

**MINUTES of the 127<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association held at the Leonardo Hotel East Midlands Airport, Ashby Road, Castle Donington, Derby DE74 2SH on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023, at 9.00am.**

Present:	L Blacklock-CA (Chair), S Reed-DY, S Briggs-IR, C O’Hare-IR, D Higgins-NE, C Gordon-NE, P Hammond-WM, N Darby-WM (for W Lewis), J Dodd-EM, A Ewart-EM, T Gardner-WS, R Harris-SO, D Headon-DC, P Murray-NW, J Waters-WE, J Gladwin-LN, Mrs P Gladwin -LN (for A Williams), J Heague-WE, R Shirley-SW
Apologies:	W Lewis-WM, A Williams-LN, Auditor (Hazelwood)
In Attendance:	C Sutton-CEO, Julia Field-Office Manager (minutes).
Observers:	S Collishaw-EM, L Fribbins-LN

The meeting was opened by the President Mr L Blacklock who thanked everyone for attending and welcomed Councillors, Reserve Delegates, the Chief Executive Officer, RPRA staff and members of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association. Mr Blacklock asked everyone to think about their fellow pigeon fanciers in Ukraine.

**1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Proposed by T Gardner, seconded by S Briggs, and unanimously agreed:

**the minutes of the 126<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022 are accepted as a true and accurate record.**

**2. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT – Chris Sutton**

*It has been a very turbulent year for the RPRA since the last CEO report. Key staff have left the organisation, taking with them many years of experience. Ian Evans’ report was the last one he delivered before deciding to leave himself, followed soon after by our Finance Manager. I have no doubt most of the staff who have left did so due to the sale of the Reddings and the subsequent move to Stonehouse, which increased their commute. Ian Evans, on the other hand had other reasons for leaving and it is a shame that after six years of valued service he felt it was time to move on.*

*The move into the new premises in Stonehouse in July also took place in this period of transformation and those of our staff who came with us were left to man the guns whilst the leadership tentatively steered the ship through the turmoil remotely and I would like to commend our President, Vice Presidents and Office Manager for the dedication they applied on behalf of us all in the RPRA, and this on top of the biggest pandemic in living history.*

*Over the last 5 years staffing levels in the RPRA have decreased by 46% and all the low hanging fruit has been picked as well as those halfway up the tree to cut costs. Redundancies have been made and some of those who have left have not been replaced which has resulted in a core level of staff working in a very stressed environment, often working long hours of overtime and forgoing holiday entitlements, only to receive criticism as the level of service declines through no fault of their own, whilst our members’ expectations have increased due to the level of technology we now have in our daily lives. If a telephone is not picked up within a minute, an email not replied to within an hour, or a text message not instantly responded to, they feel they are being ignored and lambast the recipient when they do finally get through.*

*It takes a very special person to continue working under the conditions we as an organisation have placed them in, fortunately for us, they do it because they are not quitters, they like working for the RPRA and are desperately hopeful for better times coming where they can at least get their work life balance restored. A large part of our quality of life is from the work we choose to do, but drowning in it is stressful, difficult to*

*switch off from and it is our responsibility to ensure this does not continue. I often hear the RPRA is losing thousands, undoubtedly it is underfunded by thousands, the staff are not the problem.*

*To date there has been 750,000 rings issued in 2023. The vast majority have been sent out in small packages right in the middle of a postal strike. With all the subsequent follow up calls from those fanciers who have been frustrated by what they perceive as a lack of response and once racing begins, if just 1% of them go astray we will receive 7,500 calls, most of which will be from non-fanciers who have every right to expect a first-class service if they manage to get through. Jonathan and Sean are both full time and have done a sterling job with the rings.*

*New recruit Milly is another full-time member of staff who has been taken on to assist Jonathan in Membership Support and over the past two months has been inputting the One Loft race entries. Milly has proven to be a very capable young lady and if we can manage to retain her, will be an asset for the RPRA. Sean has now moved over to Racing Support to assist Nicky inputting over 4,000 races into the system. Every race for every club or federation who return their race program must be separately entered onto the system, detailing the liberation point, the date requested and the conveying organisation, to generate the invoices once racing has finished. These are date stamped on arrival and input on a first come first served basis as some race points are more popular than others. Nicky works four days per week and returned to the RPRA in July.*

*Debbie was taken on during the summer as a temp from an agency to help with the telephones during the young bird season. Her telephone manner was outstanding and after she left for a while we made enquires directly and has now been taken on to answer the phones for us four days per week. Since the move to Stonehouse, Tracy Winter has condensed her hours to three days a week. Tracy recently been on sick leave, and we are hopeful she will return on a phased basis from the beginning of March.*

*Mel Parker was financial assistant to Lyna for many years and after Lyna left Mel has done an extraordinary job to keep the show on the road until a new finance manager was appointed. Unfortunately, that did not happen until late in November, so Mel had been working alone since the beginning of August looking after the financial data for all aspects of our organisation. A brief sign of relief came once Ian Coley was appointed as Financial Manager and although later than ideal, they both managed to get all the accounts ready for our yearly audit. Unfortunately, after returning from Blackpool Ian has not returned to work, so we are now in the process of falling behind once again, whilst a replacement is being sought. We have managed to get some help for Mel in the form of a temp from an agency and Joanne who has agreed to come and do two days for us each week.*

*Richard Chambers stepped up when Ian Evans left and built on the work Ian Evans began by continuing the relationship with DEFRA to ensure channel racing could continue. Cutting through the myriad of bureaucracy and presenting it to the clubs in the most achievable way possible, he encouraged the biggest national clubs to hold a joint liberation which meant we could assist and prove to the channel lofts it could be achieved. Richard also continued with his own projects within his role, promoting the sport during the Diamond Jubilee with many TV appearances and the sad passing of our patron HM the Queen. His work with the school lofts is exemplary and his enthusiasm is matched by the high energy levels he injects into everything he has been asked to do. Derren is our IT and website guru, working remotely on a full-time basis and his valued contribution often goes unnoticed, but each and every aspect of our technological exposure are overseen by him from the RPRA website and social media and online auctions.*

*Lastly, but certainly not least is our office manager Julia Field who has been the glue which held everything together. Her calm devotion over the last few months has given all those in her charge a sense of direction, based on priorities with each of the many tasks through the year. I joined in October, and we very quickly formed a positive working relationship with the first challenge being the removal of the negative energies created by the move to Stonehouse. This was swiftly followed with the preparation of the council meeting and as soon as that was finished the preparation for Blackpool began. For a good period, we have been*

*lurching from crisis to crisis and Julia has remained cool, calm, and collected. Julia plans to retire in April 2024, she will be difficult to replace.*

*I am from a production background in construction, where we strive to get the job done regardless of any obstacle. I have a can-do attitude and am good at maintaining direction, working for a common cause. When I first started in management my director described me as a rough diamond, I quickly realised what he meant. The building trade is tough, and it requires firm management and in the years that followed, I went on to build teams which won national awards for their work. I am all about coming together for the common goal and drive from the front to make it happen. I have had a huge appreciation for the RPRA over the years, it has organised our racing season after season and I want to give something back, I am a builder by nature, so I would like to build upon the achievements of our preceding officials.*

*It pains me to see votes against the Association, depriving it of the very life blood it needs, knowing we are just consuming the fat of a body growing more anorexic year on year. The RPRA cannot run on fresh air, and I feel it is irresponsible of us to expect it to do so. The staffing levels have borne the brunt of this attitude, to a point where we are in grave danger of neglecting their wellbeing. I have a team of players working above and beyond expectations in the premier league of pigeon associations, with no subs on the bench and no reserves, it simply cannot continue.*

*We have region meetings with just 1% of the club delegates in regular attendance and the responsibility for the situation the RPRA is in is blamed on that 1% who give up their free time with every intention of improving the sport. Even with those best intentions it is clearly not working, and we need to come together as a council to ensure we can at least plug the holes to prevent the ship from sinking. In the first instance, we need to recognise the need for more staff to enable those who do work for us to enjoy their work and at least have a holiday. Before the end of March, Mel, Nicky, and Sean have two weeks holiday each to take or lose if we do not allow them to carry those day over into next year, which only compounds the issue, and the remaining staff have three to five days on average. March will be a very lean month as regards the service we can provide and to top all of that our staff have accrued over 300 hours in overtime - I really fail to see the savings made by cutting the staffing levels so low.*

*The biggest cost to any business is the unknown and the unknowable, but over the years in management I have gained a feel for where savings can be made and a pretty good idea where money is squandered. Fractious political disagreements on any board tend to ignore the potential costs and losses to win a point, which is much the same as both sides drinking poison hoping the other party will die. We are in desperate need of a plan; one in which we all come together to achieve, or our legacy will be nothing to be proud of. We need to emulate the foresight of our grandfathers and invest in the RPRA for the common good.*

*I have been asked many times if I want to get rid of the regions, and I would like to state here and now an emphatic 'No', the regions are not the problem, they are the answer to the problem in my view. The RPRA could not withstand the upheaval of trying to bring power to the top, but it could thrive by taking away the threat of closure to the regions which would create an environment at council in which we can truly come together as equals working for the common good and build a future RPRA to be proud of. There is an awful lot of work to do, but it is not unsurmountable, the decline can be stabilised, we can begin to create rather than dismantle and leave a legacy which all our many years of volunteered service deserves. I understand I am not everyone's cup of tea, and I may speak bluntly from time to time. I may even make some enemies along the way. I will always apologise if I get things wrong. This must be seen as a bigger issue than personal feelings or political gain, this is a matter of grave importance, and the survival of our sport is depending on us. This responsibility lies solely at our feet.*

The CEO received a round of applause and Mr P Hammond gave a vote of thanks to the Council 'top table' and the RPRA staff for 'keeping the train on the tracks' in the last 12 months.

Questions to the CEO followed, including reviewing more efficient ways of reporting stray birds and staff accrued hours. The latter was referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

### **3. ACCOUNTS 2022**

The RPRA Accounts for 2022 were not available for review due to the resignation of the previous Finance Manager and the recruitment of suitable replacement taking longer than anticipated. Mr Ian Coley was a temporary Finance Manager who assisted with the preparation of the year-end accounts for the Auditors. The Finance Committee held a Zoom meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023 to review the balance sheets and reports.

Mr L Blacklock said he was disappointed with Hazelwood's having made two previous mistakes in the presentation of the accounts. Going forward the Balance Sheet should show more detail including insurance cover and donations from the regions.

Proposed by T Gardner, seconded by S Briggs, 16 for, 3 against, carried that:

**Amended accounts are to be circulated to all councillors prior to publication in the British Homing World.**

### **4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

#### **ELECTION OF PRESIDENT**

Vice-President Mr J Dodd took the Chair.

Proposed by J Gladwin, seconded by S Briggs, and unanimously agreed, that:

**Mr L Blacklock (CA) be elected as President**

Mr Blacklock took the Chair and said he felt he was surrounded by friends and wished to send his thanks to the RPRA & BHW staff.

#### **ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENTS**

Vice-Presidents Mr C O'Hare and Mr J Dodd have completed their 1<sup>st</sup> year in office and continue for a 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

Mr D Bridges stepped down as Vice-President in 2022 and was replaced by Mr J Waters in October 2022. Mr J Waters now steps down and 3 names were proposed: namely Mr J Heague, Mr P Murray and Mr D Higgins. A secret ballot was held, and the votes counted as follows: Mr J Heague – 3 votes, Mr D Higgins – 4 Votes, Mr P Murray 11 votes.

**Mr P Murray (NW) was duly elected as the third Vice-President.**

#### **ELECTION OF AUDITORS**

Proposed by J Gladwin, seconded by D Headon, and all in favour that:

**We retain Hazelwoods LLP, Chartered Accountants as auditors.**

#### **ELECTION OF SOLICITORS**

Proposed by D Higgins, seconded by S Briggs, and all in favour that:

**We retain Rickerbys LLP as solicitors.**

## **ELECTION OF TRUSTEES**

Proposed by S Briggs, seconded by J Gladwin, and all in favour that:

**L Blacklock (CA), D Higgins (NE) & R Shirley (SW) remain as trustees.**

### **5a) ELECTION OF COMMITTEES - By region representation**

#### **FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES and CLOCK, RING & WEATHER FORECAST COMMITTEE**

Proposed by R Harris, seconded by D Headon, with 18 for and 1 against agreed:

**The committee consists of L Blacklock(CA) (Chair), S Reed (DY), S Briggs (IR), A Ewart (EM), C Gordon (NE), D Headon(DC), T Gardner (WS), R Harris (SO), J Heague (WE), W Lewis (WM), P Murray (NW), R Shirley (SW) & A Williams (LN).**

#### **EMERGENCY & RULES and LIBERATION SITES**

Proposed by R Harris, seconded by J Heague, and all in favour that:

**The committee consists of L Blacklock (CA), S Reed (DY), C O'Hare (IR), D Higgins (NE), J Dodd (EM) (Chair), R Harris (SO), D Headon (DC), T Gardner (WS), P Hammond (WM), J Gladwin (LN), P Murray (NW), R Shirley (SW), J Waters (WE).**

#### **BRITISH HOMING WORLD MANAGEMENT**

Proposed by J Heague, seconded by C Gordon, and all in favour that:

**The committee consists of L Blacklock (CA) (Chair), S Reed (DY), S Briggs (IR), A Ewart (EM), W Lewis (WM), J Gladwin (LN), D Higgins (NE), R Harris (SO), D Headon (DC), T Gardner (WS), P Murray (NW), R Shirley (SW), J Waters (WE), C Sutton (CEO), S Richards (Editor)**

#### **APPEALS**

Proposed by J Waters, seconded by C Gordon, and all in favour that:

**The committee consists of L Blacklock (CA) (Chair), S Reed (DY), C O'Hare (IR), J Dodd (EM), P Hammond (WM), J Gladwin (LN), D Higgins (NE), R Harris (SO), D Headon (DC), T Gardner (WS), P Murray (NW), R Shirley (SW), J Heague (WE).**

### **5b) ELECTION OF COMMITTEES – By election**

#### **BUILDINGS**

Proposed by S Briggs, seconded by J Dodd, and all in favour that:

**The committee consists of L Blacklock (CA) (Chair), P Hammond (WM), D Headon (DC), C Gordon (NE), R Harris (SO), D Higgins (NE), R Shirley (SW).**

#### **FUTURE OF THE SPORT**

Proposed by J Gladwin, seconded by D Headon, and all in favour that:

**The committee consists of L Blacklock (CA) (Chair), S Reed (DY), C Gordon (NE), D Higgins (NE), J Dodd (EM), P Hammond (WM), R Harris (SO), D Headon (DC), A Williams (LN), T Gardner (WS), C O'Hare (IR).**

## **OLYMPIAD**

Proposed by P Hammond, seconded by R Harris, and all in favour that:

**The committee consists of L Blacklock (CA) (Chair), S Reed (DY), C Gordon (NE), R Harris (SO), D Headon (DC), R Shirley (SW), W Lewis (WM), J Wheatcroft (Team Manager).**

## **PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS**

Proposed by T Gardner, seconded by D Higgins, and all in favour that:

**The committee consists of L Blacklock (CA) (Chair), J Waters (WE), J Dodd (EM), C Gordon (NE), P Hammond (WM), R Harris (SO).**

## **6. ELECTION OF DELEGATES TO:**

### **FEDERATION COLOMBOPHILE INTERNATIONALE**

Proposed by S Briggs, seconded by C Gordon, and all in favour that:

**L Blacklock (CA) and D Higgins (NE) (reserve) remain as delegates**

### **STANDING CONFERENCE ON COUNTRYSIDE SPORTS**

Proposed by J Heague, seconded by D Higgins, and all in favour that:

**J Dodd (EM) and RPRA CEO C Sutton are appointed as delegates.**

### **CONFEDERATION OF LONG-DISTANCE RACING PIGEONS OF GB & N. IRELAND**

Proposed by S Briggs, seconded by T Gardner, and all in favour that:

**C O'Hare (IR), W Lewis (WM), and RPRA CEO C Sutton, are appointed as delegates.**

### **PIGEON RACING UK & EIRE (RAPTOR ALLIANCE)**

Proposed by C Gordon, seconded by J Gladwin, and all in favour that:

**D Higgins (NE), T Gardner (WS) remain as delegates**

## **7. PROPOSITIONS**

### **23/1 Southern Region Propose:**

#### **Delete Rule 17**

#### *Application for Affiliation*

*Rule 17 Any pigeon racing or showing organisation may apply for affiliation to the Association by writing to the Secretary of the Region within which its headquarters are situated. The written application must be made by February 1st and include: The name of the organisation, which may only include the word National if its membership is open to all members of the Association. The full names and addresses of at least eight competing lofts for a club, or three competing members for a group. A copy of the domestic rules of the organisation which must include the route the organisation wishes to fly and all rules in the Association Standard Rules for Affiliated organisations. A written statement to justify the reasons for affiliation. A deposit of £40 which may be returned less advertising costs. The fully compliant application shall be advertised by the Region Secretary in two of the UK national papers devoted to pigeon racing and showing, allowing 21 days from the date of publication during which any member, organisation or Region may submit a written and signed objection to such affiliation. The Region Secretary shall copy any written objection to the applicant organisation which then may submit a written response. At the expiry of the 21*

*days objection period the Region Secretary shall as soon as practicable, refer the application with any objections and responses to a meeting of the Region Committee at which neither the applicant nor the objector may make verbal representation unless requested to do so. The decision of the Region Committee is final and shall be communicated in writing to all parties concerned. Affiliation shall take immediate effect if granted. An organisation refused affiliation cannot reapply to any Region for a period of 12 months.*

#### **Replace with**

Rule 17 Any pigeon racing or showing organisation may apply for affiliation to the Association by writing to the Secretary of the Region within which its headquarters are situated. The written application must be made by February 1st and include: The name of the organisation, which may only include the word National if its membership is open to all members of the Association. The full names and addresses of at least eight competing lofts for a club, or three competing members for a group. A copy of the domestic rules of the organisation which must include the route the organisation wishes to fly and all rules in the Association Standard Rules for Affiliated organisations. A written statement to justify the reasons for affiliation. A deposit of £50 which may be returned less advertising costs. The fully compliant application shall be advertised by the Region Secretary in two of the UK national papers devoted to pigeon racing and showing, allowing 21 days from the date of publication during which any member, organisation or Region may submit a written and signed objection to such affiliation. The Region Secretary shall copy any written objection to the applicant organisation which then may submit a written response. At the expiry of the 21 days objection period the Region Secretary shall as soon as practicable, refer the application with any objections and responses to a meeting of the Region Committee at which neither the applicant nor the objector may make verbal representation unless requested to do so. The decision of the Region Committee is final and shall be communicated in writing to all parties concerned. Affiliation shall take immediate effect if granted. An organisation refused affiliation cannot reapply to any Region for a period of 12 months.

**Reason: Increased cost of Advertising**

**CARRIED – 17 FOR, 2 AGAINST**

#### **23/02 Irish Region Propose:**

##### **Delete Rule 27**

*Rule 27 Each Club (including any National or Specialist Club) shall pay to the Secretary of its Local Region. (a) an annual subscription to the Association £7 (inclusive of VAT) for each member of the Club except any member who has paid their annual subscription through another Club.*

*(b) and an annual subscription to the Clubs Local Region of £3 for every member of the Club except any member who has paid their annual subscription to the Local Region through another Club.*

*(c) all Junior members under the age of 18 who are members of a Club will pay an annual subscription to the Association of £3 (inclusive of VAT) except any Junior member that has paid their subscription to the Association through another Club. and an annual subscription of £2 (inclusive of VAT) to the Clubs Local Region except any junior member that has paid their subscription to the Local Region through another Club.*

#### **Replace with**

27. The membership subscriptions to be set by the Council and the CEO after the passing of accounts for that year.

**Reason: To improve the finances of the Association**

**LOST – 6 FOR, 13 AGAINST**

### **23/3 North East Region propose:**

#### **Delete Rule 27**

*Rule 27 Each Club (including any National or Specialist Club) shall pay to the Secretary of its Local Region.  
(a) an annual subscription to the Association £7 (inclusive of VAT) for each member of the Club except any member who has paid their annual subscription through another Club.*

*(b) and an annual subscription to the Clubs Local Region of £3 for every member of the Club except any member who has paid their annual subscription to the Local Region through another Club.*

*(c) all Junior members under the age of 18 who are members of a Club will pay an annual subscription to the Association of £3 (inclusive of VAT) except any Junior member that has paid their subscription to the Association through another Club. and an annual subscription of £2 (inclusive of VAT) to the Clubs Local Region except any junior member that has paid their subscription to the Local Region through another Club.*

#### **Replace with:**

27. Each Club (including any National or Specialist Club) shall pay to the Secretary of its Local Region.

(a) an annual subscription to the Association of **£11 (inclusive of VAT)** for each member of the Club except any member who has paid their annual subscription through another Club.

(b) and an annual subscription to the Club's **Local Region of £4** for every member of the Club except any member who has paid their annual subscription to the Local Region through another Club.

(c) all Junior members under the age of 18

who are members of a Club will pay an annual subscription to the Association of £3 (inclusive of VAT) except any Junior member that has paid their subscription to the Association through another Club. and an annual subscription of £2 (inclusive of VAT) to the Club's Local Region except any junior member that has paid their subscription to the Local Region through another Club.

**Reason: To improve Association finances.**

**CARRIED – 11 FOR, 8 AGAINST**

### **23/4 Southern Region Propose:**

#### **Delete Rule 27**

*Rule 27 Each Club (including any National or Specialist Club) shall pay to the Secretary of its Local Region.  
(a) an annual subscription to the Association £7 (inclusive of VAT) for each member of the Club except any member who has paid their annual subscription through another Club.*

*(b) and an annual subscription to the Clubs Local Region of £3 for every member of the Club except any member who has paid their annual subscription to the Local Region through another Club.*

*(c) all Junior members under the age of 18 who are members of a Club will pay an annual subscription to the Association of £3 (inclusive of VAT) except any Junior member that has paid their subscription to the Association through another Club. and an annual subscription of £2 (inclusive of VAT) to the Clubs Local Region except any junior member that has paid their subscription to the Local Region through another Club.*

#### **Replace with:**

27. Each Club (including any National or Specialist Club) shall pay to the Secretary of its Local Region.

(a) an annual subscription to the Association £10 (inclusive of VAT) for each member of the Club except any member who has paid their annual subscription through another Club.



(b) And an annual subscription to the Clubs Local Region of £5 for every member of the Club, except any member who has paid their annual subscription to the Local Region through another Club. All Junior members under the age of 18 who are members of a Club will pay an annual subscription to the Association of £4 (inclusive of VAT) except any Junior member that has paid their subscription to the Association through another Club and an annual subscription of £3 (inclusive of VAT) to the Clubs Local Region except any junior member that has paid their subscription to the Local Region through another Club.

**Reason: To improve the finances of the Association.**

**LOST – 5 FOR, 14 AGAINST**

**23/5 North East Region propose:**

**Delete Rule 32**

**32. An individual Member shall pay**

*(a) An annual subscription of £5 to the Association and*

*(b) An annual subscription of £5 to his Local Region.*

*(c) An individual Junior member under the age of 18 will pay to the Association an annual subscription of £3.*

*(d) an individual Junior member under the age of 18 will pay to their Local Region an annual subscription of £2. All individual subscriptions shall be paid to the Secretary of the Local Region not later than 1st March each year and are inclusive of VAT. Individual members will only be entitled to the privileges and benefits of the Association when the fees for that year have been paid. Individual members may apply from 1st November for the following years membership.*

**Replace with:**

**32. An individual Member shall pay**

**(a) An annual subscription of £10 to the Association and**

**(b) An annual subscription of £5 to his Local Region.**

**(c) An individual Junior member under the age of 18 will pay to the Association an annual subscription of £3.**

**(d) an individual Junior member under the age of 18 will pay to their Local Region an annual subscription of £2. All individual subscriptions shall be paid to the Secretary of the Local Region not later than 1st March each year and are inclusive of VAT. Individual members will only be entitled to the privileges and benefits of the Association when the fees for that year have been paid. Individual members may apply from 1st November for the following year's membership.**

**Reason: To improve the Association finances.**

**LOST – 8 FOR, 11 AGAINST**

**23/6 Southern Region Propose:**

**Delete Rule 32**

**32 An individual Member shall pay**

**(a) An annual subscription of £5 to the Association and**

**(b) An annual subscription of £5 to his Local Region.**

**(c) An individual Junior member under the age of 18 will pay to the Association an annual subscription of £3**

**(d) an individual Junior member under the age of 18 will pay to their Local Region an annual subscription of £2. All individual subscriptions shall be paid to the Secretary of the Local Region not later than 1<sup>st</sup> March**

*each year and are inclusive of VAT. Individual members will only be entitled to the privileges and benefits of the Association when the fees for that year have been paid. Individual members may apply from 1<sup>st</sup> November for the following years membership.*

**Replace with:**

32 An individual Member shall pay

- (a) An annual subscription of £8 to the Association and
- (b) An annual subscription of £7 to his Local Region.
- (c) An individual Junior member under the age of 18 will pay to the Association an annual subscription of £4
- (d) an individual Junior member under the age of 18 will pay to their Local Region an annual subscription of £3.

All individual subscriptions shall be paid to the Secretary of the Local Region not later than 1<sup>st</sup> March each year and are inclusive of VAT. Individual members will only be entitled to the privileges and benefits of the Association when the fees for that year have been paid. Individual members may apply from 1<sup>st</sup> November for the following years membership.

**Reason: To improve the finances of the Association**

**LOST – 6 FOR, 13 AGAINST**

**23/7 The Council Propose:**

**Delete Rule 39**

*39. The officers of the Association shall be a President and three Vice Presidents who shall be elected from delegates representing four different Local Regions at the annual general meeting of the Association and shall hold office for one year. Any officer shall be eligible for re-election provided that no officer shall hold the same office for more than three successive years. The conduct of the nominations for and election of officers shall be regulated by the Council.*

**Replace with:**

39. The officers of the Association shall be a President and three Vice Presidents who shall be elected from delegates representing four different Local Regions at the annual general meeting of the Association and shall hold office for one year. Any officer shall be eligible for re-election provided that no officer shall hold the same office for more than five successive years. The conduct of the nominations for and election of officers shall be regulated by the Council.

**Reason: To improve the stability of the Association.**

**CARRIED – 11 FOR, 8 AGAINST**

**23/8 Welsh Region Propose:**

**Delete rule 57**

*57. The Council and all Committees shall cause minutes of all resolutions and proceedings of the Council to be entered in books maintained for the purpose and in particular shall cause to be entered in such minutes:*

- (a) the names of the Councillors present at any meeting of the Council.*
- (b) the wording of all resolutions or decisions of any meeting.*
- (c) details of all appointments of officers of the Association*

**Replace with:**

57. The Council and all Committees shall cause minutes of all resolutions and proceedings of the Council to be entered in books maintained for the purpose and in particular shall cause to be entered in such minutes:

- (a) the names of the Councillors present at any meeting of the Council.
- (b) the wording of all resolutions or decisions of any meeting.
- (c) details of all appointments of officers of the Association
- (d) a list of which councillors voted for, against and abstained on all resolutions or decisions of any meeting. This will include all propositions put forward at an AGM.**

**This information will also appear in any publication relating to such meetings**

**Reason: To provide more transparency on how members are being represented**

**CARRIED – 10 FOR, 9 AGAINST**

**23/9 Southern Region Propose:**

**Delete Rule 59**

*59. The Association shall pay or reimburse councillors for the cost of second class return railway fares or if travelling by car an allowance of 35p per mile, hotel costs will be paid for by the Association. In attending meetings of Council or any Committee of the Council the following sums by way of expenses will be paid.*

- (a) *When necessary for a Councillor to arrive for a Thursday evening Meeting - £20*
- (b) *When necessary for a Councillor to arrive Thursday night - £10*
- (c) *In respect of any Saturday - £20 irrespective of what time the meeting finished.*
- (d) *In respect of any other day - £40*

**Replace with:**

59 The Association shall pay or reimburse councillors for the cost of second class return railway fares or if travelling by car an allowance of 50p per mile, hotel costs will be paid for by the Association.

**Reason: To improve the finances of the Association**

**LOST – 2 FOR, 17 AGAINST**

**23/10 Southern Region Propose:**

**Delete rule 60**

- (a) The President of the Association shall be paid an allowance for personal expenses of £2,000 per annum.*
- (b) Members of Council or salaried staff, nominated to represent the Association at any function or meeting shall be paid his/her travelling and accommodation – such costs to be kept a minimum. Any person accompanying a nominated representative does so at his/her expenses.*

**Replace with:**

60. (a) The President of the Association shall be paid an allowance for personal expenses of £1,000 per annum.

(b) Members of Council or salaried staff, nominated to represent the Association at any function or meeting shall be paid his/her travelling and accommodation – such costs to be kept to a minimum. Any person accompanying a nominated representative does so at his/her expense.

Reason: To improve finances of the Association

**LOST – 5 FOR, 14 AGAINST**

**23/11 London Region Propose:**

**Delete Rule 65**

*65. The accounts shall be kept at the offices of the Association or such other place as the Council may determine. The Council shall determine to what extent the accounts of the Association or any of them shall be open to inspection by members and the members shall have only such rights of inspection as are given to them by the Council.*

**Replace with:**

65. The accounts shall be kept at the offices of the Association or such other places the Council may determine. **All accounts of the Association shall be open to inspection by any member or members of the Association by appointment with the CEO.**

Reason: To show openness and transparency.

**LOST – 5 FOR, 14 AGAINST**

**23/12 Southern Region Propose:**

**Delete Rule 65**

*65. The accounts shall be kept at the office of the Association or such other place as the Council may determine. The Council shall determine to what extent the accounts of the Association or any of them shall be open to inspection by members and the members shall have only such rights of inspection as are given to them by the Council.*

**Replace with:**

65. The accounts of the Association shall be kept at the offices of the association or such place as council may determine. All accounts of the association shall be open to inspection by any member or members of the association

Reason: To show openness and transparency

**LOST – 5 FOR, 14 AGAINST**

**23/13 Southern Region Propose:**

**Delete rule 125b.**

*When transporting competing racing pigeons from Clubs to Organisations transport all baskets must be sealed by an RPRA approved seal, the birds must be accompanied by at least two members of the association who may not be subjects of the same partnership.*

**Replace with:**

All clubs using a feeder service must record the seal numbers on the crates, place the form in a sealed envelope, signed off by an Officer of the Club, and handed to the Convoyer on arrival at the collection point.

Reason – Due to declining membership and difficulty in being able to get two members to accompany the consignment to the collection point.

**LOST – 7 FOR, 12 AGAINST**

### **23/14 East Midlands Region Propose:**

#### **Delete Rule 127b)**

*b) The number of pigeons placed in the basket or container must be restricted relevant to the distance and time spent in them. The following figures must be strictly adhered to. Failure to do so may entail suspension of the individuals or organisation responsible. The nights in the basket to be from the day of marking to the projected day of liberation.*

*Time Minimum floor area per pigeon 0 or 1 night 44 sq. ins. 2 nights 52 sq. ins. over 2 nights 60 sq. ins. See Appendix F.*

#### **Replace with:**

127b) The number of pigeons placed in the basket or container must be restricted relevant to the distance and time spent in them. The following figures must be strictly adhered to. Failure to do so may entail suspension of the individuals or organisation responsible. The nights in the basket to be from the day of marking to the projected day of liberation.

Time Minimum floor area per pigeon: **Hens 44sq.ins., Cocks 49sq.ins.,** 2 nights 52 sq. ins., over 2 nights 60 sq. ins. See Appendix F.

**Reason: For the welfare of the pigeons and to recognise the size difference between the cocks and hens during transit considering the increasing frequency of higher than usual temperatures.**

**LOST – 7 FOR, 12 AGAINST**

### **23/15 The Council Propose:**

#### **Delete Rule 133 -Section B in its entirety.**

*133. Section B. One-Loft Races. 'One-Loft Race' means a race/s where members send their birds for competition to one single loft location to be trained together, and where an entry fee per bird is submitted as part of the conditions of racing. Any member of the Association or any organisation affiliated to the Association which organises a One-Loft Race shall apply to the Local Region where the loft is situated for a One Loft race licence for the race and for any interim races where prize or pool money is involved. The licence must be obtained before advertising commences and the licence number included in all adverts. The cost of the licence is to be £25 per race. At the close of entry date the organiser/organisation shall notify the Local Region/RPRA Headquarters of the total number of birds entered and the total guaranteed prize money to be flown for. In such One-Loft Races birds must be timed using an Electronic Timing System approved by the RPRA Council. All rings shall be registered in the name of the organiser.*

**Reason: With the increase in One Loft Racing which are commercial entities Rule 133b is no longer applicable.**

**CARRIED – 10 FOR, 9 AGAINST**

### **23/16 Southern Region Propose:**

#### **Delete Rule 142**

*142. The Council shall have power to make and alter Rules and regulations to cover any emergency. Such rules or regulations may be made or altered at a general meeting or a special meeting and shall operate until rescinded by the Council or until the next annual general meeting at which the requisite publication of the proposed alteration of the rules can be given, whichever is sooner.*

**Reason: Making and changing rules should be a matter for the members at the association AGM.**

## **LOST – 6 FOR, 13 AGAINST**

### **23/17 Southern Region Propose:**

#### **New Rule 233, (currently spare)**

ETS Ring assignment can only be done by the appointed official on the Clubs data base system for the ETS system you intend to use.

Assigning rings on your loft system will not be permitted and result in disqualification.

Reason – RPRA rules – 188 & 215

188 - No member shall be allowed to mark, or race ring his/her own birds or take any active part in the procedure.

215 - No member shall assist in any way in the setting and checking of his/her own clock.

## **LOST – 7 FOR, 12 AGAINST**

### **23/18 Southern Region Propose:**

#### **New rule**

Life rings to be issued on the first working day in new year

Reason - Young birds are rung in year of birth with next year's life ring e.g., 2022 young birds rung with 2023 life rings.

## **LOST – 7 FOR, 12 AGAINST**

### **23/19 The Council Propose:**

#### **New Rule 238**

All ETS master systems must be synchronised with either a GPS Signal or Radio Time signal with evidence produced by a strike report which states the method of synchronisation and the time of synchronisation. This must be completed by all masters before race marking and before race checking. Manual setting will not be allowed on all ETS master timers at marking or clock checking. Current rule 238 to move to 239

Reason: To ensure there is there is a mechanism to check for clock variations between clubs and clock stations in an organisation.

## **CARRIED – 15 FOR, 4 AGAINST**

### **23/20 Southern Region Propose:**

#### **New Rule**

Before the 1 June in each year the Chief Executive shall draw up a list of rings issued to clubs and organisations prior to 31 March in that year. The list shall include the name of the club and organisation and the county and postal area of the club headquarters. This list will be made available to the members through publication in the BHW and through the RPRA website.

Reason: To make repatriating lost pigeons easier for members.

## **LOST – 9 FOR, 10 AGAINST**

**The meeting closed at 10:36am**