approved Border Control Post. A seamless transition has not happened and the EHC process is lengthy and complex which has led to errors occurring. Horses arriving at the French ports must have an appointment pre-booked. All systems are under review and the delays are getting shorter.

SW also reminded the meeting that the EU Animal Health Law comes into effect on 21 April, the framework of which was agreed several years ago, with detailed rules coming into place at intervals since. The UK is no longer bound to apply the AHL, but Defra has no intention to reduce animal welfare levels. Further changes are due on 21 April and 21 August.

In response, Anne Vestey raised concerns about some transporters and that the delays for paperwork were making some journeys too long, leading to welfare issues. SW replied that the delays are shortening, but that some unregistered equines did need more preparation pre-export. There are undoubtedly still some challenges ahead, and we will have to get used to the higher costs involved.

Zootechnics

Rachel Davis (RD) (DEFRA) – gave an update on Zootechnics aspects. On extended breeding programmes, 100 applications had been received covering all species. The policy adopted was that there should be one breed society approved in this country, so if the breed was covered by an existing society in this country the EU applicant was refused. The situation in Northern Ireland/Daera is slightly different covering some of the Irish breeds. The full list will be published in July.

Update by Jane Nixon (JN) MRCVS on biosecurity matters

EHV - There has been a recent EHV outbreak in Spain.

West Nile Virus – Transmission is via two vectors, mosquitoes and birds. Numbers of cases are increasing in Europe and the disease is moving ever closer to this country. It is a zoonotic disease and Defra will be in control of management of an outbreak. There is an increased need for raising public awareness.

Report on the 2021 National Equine Forum and Just in Time and The Weight Question webinars including a presentation by Simon Cooper on inbreeding

Simon Cooper (SC) repeated his presentation previously given as part of the online National Equine Forum, looking at the declining genetic diversity in the Thoroughbred. The global foal crop has declined 30% in 15 years, and this has coincided with an increase in the size of stallion books. 95% of all TBs trace the Y chromosome to the Darley Arabian. Weatherbys as the main studbook does have 300 years of pedigree data, the DNA of all foals is now registered and there is accordance between the 69 global studbook authorities; however they still do not have global comparative measures with regular 3-5 year studies of measured rates of the increase in in-breeding. Future technology will be based on SNPs which gets into the details, but it is still expensive. What is best for the horse must come before what is best for the racing industry, and although the two rely on each other there must be a consideration on each side.

Mary McBryde wondered whether the EU zootechnical legislation might actually lead to a narrowing of the gene pool, rather than a broadening of it, and gave the comparison with dogs, and SC noted that Weatherbys had been in discussion with the Kennel Club. Sue McGeever noted that the EU zootechnical rules on extended breeding programmes might also cause problems as there is limited access available to the gene pool in a third country.

December 2020 British Horse Council Meeting

CC commented that many of the items concerning Brexit were now out of date, so she will circulate the minutes when they become available.

Any Other Business

NASTA performance tests will be held at Solihull, 24-25 August.

British Young Breeders – Eva-Maria Broomer (EMB) reported that the championships are likely to be delayed so this year will be used to develop skills and national activities with the aim of attracting more young people into the breeding industry.

Futurity – EMB reported that running the Futurity this year will be difficult because of the ongoing Covid uncertainties, but something will take place, possibly an online event, which had proved popular last year.

Uploads to the Central Equine Database – Sacha Shaw expressed concern that some uploads, particularly of microchip data, had not fully completed, but the PIO was not made aware of this. She queried whether there was a way for a PIO to verify that an upload had gone through fully, or whether CED was able to carry out audits. Debbie Bailey will check with CED/ER.

Celia Clarke thanked all those who had made presentations.

The next meeting will be held in approximately six months' time.

Meeting closed at 4.30 pm