

ROYAL PIGEON RACING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 124th Annual General Meeting of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association was held at the Novotel Hotel, Long Eaton, Nottingham, on Friday, 28th February 2020 at 9am. The meeting was opened by RPR President Mr D. Bridges, who thanked everyone for attending and welcomed Councillors, Reserve Delegates, the Chief Executive Officer, the Editor of the BHW, ladies from the Reddings, the RPR Development Officer and members.

Changes to 2020 RPR Councillor and Reserve Delegates: New Councillors, Mr A. Ewart, East Midland Region replaces Mr G. Daykin and Mr E. Hendrie, London Region replaces Mrs M. Murray (resigned 2019). Ex-Councillors – Mr K. Blount, Derbyshire & South Yorkshire Region; Mr G. Daykin, East Midland Region and Mr W. Lewis, West Midlands Region now Reserve Delegate.

Apology was received from Mr N. Darby, West Midlands Region

replaced by Reserve Delegate Mr C. Bradnick.

Before the commencement of the Annual General Meeting presentations were made to Mr J. Gladwin, London Region for 10 years service to Council and to Mr D. Bridges who received the Major Len Lewis Memorial Trophy awarded by the British Confederation to the new President of the Confederation.

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

The Chief Executive Officer then delivered his annual report for 2019.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR 2019

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 that have passed away in 2019. The

structure and content of my report will be very similar to that of previous years but I believe it is important that these issues are kept at the forefront of our discussions.

ACCOUNTS AND FINANCES

In 2019 a loss of £63K was realised. However it is important to note that the previous three years saw profits totalling in excess of £216K. As stated in my previous annual reports it is important that these profits are not simply added to the existing reserves of the RPR but reinvested into the sport in promotion and other aspects such as the free RPR results database launched in 2019 along with certain tasks moving to a more automated/ online approach that will enable the RPR to meet the challenges of the future and reduce its overheads. These investments have contributed to the annual loss.

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

MEMBERSHIP

In 2019 we again saw a drop in membership of 3.8% when compared to 2018. Although any reduction is not welcomed it was pleasing to note that the reduction in terms of percentage and number has decreased when compared to previous years.

Again in 2019 I have been contacted by numerous members who have been refused applications to clubs. 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.

With this in mind I put forward an addition to the existing rule 159 via my Club and Region that will, if passed, help with this issue moving forward.



*The top table of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association for 2020.
John Waters, Ian Evans RPR Chief Executive Officer, David Bridges RPR President,
Gary Cockshott and Paul Hammond.*

RESULTS OF VOTING AT 2020 AGM

Proposition	For	Against	Abstentions	Result	Proposition	For	Against	Abstentions	Result
7/1	20	0		CARRIED	7/10	9	11		LOST
7/2	WITHDRAWN				7/11	18	2		CARRIED
7/3	8	12		LOST	7/12	15	5		CARRIED
7/4	8	12		LOST	7/13	13	7		CARRIED
7/5	18	2		CARRIED	7/14	15	5		CARRIED
7/6	NO SECONDER			LOST		COUNCIL LATER RULED UNWORKABLE			
7/7	9	11		LOST	7/15	11	9		CARRIED
7/8	6	14		LOST		COUNCIL LATER RULED UNWORKABLE			
7/9	11	9		CARRIED	7/16	15	5		CARRIED

RPRA ONE-LOFT

The RPRA One-Loft Race was again a resounding success with a large proportion of the pigeons making the 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 positioning of a camera on the trapping board with a live internet feed remains popular, allowing competitors and people with an interest to follow the race remotely from the comfort of their home.

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Richard Chambers continues to make a major contribution to the RPRA. For the second year running Richard has increased the number of junior members within the RPRA, turning the tide on what was a year on year reduction of this group. The role is developing as time progresses and Richard has some exciting ideas for the future. These ideas will take time and effort to develop but the continued support of the RPRA council, regions and its members is essential if this post is to reach its potential.

PUBLICITY

The professional PR company that compliments the Development Officer's role continues to add value securing vital exposure of our great sport including supporting the CBBC's My Life programme that outlined the sport of pigeon racing through the eyes of two young enthusiasts.

BHW SHOW OF THE YEAR

The 2020 Blackpool Show of the Year was again a great success with attendance remaining consistent with previous years. The event is the

highlight of the show season and a great opportunity for fanciers to socialise. The success of the show is down to the hard work and dedication of a number of volunteers as well as the RPRA staff. Thank you to everyone involved. It was pleasing to accommodate additional auctions in the Winter Gardens in 2020 and we hope to increase this number in 2021.

LORDS v COMMONS PIGEON RACE

In June 2019 the second Lords V Commons Pigeon Race took place from Bletchley Park with the pigeons heading north towards the Barnsley and surrounding area. The race was again a resounding success with great publicity achieved.

The race was organised with the help of the All Party Parliamentary Group for pigeon racing which has provided the sport with a voice within Government.

We plan to build on the success by holding the race again in 2020

RAPTOR ALLIANCE

The increasing number of birds of prey continues to have a detrimental impact on our sport. This has been exacerbated by the increasing number of artificial nest sites in our towns and cities. By the time I give this report we were hoping that the legal challenge to one such nesting site would have been completed. However, due to a number of unforeseen setbacks this is sadly not the case. We hope that the case is submitted to the court within the very near future.

RACING IN 2019

Again the 2019 race season proved to be far from acceptable. This follows a number of years of poor racing for which there are many

reasons, some of which are in the remit of the RPRA to explore solutions. Other reasons are somewhat out of our control. For those issues that are within the remit of the RPRA we should explore opportunities, reasons and possible solutions. As the governing body, direction has to come from the RPRA. One thing is for sure we cannot carry on doing things in the same old way and expect different results. What worked 40 years ago clearly does not work today.

One of the avenues we have explored during 2019 is to provide the racing organisations with weather reporting that is tailored to meet the race planning for Continental racing. Myself, Chris Gordon and Richard Chambers recently met with the Met Office to enhance this service and hopefully Council will approve this proposal later today.

Another step in the right direction relates to the appointment of a Health Working Group that works with stakeholders such as the VMD, APHA and DEFRA. A project that aims to assist members who are experiencing major health issues/high mortality rates will be launched in March.

CHANGE

Early indications are that the proposal to move to a one member one vote system for voting on propositions will fail. From a personal point of view this is disappointing. I can say with some confidence that the current structure results in an association that does not represent the majority view of its members.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND TRANSPARENCY

What has also been disappointing is the leaking of confidential information which can only have come from members of Council. This



Mr Les Blacklock presenting The Major Len Lewis Memorial Trophy, awarded by the British Confederation, to the new President of the Confederation Mr David Bridges.

information falls into the hands of individuals, whose motivation may be interpreted to be solely to generate unrest through wrongly interpreting and reporting such information. This has to stop; I am all for transparency but information used in this way causes unrest and does nothing to move the RPR or the sport to where it needs to be. There are far more constructive ways to do so and people's time would be better served doing so!

FINALLY

On the positive side it is the RPR that continues to provide the infrastructure to enable pigeon racing across the UK no matter what Union or organisation you may be aligned to. This fact should not be overlooked.

In summary small steps are being made to move the sport in the right direction but we need to start taking giant strides with everyone pulling in the same direction.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a successful 2020 season.

The Chief Executive Officer Mr Ian Evans's report was accepted with a vote of thanks.

The next item on the agenda was the accounts for 2019. After a short debate the accounts were unanimously passed.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The President, Mr D. Bridges

vacated the chair and declared all offices open. Nominations for the new President of the RPR were received for Mr D. Bridges, with no further nominations Mr D. Bridges was elected President of the RPR for 2020.

Nominations were then received for the three Vice-Presidents, Mr P. Hammond, Mr G. Cockshott and Mr J. Waters. Voting then took place and unanimously agreed that they be elected Vice-Presidents for 2020.

Voting then took place for the Auditors, a proposition for the current RPR Auditors Hazlewoods was received and with no amendment Hazlewoods were elected auditors for 2020.

Voting then took place regarding solicitors where a proposition was received that Rickerbys be elected as the RPR Solicitors. Trustees: Mr L. Blacklock, Mr R. Shirley and Mr D. Higgins were unanimously elected for 2020.

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; Reddings House; Future of the Sport; Olympiad, Performance Enhancing Drugs and Appeals Committee. The election of delegates to the Federation Colombophile Internationale; Confederation of Long Distance Pigeon Racing Unions of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Pigeon Racing UK & Ireland (Raptors) were then taken. The

Standing Conference on Countryside Sports committee was then discussed and decided that this be suspended for this year and reviewed again next year.

Voting then took place on the propositions on the Agenda for 2020.

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

President: Mr D. Bridges
(3rd Year)
Derbyshire & South
Yorkshire Region

Vice-Presidents:
Mr G. Cockshott
(3rd Year)
North East Region

Mr J. Waters
(2nd Year)
Western Region

Mr P. Hammond
(2nd Year)
West Midland
Region

Following the AGM the various sub-committees of the RPR met and then at 4pm full Council reconvened, with the President, Mr D. Bridges taking the chair and welcoming all present.

After a few minor amendments the minutes were passed. Matters arising: C7536 Annual insurance premium payment of £2 per member, correct proposer should read Mr C. Gordon and not Mr L. Blacklock as printed in the minutes.

REPORT ON COMMITTEE MEETINGS

OLYMPIAD

The Chief Executive Officer delivered the report for the above committee held on 27th February. Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record. Matters Arising: The Chief Executive Officer explained that the Olympiad training had not gone ahead due to the availability of the FCI trainer. Mr L. Blacklock advised that the FCI meeting was this weekend and therefore there was no update in relation to the World's Best Pigeon and Co-efficient Calculation. Team Manager Update:

Western European Show was a great success with the UK Team finishing third. Enquiries had been made to fly the birds to the next Olympiad but a lot depends on the Brexit deal. It was noted that we need to promote the classification far more. This would be done in the BHW and through social media and would need to be every two to three weeks. Mr L. Blacklock had attended as a judge and considered it a great honour. It was then unanimously agreed that we send a team to the 2021 Olympiad.

Liverpool Show: The 2019 show was poorly attended, although the pigeon show was a success with qualification for Blackpool achieved. Mr J. Waters provided an overview of the day and possible security concerns in managing ticket attendance. Sales went well. The finances of running the show were discussed with regards to the 2020 Show. It was unanimously agreed that the Chief Executive Officer visit the venue as soon as possible to negotiate venue hire and circulate to the committee members with a view to giving the show another go, provided it is at a much reduced cost. A vote of thanks was given to all those involved in organising the 2019 show.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS

The Chief Executive Officer delivered the report for the above committee held on 27th February. Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record. **Matters Arising:** There was no progress with the Kite Mark and the Chief Executive Officer was working with the laboratory. Mr R. Harris requested clarification in terms of who would know who will be tested. The answer was the strategic tester and the Chief Executive Officer. Mr Waters asked Mr Harris if he had reflected on the comments made and if he would now confirm the source, Mr Harris declined. As a result Mr Waters requested he is taken off the approved list of sample collectors. The committee also agreed that sample collections have to be RPRAs members. **Testing Budget for 2020:** It was unanimously agreed that the budget is set at £12,000 The free test offered to organisations and pricing policy remains the same as last year. **Correspondence:** Letter from West Midlands Region asking clarification



RPRAs President, David Bridges presenting an RPRAs Certificate of Merit, to Councillor Mr John Gladwin of the London Region in recognition of his 10 years service as a Councillor .

of the strategic sample collector, the committee endorse the Chief Executive Officer's reply.

FUTURE OF THE SPORT

The Chief Executive Officer delivered the report for the above committee held on 27th February. Minutes of the previous meeting held were accepted as a true and accurate record after a couple of minor spelling errors were corrected. **Matters Arising:** Data Recorders – information not presented, Chief Executive Officer to chase those organisations with data recorders to provide information in 2020. Mr Higgins asked if we had considered the extra workload in relation to the yearling race. The loft manager confirmed this had been considered and with the additional full time member of staff and the loft enhancements it was manageable. Mr Harris asked how the unused school spaces will be used. This was answered satisfactorily. **Yearling Race,** rule amendments, Rule 14 changed to 3 Hot Spot races plus the Final Race. Rule 25 last sentence regarding applying membership to National clubs is deleted; Rules will be published after July's meeting. It was then unanimously agreed that we go ahead with the yearling race. **One-Loft Manager's Contract:** It was unanimously agreed that we adopt the second option to include old bird loft with the following amendment,

that the contract is amended to be £31 for all entries in respect of the Young Bird loft entries. **FoS Accounts:** Mrs L. Zhang provided an overview of the accounts and forecasted a profit for 2020. Thanks was then given to Mrs L. Zhang for preparing the accounts.

Lobbying Campaign: The Chief Executive Officer provided an update that included the appointment of a new Chair and how the group continues to support our aims and objectives. Mr D. Higgins provided an update in relation to churches and listed buildings and the different rules regarding planning for churches. **Court Action Update:** The court case had stalled through a number of reasons but would be submitted very soon. **Lords v Commons Race:** Plans were underway to hold the race in June 2020. **Development Officers Project:** It was proposed and unanimously agreed that £5k from the remaining surplus is set aside to support new starters, subject to Mr R. Chambers and the Chief Executive Officer producing qualifying criteria at the next meeting for the committee to approve. Mr R. Chambers provided a progress update with young members increasing from 79 to 265. It was then unanimously agreed that a vote of thanks be given to Mr R. Chambers for his presentation and efforts and also to Mr D. Brown of the RPRAs. It was then unanimously agreed that the 2020 budget is set at £60k. **Correspondence:** Letter from

RPRA CLUB NUMBERS

	2017	2018	2019
CUMBRIA	81	81	82
DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKS	120	114	109
DEVON & CORNWALL	32	31	28
EAST MIDLAND	188	180	176
IRISH	98	101	101
LONDON	133	135	125
NORTH EAST	179	171	157
NORTH WEST	113	113	114
SOUTHERN	80	77	78
SOUTH WEST	80	81	77
WELSH	62	58	59
WESTERN	177	172	167
WEST MIDLAND	192	181	173
	1,535	1,495	1,446

Mr Morton regarding how entries are allocated was discussed. The committee felt the content was a valid point but it was agreed it was difficult to manage the process any differently. It was then unanimously agreed that we endorse the Chief Executive Officer's reply.

**REDDINGS HOUSE
COMMITTEE**

Mr D. Bridges delivered the report for the above committee meeting held on 27th February. Minutes of the previous meeting held were accepted as a true and accurate record. Update on the sale of The Reddings: Contracts had been exchanged with a flexible completion date of 6 weeks notice by the RPRA but before 23rd December 2020. Update on the purchase of Ley Court: There were still issues over the freehold which the RPRA Solicitor was dealing with. It was unanimously agreed that subject to available cash flow that the purchase completion takes place before the sale completion to allow for moving.

**BRITISH HOMING WORLD
MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE**

The Chief Executive Officer delivered the report for the above committee meeting held on 27th February. The minutes of the last meeting were accepted and passed as a true and accurate record. Matters arising: BHW subscription payments by Direct Debit – Mrs L. Zhang has been working with the bank but progress is slow due to personnel changes at the bank, with

matters still ongoing. Print quality of the magazine had improved.

The Editor then gave his report. Circulation was down over the past 12 months, postal subscriptions slightly down 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 136 pages, with the auction edition at 192 pages. The online double edition for the Blackpool Show was again provided free of charge.

The 2021 Calendar, Wall Planner and Diary were discussed and it was decided that we again produce them. A quote for the printing of the BHW Diaries was also accepted. The 2021 Stud Book was then discussed and agreed we again go ahead with producing one with the Editor reviewing the cost of reducing slightly the number of pages. 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 2020 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 2019. The Editor then reported that the BHW had attended the Blackpool Show, Olympiad Show in Liverpool 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 excellent state of the accounts and for the reduction of debtors over recent years.

APPENDIX 'A'**RPRA COUNCIL MEETINGS**

22 February 2019	16 April 2019 (Nottingham)
22 February 2019 (AGM)	24 July 2019 (Welshpool)
	25 October 2019

COMMITTEE MEETINGS**Finance & General Purposes**

22 February 2019

President & Vice-Presidents

21 February 2019	(Nottingham)
24 July 2019	(BHW)
24 October 2019	(Nottingham)

**Clock Ring & Weather
Forecast/Liberation Site**

22 February 2019

Show of the Year

7 March 2019
3 September 2019
26 November 2019

**Finance & General Purposes &
Clock, Ring & Weather Forecast**25 October 2019
16 December 2019**Future of Sport**21 February 2019
24 October 2019**Emergency & Rules**

22 February 2019

PED Sub-Committee21 February 2019
24 October 2019**Emergency & Rules
and Liberation Site**

25 October 2019

Reddings House21 February 2019
16 April 2019 (Nottingham)
24 October 2019**British Homing World**21 February 2019
24 July 2019
24 October 2019**Appeals**23 February 2019
26 October 2019**Olympiad**22 February 2018
25 October 2018**Standing Conference on Countryside Sports**25 May 2018
1 November 2018

Blackpool Show: It was unanimously agreed that the buffet lunch for the 2021 show should be of a higher quality and for reduced numbers to include only the foreign guests, special guests and the RPR President. **Blackpool Show Hotel Accommodation:** The Chief Executive Officer had received numerous strong complaints about the hotel rooms, food and service at the Grand Hotel, Blackpool and had asked the hotel for a reduction in the bill for the RPR bookings. No response had been received to date. The Chief Executive Officer has been working with Visit Blackpool to find alternative suitable accommodation for 2021. He along with the Show Chairman, Mr David Trippett will visit these proposed alternative hotels.

EMERGENCY & RULES & LIBERATION SITE COMMITTEE

Mr J. Waters delivered the report for the above committee held on 28th February. Minutes of the previous meeting held were accepted as a true and accurate record. Matters arising: ER&LS 19/04 See Appendix M (at the end of rule 25). Committee recommends Appendix M as follows: When independent transport companies/hauliers are responsible for liberation site fees they must pay these fees direct to the RPR and reclaim these payments from the convoyed organisations. The committee also recommends to include this on Form (Rule 25). ER&LS 20/03 Reference liberation

site fees see Appendix M in the RPR Rule Book. ER&LS 19/09 That the committee ask the RPR staff to check the current phone numbers of airfields to be notified and can they provide an alternative number if the first cannot be contacted due to the difficulty in contacting some airfields.

New Race Points. Following the request by Council for HQ to make a concerted effort to find liberation sites, adverts were placed in Farmers Weekly and the following sites are to be pursued. The committee agreed that we go ahead with Chichester site and organise a site visit; go ahead with site visit to Lower Kingsford by Mr D. Headon; go ahead with site visit to Lymburghs Farm by Mr P. Hammond.

Implications of the propositions passed at the AGM.

Rule 16 go forward as printed in 7/1;

Rule 59 go forward as printed in 7/5;

Rule 159b go forward without the appendix as printed in 7/9;

Rule 168a go forward as printed in 7/11;

New Rule 26 go forward as printed in 7/12;

At this point Council voted to invoke Rule 142 and decided by 13 votes for with 6 votes against that New Rule 26 go forward as printed in 7/12 but with 'before March 1st each year' inserted into the rule. The New Rule now reads: Each club (including any National or Specialist Club) shall before March 1st each year pay to the secretary of its Local Region an annual payment to the Association of £2.00 (inclusive of VAT) for each

APPENDIX 'C' SERVICES

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

member of the club except any member who has paid the annual payment through another club. Council also agreed New Rule 7/12 goes forward under the heading 'Insurance Premium' to be inserted within the RPR Rule Book as Rule 26.

New Rule 37 go forward as printed in 7/13;

New Rules under 7/14 and 7/15 were passed at the AGM but both were later deemed unworkable;

New Rule under 7/16 goes forward as printed and be inserted as 153a and the current 153 becomes 153b.

Liberation Site Report February 2020. Stoney Cross former Airfield; Confirmation received for permission to use Stoney Cross car park. To use this location we would need to cancel Lyndhurst, the difference between the two sites is 1533 yards NW. Committee member P. Hammond, to view Stoney Cross site and then make a decision.

Convoyers meeting, 18th January at the Blackpool Winter Gardens. The committee noted the convoyers report requesting the ban on the use of shaving in crates and recommending the use of cardboard instead. Council consider there is no requirement to ban the use of

APPENDIX 'B' MEMBERSHIP 2019

REGION	AFFILIATED MEMBERS	INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS	TOTAL 2019 MEMBERSHIP	COUNCILLORS (RULE 42)	*TOTAL 2018 MEMBERSHIP	DIFFERENCE + / (1)	VARIANCE %
CUMBRIA	795	61	856	1	931	-75	-8.76
DERBYSHIRE & S YORKS	1,371	40	1,411	1	1,514	-103	-7.30
DEVON & CORNWALL	442	33	475	1	498	-23	-4.84
EAST MIDLAND	1,968	141	2,109	2	2,312	-203	-9.63
IRISH	1,918	66	1,984	2	1,874	110	5.54
LONDON	1,762	176	1,938	2	1,987	-49	-2.53
NORTH EAST	2,335	178	2,513	3	2,505	8	0.32
NORTH WEST	1,174	79	1,253	1	1,308	-55	-4.39
SOUTHERN	1,161	104	1,265	1	1,408	-143	-11.30
SOUTH WEST	1,062	88	1,150	1	1,237	-87	-7.57
WELSH	301	20	321	1	355	-34	-10.59
WESTERN	1,802	129	1,931	2	1,941	-10	-0.52
WEST MIDLAND	2,187	213	2,400	2	2,499	-99	-4.13
	18,278	1,328	19,606	20	20,369	-763	-3.89

% Variance Year on Year – 2018 -5.00; 2017 -6.03; 2016 -4.90.

chippings. The committee asked that the RPRA contact all registered conveyors to invite them to the Convoys meeting at Blackpool. The committee is also going to ask the RPRA to encourage organisations to liberate their pigeon together where possible. It was also agreed that wherever possible with reasonable time, the driver/convoys informs the site agent of any alterations to the liberation. Chief Executive Officer to place an advert in the BHW and a notice on the website to this effect.

The Race Analysis from Vice-President Mr P. Hammond was noted.

Animal Transport Licence – Guidance from APHA/DEFRA, committee have discussed the guidance from APHA/DEFRA and would like to recommend to the Chief Executive Officer that he puts the current situation regarding the licencing in the BHW and on the website.

Solicitor's Advice Rule 152a and 152b. Officers 152a. The officers of an Organisation shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents, Chairman, Treasurer, Auditors, Committee and Secretary and such other officers and officials as the Organisation may deem necessary. All officers shall be elected annually. Such powers shall be delegated by the Organisation to its officers as the Organisation considers appropriate. 152b. With the exception of the Secretary, all officials and Committee members of groups as defined in Rule No. 2, must be elected delegates of members organisations. It was unanimously agreed that Rules 152a and 152b be placed on the October 2020 Emergency Rules & Liberation Site Committee agenda.

Correspondence: Western Region email 21st February 2020, Query Set-up of ETS at clubs. It was unanimously agreed that the Chief Executive Officer advises Mr Johnson that in the first instance his query should be raised with his own Region. Reference RPRA Rule 10. Unikon email 27th February 2020 – Unikon Result Pending, it was unanimously agreed that we note the email item regarding ETS printers and the item to be placed on the next agenda.

**FINANCE & GENERAL
PURPOSES COMMITTEE AND
CLOCK, RING & WEATHER
FORECAST COMMITTEE**

The Chief Executive Officer delivered the report for the above committee held on 28th February. Mr D. Bridges opened the meeting by announcing a serious breach of confidentiality had occurred from a member or members of this committee as copies of the draft accounts of the RPRA and BHW had been passed to someone outside of this committee and subsequently published in another fancy publication. This matter is now under investigation. Minutes of the previous meeting held were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Matters arising: RPRA Races 2020 (larger but fewer liberations) – Positive meeting held between Midlands National FC (MNFC), the National FC (NFC), Chief Executive Officer Ian Evans at The Reddings, however mutually agreeable dates for the races could not subsequently be agreed. The committee unanimously agreed that the Chief Executive Officer should attend further meetings with the MNFC, NFC, BICC and any other larger organisations to discuss the reasons for the races with a view to setting dates for 2021.

Review of undelivered post items to The Reddings – Julia Field reported there is now a process in place to pay the Royal Mail for items of under-paid postage via the RPRA's prepaid franking machine. Items are then delivered 2-3 days later. Costs are to be passed on to the sender.

BHW staffing/overtime report

- Overtime payments too high overall and should be reduced
- Most of the overtime was paid to one member of staff
- Consideration of the RPRA/BHW Lone Working Policy was discussed
- Risk to publication of over reliance on one key member of staff
- A full review of working time patterns and job descriptions should be carried out.

The committee then voted by majority decision that the BHW magazine should be posted out by 2nd class post, one day earlier to still arrive with the majority of subscribers on a Thursday. Council decided that for a trial period in the off season, starting approx October 1st that we would print the BHW on a Monday and post out 2nd class post, see how it goes and then review. It was then unanimously agreed that the Chief Executive Officer look at

man hours and costs per page to produce the magazine and compare to industry standard.

Implications of proposals passed at AGM, it was unanimously agreed that changes to travel expense claims policy should be effective immediately.

Financial Reports: The RPRA Accounts were circulated, reviewed and discussed. Mrs L. Zhang answered all queries and was thanked for her good work. The committee then agreed by 5 votes for, 3 against, 3 abstentions that there should be a 50% reduction in overtime at the BHW. This was then brought to Council and with no seconder for this action to be taken it was defeated. It was then agreed that the Chief Executive Officer investigates, studying costs at the BHW, discusses conclusions with the President and Vice-Presidents and implement recommendations. Request to transfer funds: It was agreed that residual funds for Lib-Line be transferred to the RPRA account and residual funds for MNFC Secret Messages project be transferred to the Future of the Sport account.

Price List: It was unanimously agreed that Basket Seals and Race Rubber prices should be increased to reflect the increased cost from the supplier and to incorporate any Royal Mail increase.

It was then proposed that the NWHU ring registration price should be £2 in line with foreign ring registration. An amendment proposed that NWHU ring registration price should remain at 30p. Voting took place with the proposition receiving 8 votes, the amendment received 10 votes, with one abstention. Therefore the price for NWHU ring registration remains at 30p per ring.

Key Measures of Activity: Statistics were reviewed and discussed. Chief Executive Officer to investigate changing the financial year to be in line with the Fiscal year and report back at next meeting. Future report to include the number of undelivered Royal Mail items. Thanks, given to Mrs Field for the information provided.

Working Groups: Health of birds – Project set up to identify the different viruses in young pigeon. The Chief Executive Officer and Chris Gordon met with DEFRA/APHA to discuss mortality in birds. Proposal is to set up a triage vet service. So far 5

veterinary practices are on board. A project pack is to be launched in March.

Weather Reporting – Chief Executive Officer, Chris Gordon and Richard Chambers visited the Met Office and have been working together to have a detailed customised weather report for clubs and organisations during the racing season. Trials in 2019 are looking positive. It was then unanimously agreed that a budget of up to £3,500 per annum be made available for the project.

Liverpool Olympiad Show: An application has been made to the venue for a reduced hire cost for 2020 and is under negotiation. Access to the venue should be tightened up as some visitors were entering without paying via the docking bay.

RPR National Awards: Publicity need to be increased, criteria to be reviewed, distance categories to be reviewed to allow greater participation. It was unanimously agreed to accept in principle to review the criteria for 2021 awards.

Staff Expenses Policy: It was unanimously agreed to add, that only mileage over and above the normal journey to work mileage can be claimed.

Safeguarding Policy: Draft document circulated and reviewed. Chief Executive Officer is seeking legal advice on the draft policy. Policy to be available in due course as an appendix to the RPR rules and on the RPR website anyone to download. Richard Chambers is the approved reporting officer for the RPR. Update to appear in the BHW in due course to assist clubs of their responsibilities regarding children and vulnerable adults.

Keeping pigeons on allotments – Guide for local authorities

Guidance has been received from the RSPCA which is detrimental to pigeon fanciers and therefore the Chief Executive Officer is updating the policy. An amended version will be available for review at the the next meeting.

Benzing M3 Clock – Approval. The clock has been passed to C. Gordon for testing. It has already been tested and approved by the FCI. It was unanimously agreed that the Benzing M3 clock be approved for use subject to testing by C. Gordon.

Correspondence: London Region letter dated 2nd December 2019. It was unanimously agreed that the

Chief Executive Officer's reply be endorsed.

Irish Region letter received 5th January 2020. It was unanimously agreed that the RPR give £1,000 to the Irish Region for sponsorship of a race to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the NIPA.

Council proposed for the 2021 RPR AGM, on a one year trial basis, that we operate a postal vote for one man, one vote on the 2021 propositions, voting was 12 votes for, 4 against with 3 abstentions.

Confederation of Long Distance Racing Pigeon Unions. A report of a meeting held in Blackpool on 17th January 2020 was then given by Mr D. Bridges.

Brief reports on the Continental visits were then given by the Mr J. Waters, Mr L. Blacklock and Mr T. Gardner.

Correspondence: Letters from the Cumbria Region, London Region, East Midland Region, Southern Region and the North West Region all relating the compulsory insurance premium, Chief Executive Officer to reply. The letter from the Southern Region regarding the NWHU, Chief Executive Officer to reply.

Council was informed that all but two Regions Balance Sheets had been sent but not received. These two Regions were asked to forward them on again.

Council Meetings 2020/21 was discussed and confirmed as 29th 30th & 31st October 2020 and 25th, 26th & 27th February 2021, both being held at Novotel Hotel, Long Eaton, Nottingham.

The Continental Gifts were handed out to the Welsh, Devon & Cornwall, Derbyshire & South Yorkshire and Irish Regions.

J. & J. Stretch, application for their suspension to be lifted was accepted.

APPEALS

Minutes of a meeting of the Council of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association held in the Novotel Hotel, Long Eaton, Nottingham on Saturday, 29th February at 9am to hear appeals.

Appeal 1 – Monk Bretton HS v Mr Beaumont, hearing under RPR Rule 83.

Present – Messrs J. Waters (Chairman), D. Higgins, T. Gardner, D. Headon, L. Blacklock, J. Dodd, S.

Mellor, J. Gladwin, S. Briggs, P. Hammond, R. Harris.

Apologies: Mr R. Shirley.

Also present: Defence – Mr Beaumont represented by Mr K. Blount. Appellant – Monk Bretton represented by Mr Greenwood; Witnesses: Mr Armitage, Mr Stone, Mr Bannister.

In attendance – I. Evans, Chief Executive Officer, Mrs C. Gardner, G. Cockshott, J. Heague, Mr O'Hare, Mrs Gladwin.

It was the unanimous decision of the Appeals Committee of those present that the appeal be disallowed. The Appeals Committee found in favour of Mr Beaumont on the grounds that Mr Beaumont had been accepted as a full member of the club.

Appeal 2 – Mr Jackson v Yorkshire Middle Route Combine, hearing under RPR Rule 83.

Present – Messrs D. Bridges (Chairman), J. Waters, T. Gardner, D. Headon, L. Blacklock, J. Dodd, S. Mellor, J. Gladwin, S. Briggs, P. Hammond, R. Harris.

Apologies: Mr R. Shirley.

Also present: Defence – None. Appellant – None.

In attendance – I. Evans, Chief Executive Officer, Mrs C. Gardner, G. Cockshott, J. Heague, Mr O'Hare, Mrs Gladwin, D. Higgins.

It was the unanimous decision of the Appeals Committee of those present that the appeal be disallowed on the grounds that the Combine complied with its own Rule 34 regarding improbable velocities.

Appeal 3 – Mr May v Mr Kennedy, hearing under RPR Rule 83.

Present – Messrs D. Bridges (Chairman), J. Waters, D. Higgins, T. Gardner, D. Headon, L. Blacklock, J. Dodd, S. Mellor, J. Gladwin, S. Briggs, P. Hammond, R. Harris.

Apologies: Mr R. Shirley.

Also present: Defence – Mr S. Finan (Mr Kennedy's representative). Appellant – Mr May.

In attendance – I. Evans, Chief Executive Officer, Mrs C. Gardner, G. Cockshott, J. Heague, Mr O'Hare, Mrs Gladwin, J. Gladwin, T. Williams.

It was the unanimous decision of the Appeals Committee of those present that the appeal be disallowed on the grounds that it had not been proved beyond reasonable doubt that Mr Kennedy had contravened any RPR Rules.