



**MINUTES**  
**BRITISH HOMING WORLD**  
**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**25<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

## ROYAL PIGEON RACING ASSOCIATION

British Homing World Management Committee

**Minutes**

25<sup>th</sup> October 2024

MINUTES of the British Homing World Management Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at the Leonardo Hotel, East Midlands Airport, Ashby Road, Castle Donnington, Derby DE74 2SH at 11:30am.

Present: L Blacklock-CA (Chair), D Headon-DC, S Reed-DY, J Dodd-EM, C O'Hare-IR, J Gladwin-LN, G Cockshott-NE, P Murray-NW, R Harris-SO, W Lewis-WM, T Gardner-WS, C Sutton-CEO, R Chambers-Head Officer, BHW

Apologies: R Shirley-SW, S Beardmore-WE

In attendance: S Collishaw-EM, S Briggs-IR, A Williams-LN, H Jackson-NE, N Darby-WM, S Woodman-Finance Manager, Nicola Mills-Office Manager (minutes)

Observers: J Wheatcroft-Olympiad Team Manager, Mrs P Gladwin, Mrs B Lewis

1. **ROLL CALL** – as above
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – as above
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – None declared
4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 23.02.24**

**Proposed by WS, seconded by NW, and all in favour, that:**

**BHW24/02 The minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 are accepted as a true record.**

### 5. **MATTERS ARISING**

Page 2 - SO asked if the items on the BHW balance sheet that needed to be reviewed had been reviewed – it was confirmed this had been done.

Page 2 - SO enquired if external advertising had been considered – it was confirmed this is being pursued.

Page 2 - SO asked if vets had been approached to write an article – it was advised that content would be addressed shortly in the Head Officer, BHW's report.

Page 2 - NW enquired how debtors are being managed – it was confirmed this was to be covered later in the meeting.

Page 3 - LN asked if the meeting between the CEO and D Trippett and the Winter Gardens took place on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024? The CEO confirmed that it did, and that the Winter Gardens had advised a 10% increase in rental charges year on year, plus a restoration fee – which was negotiated as a per order charge for 2025, but likely to be a per ticket charge for 2026. Security issues were addressed. It was confirmed that we do still get help from Blackpool Council.

SO enquired if the Show of the Year accounts would be circulated to Council? The CEO confirmed they had been signed off and would be circulated. The President added that he had seen the accounts and that they would be sent to councillors. The 2024 Show of the Year generated a £30,000 profit (excluding costs to the RPRA). £5,000 of this would be ringfenced to help with Olympiad 2028 costs, and £4,000 given to 2 charities – Shine and the British Pigeon Fanciers Medical Research. The President mentioned that costs would be reduced in 2025 with councillors paying 50% towards their accommodation/food.

It was confirmed that attendance numbers had increased significantly, £39,600 was taken on the door. The President added that the Blackpool show is the biggest in Europe as a pigeon show, this is something to be proud of and to continue; a discussion is now required regarding how to proceed and fund Olympiad 2028 if we wish to proceed with this.

## 6. HEAD OFFICER, BHW – REPORT

R Chambers presented his report:

- All key focuses for the BHW in 2024 had been addressed.
- Current overall picture – Ongoing monitoring of price increases and profit margins and pagination; 3 staff have left; reader engagement is the number one priority – content and product quality must be addressed/increased - support/ideas are required; Postage prices - Postmark have advised a 7-10% increase on postage in January 2025.
- BHW **SWOT** analysis –  
**Strengths** – new processes have been implemented and costs reduced, the BHW is now in a stronger position financially, our member database is a strength  
**Weaknesses** - Infrastructure – computers and processes require updating, this is affecting production; Content – historically provided by scribes, new content is needed and requires support - plan to introduce a proposal to the regions to produce 12 articles a year (excl results) from some of the best flyers in their region.  
**Opportunities** (to be turned into strengths) – Limited competitor on print; Sale or return; RPRA Auctions; Rental of half of the building; Potential new membership retention process  
**Threats** – declining base audience numbers; increase in costs; content advertisers being published online quicker
- Paperless production at Welshpool has saved significant money on ink and paper and storage space.

- Price increase and reduced postal and news stand subscription numbers has resulted in a steady decline on income, which was predicted. Overall percentage of fanciers reading the magazine has increased slightly.
- BHW Sale & Return – Alongside firm sales under the counter; looking to trial sending extra copies to targeted areas where there are no firm sales but lots of fanciers.
- Subscription rates – comparison with Cage and Aviary (nearest competitor) – now in line with where the market is and can compete.
- Balance sheet - presented by the Finance Manager:

As at the end of September 2024:

Digital subscriptions generated a gross profit of approx. £17,000.

Printed copies of the BHW generated an income of £406,000, comprising £194,000 from printed copies and £212,000 from postal subscriptions. Associated costs (11 months) were £193,000 - £78,000 from print costs, £6,000 from postage costs and £109,000 from distribution and carriage costs. Income minus costs generated a gross profit of £213,000.

Other income streams included Prize cards £1,283 gross profit, Stud books £10,500 and advertising £141,000, generating a total gross profit of £152,783.

The total income generated by the BHW was £583,000. The total cost of sales was £201,000. The total income stream of £583,000 less the cost of sale of 201,000 generated a gross profit £382,000, equating to a 65% gross profit margin.

Overheads totalled £423,000, made up from staff costs (£342,000, including RPRA recharged payroll costs), travel costs (reduced), office costs, bank charges, SOY expenses (recharged back to RPRA in October) and legal and professional (mainly Hazlewoods and legal advice).

If redundancy payments and SOY recharges were removed the BHW would have made a profit of approx. £7,000 this year. With the Head Officer, BHW's passion and energy the BHW is moving in the right direction. The Finance Manager then relayed the Balance sheet, in terms of the BHW assets and liabilities resulting in the net worth of the BHW (on paper) as £583,000. The rates liability was highlighted as the most expensive office cost at £11,000, other costs were minimal. The debt book is very manageable.

The President thanked the Finance Manager for the concise accounts.

- Gardening costs have been saved by the Head Officer, BHW mowing the grass himself.
- Buildings – the building has been split, there is now no light or heat in the partitioned building so some utility costs should be reduced. The partitioned building could now be rented out as a self-supportive building and provide an income.
- Predicted situation – general costs set to rise over the next 3 years due to reduction in inflation; processes will change; content quality and amount to increase; problems with Royal Mail delivery continues to be an issue – this has been reviewed but will continue looking at alternatives.
- Key focuses for BHW 2025 – to continue to make a profit; continue to modernise the tabloid; to monitor supplier contract prices; to standardise the pages; annual cover of advertising to mitigate the cost rises; to focus on the quality of content; to implement the sale or return trial; continue to assess the accounts.

## 7. CEO UPDATE ON IMPROVEMENTS

The CEO outlined the plans/options for the building. To rent the second building as a self-sufficient unit yielding approximately £9,000 rental per year, £5,000-£7,000 would need to be spent installing a kitchen and toilet.

The modernisation of processes and technology are also being reviewed – the current internet line is archaic making it difficult for the staff to work in real time and affecting the rate of production. Work needs to be stored in the cloud rather than on local storage on a computer at Welshpool. 2 companies have been approached to provide solutions/costings.

*(1:00-2:00pm – Lunch)*

## **8. ACCOUNTS, FINANCE & DEBTORS**

Discussed above

## **9. BHW SHOW OF THE YEAR 2025**

### **a. Guest List for 2025**

The President advised that foreign guests and past RPRA presidents have usually been invited to the Friday evening dinner. He also suggested an invite should be extended to the Mayor and Mayoress of Blackpool and the two MPs for Blackpool, in light of the potential forthcoming Olympiad 2028, and also representatives from the show sponsors and stewards, working Councillors, Julia Field (past Office Manager), BHW and RPRA staff. He emphasized that the Show of the Year is an important part of the association. The RPRA are mindful of cutting costs by working Councillors paying 50% towards the cost of their accommodation (partners/spouses pay full cost). The CEO highlighted the non-monetary value gained by inviting the Mayor and Mayoress of Blackpool – they helped the Show considerably during the year of bird flu, and the sponsors, and it should be recognized how the other foreign unions provide assistance when needed. The President assured that costs will be kept to a minimum.

**Proposed by NE, seconded by WM, with 9 votes for: CA/DC/EM/IR/NE/NW/SO/WM/WS; 0 votes against and 2 abstentions: DY/LN, that:**

**BHW24/03 The proposed list is invited to the Friday night dinner and selected guests for the weekend**

### **b. Saturday lunch buffet – venue/menu**

The event was cancelled for this year.

### **c. FCI Judges Training**

The President has been unable to contact Michael Koch (FCI trained judge). He suggested that T Haley may be able to organise the training? The CEO will try to contact T Haley as a backup and check if the FCI will recognise him as a trainer.

## **10. CORRESPONDENCE**

None

## **11. AOB**

DC suggested that the Convoyers meeting scheduled to take place at Blackpool should also include Race Controllers, so that they can meet. This was agreed.

DC also mentioned that in previous years S Richards and his wife provided drinks in the Scribes room. It was confirmed that something similar would be sorted out.

*2:17pm - Meeting closed*