

ROYAL PIGEON RACING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 122nd Annual General Meeting of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association was held at the Novotel Hotel, Long Eaton, Nottingham, on Friday, 23rd February 2018 at 9am. The meeting was opened by the outgoing RPRA President Mr L. Blacklock, who thanked everyone for attending and welcomed Councillors, Reserve Delegates, the General Manager, the Editor of the BHW, ladies from the Reddings and members.

Apologies were received from Mr J. Lawley and Mr R. Jones, West Midlands Region replaced by Mr W. Lewis and Mr P. Hammond; Mr G. Daykin, East Midland Region replaced by Mr J. Dodd; North West Region Mr P. Murray standing down replaced by Mr S. Mellor; with Mr D. Holmes, East Midland Region and Mr A. King, Southern Region also standing down.

The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting were passed as a true and accurate record.

The General Manager then delivered his annual report for 2017.

GENERAL MANAGER'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR 2017

Before I provide my Annual Report I

would like to take this opportunity to wish all those who are currently experiencing ill health a speedy recovery and to remember those who have passed away in 2017.

ACCOUNTS FINANCES

In 2017 there was a significant increase in profit on the Trading Account when compared to the previous year due in no small part to the contribution from the British Homing World and the RPRA One-Loft.

Although this profit is welcomed it is important that these funds along with any future years' profits are invested in projects that promote the sport and improve the service for our members and are not used to increase the current level of reserves.

Once again the high standard and level of accuracy within the accounts was also highlighted by the auditors, thanks to the Finance Manager, Mrs Lyna Zhang and her team.

MEMBERSHIP

An issue which seems to be ever increasing is the refusal of applications to clubs. This not only relates to adults but also children and school lofts that

have been refused membership of their local club. While I appreciate that in a small minority of cases there may be 'genuine' reasons for an application to be refused, this is not always the case. A review of Rule 159 will hopefully be undertaken by the Rules committee later today.

As we are all aware the participation in the showing and racing pigeons is in decline. In 1989 the RPRA membership was estimated at 60,000 and in 2017 this membership has dropped to a level of 20,451, a reduction of over 60% in less than 30 years. In 2017 membership fell by 6% when compared to 2016.

If current trends continue it is likely that the membership numbers will continue to fall by 5% year on year. However, if we take into consideration that a significant proportion of our membership are above retirement age and there are few new members coming into the sport it is likely that the level of membership will reduce at a far greater rate in future years. As the premier organisation associated with our sport the RPRA should take further steps to reduce this trend. We have to accept that the membership levels are probably never going to reach the heights of the 1980's but through appropriate interventions and promotion we can attract new membership. Although the ideal 'target' would be young people we have to also acknowledge the great success of Peter Hargreaves in attracting a wide range of people to the sport in Oswaldtwistle. Unfortunately not every club has a Peter Hargreaves so it's down to the RPRA to look for solutions – rightly so.

The RPRA accountants included in their annual report that the membership is falling at an alarming rate and that reserves should be invested to promote the sport and attempt to increase participation and secure the future of the RPRA.

With this in mind, I have developed a project proposal that aims to attract new membership and increase participation. I hope that Council approve the funds required to implement this pilot project.

ONE-LOFT

The RPRA One-Loft Race was again a resounding success with a large proportion of the pigeons making the



The new Royal Pigeon Racing Association President, David Bridges receiving the RPRA Chain of Office from the outgoing President, Les Blacklock.

final race. The one loft has to be considered the best in the UK which is due in no small part to the One Loft Manager Jeremy Davies and his team.

The significant investment the RPRA Council agreed at October meeting will enhance the one loft experience in 2018 and help keep the loft at the forefront of one loft racing in the UK.

SCHOOL LOFTS

In October the Future of the Sport Committee approved funding for three new school lofts, two of which are well on their way towards racing in 2018. These projects received great coverage in their local press, providing good publicity and raising awareness of the sport.

PROPERTY

I had hoped that I would be writing my 2017 annual report from new offices. However, for a variety of reasons we are still based at the Reddings in an environment that is far from ideal. Since October's Council meeting further reports have been produced on the options available to Council which I hope will enable us to make a decision and move forward with looking back.

BHW SHOW OF THE YEAR

The 2018 Blackpool Show of the Year was again a great success with attendance remaining consistent with previous years. This year saw the welcome return of the Olympia Hall which created much more space



The elected top table of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association for 2018. Arthur Cowley, Gary Cockshott, President David Bridges, Les Blacklock and Ian Evans, RPRA General Manager.

resulting in less crowding. The show also continues to attract great media coverage providing great publicity and raising awareness of our sport.

urban nest boxes and also implement a lobbying campaign both of which will hopefully prove successful in 2018/19.

RAPTOR ALLIANCE

The increasing number of birds of prey continues to have a detrimental impact on our sport. The Raptor Alliance continues to explore avenues to alleviate this issue. Although progress has been very slow this is no reflection on the dedication and hard work of all those involved which come in for unfair criticism. In 2017 the Alliance has explored avenues to challenge the

AVIAN INFLUENZA

In 2017 there were numerous outbreaks of Avian Influenza in the UK. Although this had little impact on the vast majority of members it did have a detrimental effect on those fanciers that live within the 10km zone around outbreaks such as Blackpool and where racing was suspended for a number of weeks.

However, for this limited impact to continue it is essential that we



Photographed at last week's Council meeting, members of full Council of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association.

RESULTS OF VOTING AT 2018 AGM

Proposition	For	Against	Abstentions	Result	Proposition	For	Against	Abstentions	Result
7/1	13	9		CARRIED	7/38	13	9		CARRIED
7/2	9	11	2	LOST	7/39	14	8		CARRIED
7/3	16	6		CARRIED	7/40	14	8		CARRIED
7/4	14	8		CARRIED	7/41	WITHDRAWN			
7/5	14	8		CARRIED	7/42	14	8		CARRIED
7/6	14	8		CARRIED	7/43	WITHDRAWN			
7/7	6	16		LOST	LATER AMENDED BY COUNCIL TO £100 UNDER RULE 142				
7/8	WITHDRAWN				7/44	21	1		CARRIED
7/9	WITHDRAWN				7/45	17	5		CARRIED
7/10	14	8		CARRIED	7/46	20	2		CARRIED
7/11	7	15		LOST	7/45 & 7/46 THE SAME, COUNCIL APPROVED 7/45, PREFERRED TO 7/46				
7/12	3	19		LOST	7/47	14	8		CARRIED
7/13	14	8		CARRIED	7/48	14	8		CARRIED
LATER WITHDRAWN BY COUNCIL ON GROUNDS OF NOT BEING IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF REGIONS					7/49	14	8		CARRIED
7/14	14	8		CARRIED	7/50	14	8		CARRIED
7/15	WITHDRAWN				7/51	14	8		CARRIED
7/16	WITHDRAWN				7/52	14	8		CARRIED
7/17	11	11		LOST	7/53	14	8		CARRIED
7/18	8	14		LOST	7/54	14	8		CARRIED
7/19	WITHDRAWN				7/55	14	8		CARRIED
7/20	WITHDRAWN				7/56	14	8		CARRIED
7/21	WITHDRAWN				7/57	14	8		CARRIED
7/22	WITHDRAWN				7/58	14	8		CARRIED
7/23	WITHDRAWN				7/59	11	11		LOST
7/24	12	8	2	CARRIED	7/60	18	4		CARRIED
7/25	11	11		LOST	7/61	10	12		LOST
7/26	WITHDRAWN				7/62	19	3		CARRIED
7/27	12	10		CARRIED	7/63	12	10		CARRIED
7/28	WITHDRAWN				7/64	17	3	2	CARRIED
7/29	WITHDRAWN				7/65	WITHDRAWN			
7/30	WITHDRAWN				7/66	14	8		CARRIED
7/31	WITHDRAWN				7/67	WITHDRAWN			
7/32	WITHDRAWN				7/68	WITHDRAWN			
7/33	WITHDRAWN				7/69	WITHDRAWN			
7/34	14	8		CARRIED	7/70	19	1	2	CARRIED
7/35	14	8		CARRIED	7/71	17	5		CARRIED
7/36	14	8		CARRIED	7/72	WITHDRAWN			
7/37	WITHDRAWN				7/73	16	4	2	CARRIED

demonstrate compliance with the General Licence for gatherings. A code of practice has been developed, agreed and publicised in this respect which will provide our membership with the information required to meet the requirements of the General Licence.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS

The number of tests undertaken in 2017 reduced significantly due to a number of reasons but mainly bad publicity relating to the process. During the year the PED committee have been working closely with a UK based laboratory to develop a testing programme. I am pleased to confirm that this work has proved beneficial and subject to agreement from the RPRA Council this programme will be implemented in 2018. A number of regional representatives have already attended a training session at the

laboratory and are certified to carry out the collection of samples and also train others in the collection of samples.

HALL REPORT

The decision taken by the RPRA Council to reject the Hall Report was on a personal note very disappointing and early indications are that the propositions put forward to introduce certain recommendations contained within the report will also be defeated. This is obviously democracy in action. However, we should consider whether this actually represents the feelings and wishes of the majority of the RPRA members. If we look at the percentage of the membership represented at Region meetings it is apparent that there is little engagement and therefore the true feelings and wishes of the membership is not being represented through the current governance structure of the RPRA. Of course

members have the opportunity to attend regional meetings but the fact is they don't. There are many reasons for this, from a lack of apathy to the fact that many people have to travel long distances in order to attend. There are many ways of engaging with the membership through postal and online voting systems which don't need to be expensive. A simple voting paper distributed in the BHW, the RPRA website, email as well as via social media will be of little cost to the RPRA. Taking this into consideration I request the RPRA Council agrees to carry out a consultation exercise of the membership on such things as governance. I know the majority of members are not interested in such matters and just want to race their pigeons but I am sure that this process will enable us to gain the thoughts of a larger percentage of our members and in a much more productive and beneficial way than the current process of having to attend a

meeting. It may have always been done that way but it doesn't have to continue that way.

RPRA PRESIDENT

This year will see Les Blacklock stepping down as President of the RPRA. Les chaired the interview panel that recruited me to the position of General Manager and so you all have him to blame. On a serious note, Les has been very supportive towards me, always available on the other end of the phone if needed, something that is very much appreciated. The position of RPRA President is an honour that obviously comes with responsibility, pressure and taking decisions that will not be popular with everyone. However, having worked with Les for the past 16 months it is apparent to me that at the forefront of his thoughts and actions is always the best interest of the RPRA.

The General Manager Mr Ian Evans's report was accepted with a vote of thanks.

The next item on the agenda was the accounts for 2017.

There were no questions or queries concerning the Balance Sheet so the accounts were unanimously passed.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The outgoing President, Mr L. Blacklock vacated the chair and declared all offices open. Nominations for the new President of the RPRA were received for Mr A. Cowley, Western Region and Mr D. Bridges, Derbyshire & South Yorkshire Region. Voting then took place with Mr A. Cowley receiving 8 votes and Mr D. Bridges receiving 13 votes with one spoilt paper not counted, the new President elected for 2018 was Mr D. Bridges.

Nominations were then received for the three Vice-Presidents, Mr A. Cowley, Mr J. Gladwin, Mr L. Blacklock and Mr G. Cockshott. Voting then took place with Mr L. Blacklock receiving 19 votes, Mr A. Cowley receiving 15 votes, Mr J. Gladwin 13 votes, Mr G. Cockshott also

13 votes. Mr L. Blacklock and Mr A. Cowley were then duly elected Vice-Presidents for 2018. With Mr J. Gladwin and Mr G. Cockshott receiving the same number of votes, Council then voted by 12 votes to 9 with again 1 spoilt paper not counted that Mr G. Cockshott be voted a Vice-President for 2018.

Voting then took place for the Auditors, a proposition for the current RPRA Auditors Hazlewoods was received with an amendment that we look for alternative auditors. Voting then took place with the proposition receiving 17 votes and the amendment receiving 5 votes. Hazlewoods were then elected auditors for 2018. Voting then took place regarding solicitors where a proposition was received that Rickerbys be elected as the RPRA solicitors with an amendment received that we look for alternative solicitors. Voting then took place with the proposition receiving 10 votes and the amendment receiving 12 votes. With this vote a proposition was received that we continue to work with our current solicitors, Rickerbys, until such times an agreed alternative be found, voting was 16 votes for with 6 abstentions.

Then followed the election of officers onto the various sub-committees – Finance and General Purposes; Emergency and Rules; Clock, Ring and Weather Forecast & Liberation Sites; British Homing World Management and Lib-Line; Reddings House; Future of the Sport; Olympiad, Performance Enhancing Drugs and Appeals Committee. The election of delegates to the Federation Colombophile Internationale; Standing Conference on Countryside Sports; Confederation of Long Distance Pigeon Racing Unions of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Pigeon Racing UK & Ireland (Raptors) were then taken.

Voting then took place on the propositions on the Agenda for 2018.

At the AGM the President and Vice-Presidents were elected as below:

President Mr D. Bridges
(1st Year)
Derbyshire & South
Yorkshire Region

Vice-Presidents
Mr A. Cowley
(2nd Year)
Western Region

Mr L. Blacklock
(1st Year)
Cumbria Region

Mr G. Cockshott
(1st Year)
North East Region

APPENDIX 'A'

RPRA COUNCIL MEETINGS

24 February 2017	27 October 2017
24 February 2017 (AGM)	
25 February 2017 (Appeals)	

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Finance & General Purposes

24 February 2017
27 October 2017
18 December 2017

President & Vice-Presidents

23 February 2017	(Coventry)
11 April 2017	(Cheltenham)
19 July 2017	(Welshpool)
26 October 2017	(Nottingham)

Clock Ring & Weather Forecast/Liberation Site

24 February 2017
27 October 2017

Show of the Year

16 February 2017
06 July 2017
06 September 2017
15 November 2017

British Homing World

23 February 2017
19 July 2017
26 October 2017

Future of Sport

23 February 2017
06 June 2017
26 October 2017

Emergency & Rules

24 February 2017
27 October 2017

PED Sub-Committee

23 February 2017
26 October 2017

Reddings House

23 February 2017
19 July 2017
26 October 2017

Pigeon Racing UK & Ireland (Raptor Alliance)

03 April 2017	(Colchester)
03 July 2017	(Cheltenham)
05 September 2017	(Colchester)
09 October 2017	(Cheltenham)
24 November 2017	(Doncaster)

Olympiad

23 February 2017
27 October 2017

Standing Conference on Countryside Sports

27 April 2017
02 November 2017

All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG)

12 September 2017 (London)

Following the AGM the various sub-committees of the RPRA met and then at 3pm full Council reconvened, with the new President, Mr D. Bridges taking the chair and welcoming all present.

Apologies were received from Mr G. Daykin, East Midland Region, replaced by Mr J. Dodd.

After a minor amendment the minutes were passed.

Matters Arising: South West Region minute book. After further discussion Council decided by 19 votes for with 2 abstentions that there is not enough evidence in it and the need to move on that no further action be taken.

Beachcomber Medal had been sent to Cleave for validation and it was the consensus of opinion that there is no reason to suspect that the medal is anything other than the medal that was originally presented by Maria Dickin in 1944. Council decided that we accept the recommendation of Cleave that it is genuine and we thank the General Manager for his work in resolving the matter.

Reddings House Redevelopment: The General Manager and Mr R. Shirley reported that an application had been made to Cheltenham CBC regarding a Pre App Advice which detailed an application to get consent. After a lengthy discussion Council voted by 18 votes for with 4 abstentions that we move the staff to temporary serviced accommodation, sell The Reddings and then buy another property when The Reddings is sold. A votes of thanks was given for all the hard work given by the General Manager and Mr R. Shirley.

Trustees Duties and Responsibilities: Council then voted by 19 votes for with 3 abstentions that Mr D. Higgins, Mr R. Shirley and Mr L. Blacklock would be the RPRA Trustees.

REPORT ON COMMITTEE MEETINGS

OLYMPIAD

The General Manager delivered the report for the above committee held on 22nd February. Minutes of the previous meeting held 27th October 2017 were accepted as a true and accurate record. There were no matters arising. Team Manager Update: The Team Manager had spoken to a few companies regards flying the birds to Poznan which wasn't logistically ideal, so he will probably drive to Poznan. Estimated costs would be finalised closer to the date. An advert will be placed in the BHW advertising the Olympiad before the racing season starts and continue on a monthly basis. It would also be publicised on social media and issued via the RPRA database. It was also hoped that past UK Olympiad winners would be published in the BHW to help

generate interest. It was decided that the Show for the selection of birds for the Olympiad would be held in Liverpool on 18th November, 2018. It was then proposed and endorsed by Council by 20 votes for with 2 abstentions that the RPRA consider hosting the 2023 Olympiad in Blackpool. A letter of intent be sent to the FCI asking for the cost implications and also informing them that we are interested in hosting the Olympiad in 2023.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS

The General Manager delivered the report for the above committee held on 22nd February. Minutes of the previous meeting held 26th October 2017 were accepted as a true and accurate record. Matters arising: Mr A. King asked if last year's tests were negative. The General Manager confirmed that all test were negative. UK Laboratory Update: Since the committee last met the General Manager had kept the committee updated in respect of developments with the UK based laboratory. A number of meetings with the laboratory and representatives of the PED committee had taken place culminating in training sessions for regional representative being completed on 16th February. There had been no cost to the RPRA. The knowledge and genuine interest shown by the laboratory to develop the PED testing programme had impressed all the committee members. It was then unanimously agreed that the contract with the laboratory is signed by the General Manager with a view to commence testing as soon as possible in 2018.

Appendix G: Amend point 11 to read: Where the test of Sample B had been requested the appellant has to disclose the result to the RPRA prior to the Appeal Hearing. Amend point 4 to read: Only a suitable trained person,

authorised by the RPRA in the presence of a witness is to collect samples. The committee then unanimously agreed that Appendix G is accepted with the above amendments. It was also agreed that the process should involve: A list of suitably trained sample takers is maintained by the RPRA; Test packs are only issued to authorised sample takers; Region to provide certificates to suitably trained individuals; RPRA HQ to draft identification document with photograph identity, similar to the convoyer licence. Sample Testing Update: The General Manager and those committee members that were present at the training provided an overview of the training and all agreed that the training was a positive step forward. Test Budget: It was unanimously agreed that the RPRA Drug Testing programme is agreed. Correspondence: Email from Irish Region dated 12th January 2018, that the RPRA should publish a list of banned substances in the BHW. It was unanimously agreed that based on the advice from the laboratory that the list is not published, other than that contained within Appendix G. The committee would then quote the advice from the laboratory in response to the Irish Region.

FUTURE OF THE SPORT

The General Manager delivered the report for the above committee held on 22nd February. Minutes of the previous meeting held 26th October 2017 were accepted as a true and accurate record. Matters arising: The funding allocated to the Birdmen Book had assisted in moving the project towards publication. The FoS committee would be updated when the launch date was confirmed. The General Manager updated the committee in respect of progress for the Raptor Alliance Lobbying campaign. In order to ensure that the funding was

APPENDIX 'B' MEMBERSHIP 2016

Date: As at February 2nd, 2017

REGION	AFFILIATED MEMBERS	INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS	TOTAL MEMBERSHIP
CUMBRIA	926	26	952
DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE	1,491	86	1,577
DEVON & CORNWALL	467	50	517
EAST MIDLAND	2,202	171	2,373
IRISH	1,907	59	1,966
LONDON	1,936	119	2,055
NORTH EAST	2,511	139	2,650
NORTH WEST	1,255	105	1,360
SOUTHERN	1,274	156	1,430
SOUTH WEST	1,177	117	1,294
WELSH	340	5	345
WESTERN	1,935	103	2,038
WEST MIDLAND	2,524	140	2,664
Totals	19,945	1,276	21,221

RPRA CLUB NUMBERS			
	2016	2017	% Diff
CUMBRIA	79	81	2.5
DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKS	122	120	-1.6
DEVON & CORNWALL	35	32	-8.6
EAST MIDLAND	191	188	-1.6
IRISH	97	98	1.0
LONDON	133	133	0.0
NORTH EAST	191	179	-6.3
NORTH WEST	114	113	0.9
SOUTHERN	80	80	0.0
SOUTH WEST	79	80	1.3
WELSH	58	62	6.9
WESTERN	178	177	-0.6
WEST MIDLAND	205	192	-6.3
	1,562	1,535	-1.7

used in the most beneficial way possible, certain periodic targets in relation to progress had now been agreed and would be built into the contract. Payment would be split into pre-agreed quarterly profiles subject to the achievement of the agreed targets. Ultimately it was estimated that this draft amendment would be submitted to the UK Government in September 2018 with a view to it being incorporated into the Wildlife and Countryside Act by the end of December 2018. The General Manager confirmed that the cover for the One-Loft Trailer had been purchased. Loft Manager's Update: Unfortunately the One-Loft Manager was unable to attend due to Benzing being at the lofts fitting the new ETS. In his absence the General Manager provided an overview which included an outline of the improvements made to the loft, supported by photographs and costs. The loft had reached capacity within four weeks of advertising, with in excess of 100 entrants on the reserve list. The One-Loft Manager had requested that the capacity be increased to 1,480, and this was approved. It was also agreed that the Two-Bird Average prize be to the value of £500. The committee then gave a vote of thanks to Jeremy, the One-Loft Manager for all his efforts.

FoS Accounts: The Finance Manager presented the accounts and satisfactorily answered any questions relating to them. The accounts were then accepted with a vote of thanks to the Finance Manager, Mrs L. Zhang. Update on School Lofts: The agenda packs included an update on the School Lofts funded through the FoS committee along with coverage of the projects within the local press. Although two of the school lofts were progressing towards racing in 2018 unfortunately the third loft at Clifford Primary School now looks unlikely to go ahead due to local opposition to the project.

Correspondence: The 115 Club

which provides high quality out of school care had entered the One-Loft Race. The RPRA Finance Manager requested the FoS committee to clarify whether this Club would be eligible for the School prize fund. The committee agreed that they were allowed to compete for school prizes. Southern Region letter dated 4th December, 2017 requesting that the FoS Committee reconsider the decision to allow all school entries to be eligible for all the school prizes. It suggests that only one prize per school is awarded. The Region felt that schools with multiple entries are at an unfair advantage. It was agreed to defer the decision until the October meeting. It was then unanimously agreed that the school prize money for the final race be doubled. Mr Michael Marr of Germany had very kindly donated €200 towards a prize for young fanciers and the committee decided that this be awarded to the best single performance by a school loft.

Project Proposal: The General Manager provided an overview of his project proposal to employ a Development Manager. The aims and objective of the project would be to promote the pigeon sport at community, regional and national level supported by professional PR activities, the General Manager and RPRA HQ. The strategy associated with the project would involve taking advantage of existing government policy around social isolation and loneliness, existing community based projects and projects aligned to the education curriculum. The Development Officer would also be required to work closely with Mr P. Hargreaves, building on his success in increasing membership in Oswaldtwistle. The cost of the project would be £30k over a 12 month period at which point the success of the project would be evaluated and extended if the project had been successful. It was unanimously agreed that the FoS fund the project for 12 months. Finally it was pointed out that there is no mention of the Pigeon Project on the Bletchley Park website. The General Manager was requested to speak to Bletchley Park about this issue and also to purchase a new display cabinet.

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The General Manager delivered the report for the above committee held on 23rd February. Minutes of the previous meeting held 18th December 2017 were accepted as a true and accurate record. Matters arising: The possibility of purchasing new PCs for Region secretaries was discussed at the last meeting where it was agreed that a decision would be made once the Region's balance sheets were

available. A summary of cash reserves stated in the Regions' annual accounts was distributed. Based on the amount of reserves available to Regions it was felt that there was sufficient funds to purchase their own PCs. It was then agreed that we approach the RPRA accountants for advice in relation to Region accounts. A request to change the database passwords for Region secretaries had been sent to Mr M. Winnall. The General Manager explained that since the last meeting there had been no developments in relation to the Secret Messages project. Taking into consideration the FoS committee's agreement to fund the proposed pilot project, it was suggested that the remaining balance of £3,800 could be used as a contingency to support the Development Officer. This was then unanimously agreed.

The General Manager confirmed that he had spoken with the RPRA insurance broker who confirmed that the current level includes that for Trustees to the value of £1 million. It was important to note that this cover was to cover legal costs towards any action against the RPRA Trustees but would not cover penalties incurred as a result of such legal action.

Implications of propositions passed at the AGM. The committee agreed by 21 votes for with 1 abstention that the amendment to Rule 124, to increase conveyors licence comes into force from 2019. Accounts: The Finance Manager distributed and provided an overview of the Association accounts as at 31st January 2018. The current level of ring sales and income was discussed and agreed by 17 votes for, 4 against with 1 abstention that starting in 2019 a 30p levy be put on all non-GB rings. The committee also asked if we could look at amending Rule 139b by sending it to the Rules committee to look at due to the rise in advertising costs. Price Lists: the increase in postage costs should be included in the price list when the rise is known in March 2018 and that the price for sealing pliers is amended to price on application. It was then agreed that there is an increase in basket fees for Channel races from 15p to 20p per basket to reflect the exchange rate. The current cost is 23 cents per basket. Key measures of activity: A vote of thanks was given to Mrs J. Field for producing the statistics. Referral from the FoS Committee: The FoS Committee requested the Finance and General

APPENDIX 'C' SERVICES

These figures are available on the RPRA website – via the Racing Handbook Page – under HQ statistics – and are updated at least twice a year.

Purpose Committee to look at how we could help the existing membership. This was discussed but no recommendations were made. SoY Staff costs contribution: The request to increase the staff costs contribution from the SoY Funds to 8% was made at the show committee. The show committee felt 8% was too high and made a counter offer at 2%. The F&GP committee was unsatisfied with the offer and warranted further discussion at Council. Council then agreed by 12 votes for, 8 against with 2 abstentions that we accept the 2% offer this year.

CLOCK, RING, WEATHER FORECAST AND LIBERATION SITE COMMITTEE

Mr A. Cowley delivered the report for the above committee held on 23rd February. Minutes of the previous meeting held 27th October 2017 were accepted as a true and accurate record. Matters arising: Tauris UK 2018 Update: Letter dated 20th February regarding single races, not regarded as a problem by others and this may be incorporated in the next software update. Letter noted and put on file. Toppigeon – ring compatibility: It was unanimously agreed that we instruct the General Manager to write to the clock manufacturers who have not responded and ask them for an update to previous letters and write to the FCI to ask if there had been any further developments. Request for ETS ring price review: Replies had been received from Unikon, Mega, Tipes and Tauris. No reply from Benzing, but overall there were no reductions offered and no guarantee that prices would not rise. Replies were noted and left on file. CRW 17/18 Unikon's response regarding striking off a race was discussed and unanimously agreed that their response was noted and we await further investigation. Implications of the propositions passed at the AGM would be left to the Rules Committee. Puncture Clocks – Audit: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that we place an advert in the BHW and RP to the effect that any puncturing clock needs to be re-registered at The Reddings prior to the start of the 2018 racing season. Failure to do so will disqualify the clock from any further use. Puncturing clocks may not be sold, loaned, disposed of or for the use of any other person in any RPRA competition. Correspondence: Cumbria Region letter regarding the issue of life rings. Council agreed by 17 votes for, 4 against with 1 abstention that the General Manager write a reply to the Cumbria Region stating that the distribution date of 1st December is left as it is. Irish Region email dated 12th January 2018 regarding Unikon strike off at home, that the matter had already

been dealt with. Southern Region letter dated 24th January 2018 linking Benzing to Unikon. It was agreed that the General Manager writes to the Southern Region advising them to contact Unikon asking that if the problem continues, to ask Unikon for the code. Irish Region email dated 4th February 2018 regarding Rule 235a was referred to the Rule Committee. Mega System letter received 13th February 2018. This was a communication error which has now been resolved internally and the General Manager would reply to Mega to this effect.

Liberation Site Committee: Liberation site report, Salisbury Livestock Market, the South West Region Secretary reported that due to the many electrical cables it was not suitable for liberations. Site to be kept as is; Charnock Richard, permission was given to Mr L. Blacklock to investigate this site. Convoyers Meeting: Portland liberation site, acting on information received at the convoyers meeting in Blackpool the number of vehicles at Portland be restricted to 6 large vehicles, booked on a first come, first served basis. Convoyers meetings at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool room not suitable and the venue would be reviewed for 2019. Correspondence: Letter from Southern Region dated 4th December 2017 regarding Airports. The matter had been discussed and agreed that the current RPRA Rules meet CAA requirements.

EMERGENCY & RULES COMMITTEE

Mr L. Blacklock delivered the report for the above committee held on 23rd February. Minutes of the previous meeting held 27th October 2017 were accepted as a true and accurate record after the highlighting of a typing error. Matters arising: Review of Rule 159. At the October meeting the review of the Rule 159 was included on the agenda. This review was requested by the President and Vice-Presidents due to increasing complaints from members that are being refused membership of their local clubs, this also includes young fanciers and school lofts. In light of this, a new Rule 159 goes forward to Council: New Rule 159, Where a member is not already a member of an affiliated organisation (except National and/or Specialist Clubs) he/she will be granted admission to their geographically closest organisation (based upon distance from club headquarters) unless the member is a debtor to the organisation or any RPRA affiliated organisation. If the member is deemed unfit to become a member of the organisation, the organisation must write to their affiliated Region stating the reasons for refusal. The Region will

preside over the matter and make a decision after hearing both parties. The Region's decision is final. Council agreed by 14 votes for, 7 against with 1 abstention that this go back to Regions for discussion and then brought back to the October Council meeting. The Emergency & Rules Committee requested to review Rules 227 and 240 to accommodate both types of clocking system. The Rules Committee believes that parity cannot be achieved between the two timing systems referred to in Rules 227 and 240.

Correspondence: London Region email dated 13th November 2017 re double ringing and their letter dated 9th January 2018 regarding Rule 174 were dealt with at the AGM. Southern Region letter dated 4th December 2017 re Rule 174 requesting clarification. The General Manager to put a notice in the BHW stating that all fees to be paid for by 1st April as per Rule 174 and also Rule 161. An organisation can charge a late payment fee providing this is in their domestic rules. R. Harris email dated 26th January 2018 re Clarification ETS rings. It was unanimously agreed that you are not allowed to superglue ETS rings to the Life Ring as this contravenes Rule 96. Irish Region email dated 4th February 2018 re Change of Rule 235a. Change for this rule is because some members are making changes at their lofts. It was agreed that we delete current Rule 235a and replace with: Rule 235a. All electronic rings must be allocated to the life ring number of the members pigeons in the organisation premises or other approved premises by two elected officials a minimum of 7 days prior to the use of the ETS. Allocation on race marking night will only be permitted due to a defect or loss of an electronic ring. South West Region letter dated 8th January 2018 re Rule 42 had already been dealt with.

Implications of the propositions passed at the AGM.

Rule 2 go forward as printed in 7/1;
Please note with reference to the above Rule 2 as per 7/1 reference Part B: Definitions the General Manager has been replaced by Chief Executive. This now applies to all RPRA rules.

Rule 10 go forward as printed in 7/3;
Heading 'Appeals to the Council' to be changed to 'Appeals'

Rule 38 go forward as printed in 7/4;
Rule 35 go forward as printed in 7/5;
Rule 36 go forward as printed in 7/6;
Rule 40 go forward as printed in 7/10;
Rule 44, as printed in 7/13, the Cumbria delegate wishes to withdraw the amendment to Rule 44 on the grounds that it is not in the best interests of the Regions. Council unanimously endorsed the decision.

Rule 42 goes forward as printed in 7/14;
 Rule 57 goes forward as printed in 7/24;
 Rule 60a goes forward as printed in 7/27;
 Rule 69 goes forward as printed in 7/34;
 Rule 73 goes forward as printed in 7/35;
 Rule 74 goes forward as printed in 7/36;
 Rule 77 goes forward as printed in 7/38;
 Rule 78 goes forward as printed in 7/39;
 Rule 82 goes forward as printed in 7/40;
 Rule 83b goes forward as printed in 7/42;
 Rule 85 as printed in 7/43 has been amended to £100 under Rule 142.
 Voting 21 votes for, 1 abstention;
 Rule 86 goes forward as printed in 7/44;
 Rule 96 goes forward as printed in 7/45 – preferred to 7/46;
 Rule 99 goes forward as printed in 7/47;
 Rule 100 goes forward as printed in 7/48;
 Rule 101 goes forward as printed in 7/49;
 Rule 102 goes forward as printed in 7/50;
 Rule 106 goes forward as printed in 7/51;
 Rule 108 goes forward as printed in 7/52;
 Rule 109 goes forward as printed in 7/53;
 Rule 110 goes forward as printed in 7/54;
 Rule 111 goes forward as printed in 7/55;
 Rule 112 goes forward as printed in 7/56;
 Rule 113 goes forward as printed in 7/57;
 Rule 114 goes forward as printed in 7/58;
 New Rule 124, as printed in 7/60, General Manager needs changing to Chief Executive in line 2 and line 7;
 Rule 127c goes forward as printed in 7/62;
 Rule 129 goes forward as printed in 7/63;
 Rule 133b goes forward as printed in 7/64;
 Rule 141 goes forward as printed in 7/66;
 New Rule as printed in 7/71, line 2 change General Manager to Chief Executive;
 Rule 132 goes forward as printed in 7/73.

BRITISH HOMING WORLD MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The General Manager delivered the report for the above committee meeting held on 22nd February. The minutes of the last meeting were accepted and passed as a true and accurate record. Matters arising: Editor's new car, the leasing and purchasing costs are virtually the same. The Editor then gave his report. Circulation was down over the past 12 months, postal subscriptions remain

steady with online subscriptions increasing over the same period. Blackpool Show of Year double issue was again a resounding success, especially the online edition.

The Blackpool edition was 176 pages; with the auction edition at 200 pages. The online double edition for the Blackpool Show was again provided free of charge.

The 2019 Calendar, Wall Planner and Diary were discussed and it was decided that we again produce them. The quote for the printing of the BHW Diaries was also accepted. The Sponsorship of race results was raised and discussed. It was then agreed that the larger organisations currently sponsored by the BHW for their race results would continue for the 2018 season. The Editor then informed the meeting that his staff wished to place on record their thanks to the BHW Committee and to Council for monies given for the staff Christmas lunch and the salary increase awarded in 2017. The Editor then reported that the BHW had attended the Blackpool Show, NEHU Show and both Racing Pigeon Shows at Doncaster and Uttoxeter and it had been a successful show season.

Accounts, Finance and Debtors, details were distributed at the meeting and were reviewed and discussed. Thanks were given to Mrs Zhang for the accounts and for the reduction of debtors over recent years.

The General Manager and the Editor had met with representatives from our Printers, Mortons with regards to the printing and distribution contract which is due for renewal in August. The situation is currently being reviewed by the Editor, General Manager and the Finance Manager and circulated to the President and the three Vice-Presidents.

Show of the Year 2018 feedback was then given and it was unanimously agreed that a letter of thanks is sent to Ms Ruth Archer for the donations from the estate of Mr Brian Tattersall to the Ladies Charity Stand.

BHW overtime costs was then discussed with the General Manager, Finance Manager and the Editor to review.

Correspondence: A thank you letter was received from former RPRA General Manager Peter Bryant and his wife for their invitation to attend the 2018 BHW Blackpool Show of the Year.

Confederation of Long Distance Racing Pigeon Unions. A report of a meeting held in Blackpool on 19th January 2018 was then given by Mr L. Blacklock.

Brief reports on the Raptor Alliance, The German Show, FCF Congress, Gravelines and the NPO were then

given by the General Manager, Mr L. Blacklock, Mr R. Shirley and Mr D. Higgins.

Correspondence: West Midlands Region letter dated 23rd December 2017, South West Region letter dated 8th January 2018 and the East Midland Region letter dated 8th January 2018. It was agreed that letters are sent to these Regions saying that there were propositions on this year's AGM agenda to start implementation of the recommendations of the Hall Report but these were defeated at the AGM. Letter from the Derbyshire & South Yorkshire Region letter dated 8th January 2018 re the question of the custodianship/ownership of the Blackpool Show of the Year be discussed by Council. Their decision was that is called the British Homing World Show of the Year, and that the President of the RPRA asks the Show Committee to run the show on their behalf each year.

Queen's Coronation 65th Anniversary: It was agreed that the RPRA purchase 13 trophies, to be given to the winners of each Region's organised Region race to commemorate the Queen's Coronation 65th Anniversary.

Council then decided to ask the Show Committee to see if they would write and ask all auctioneers who hold auctions on the Blackpool Show of the Year weekend in Blackpool to make a donation to the Show of the Year Charities.

Council Meetings 2018/19 was discussed and confirmed as 25th, 26th & 27th October 2018 and 21st, 22nd & 23rd February 2019, both being held at Novotel Hotel, Long Eaton, Nottingham.

The Continental gifts were handed out to the West Midlands and London Regions.

APPEALS

Minutes of a meeting of the Council of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association held in the Novotel Hotel, Long Eaton, Nottingham on Thursday, 22nd February at 5pm to hear appeals.

Present – Messrs L. Blacklock (Chairman), K. Blount, J. Gladwin, R. Harris, D. Headon, J. Hooper, G. Field, G. Field, J. Waters and R. Shirley.

Appeal 1 – Titanic HPS v Irish Region, rehearing of the decision by the NIPA.

It was the decision of the appeals committee that the appeal be allowed on the grounds that the NIPA did not comply with RPRA Rules 168/169.