

**Minutes of the Longhorn Cattle Society Annual General Meeting
Held at the Priest House Hotel, Castle Donington, Derbyshire
commencing at 2.00pm on Saturday 12 October 2019**

Present were: Mr D Blockley (Chairman)
Ms D Dann (Secretary)
Mrs S Coleman (President)

71 members and guests were present:

Mr R Adams, Mr J Barber, Ms H Beeby, Mr B Bellew, Mr D Bevan, Mr F Binns, Mrs A Blockley, Mr J Bradford, Miss M Bradford, Mrs W Bradford, Mr J Brewer, Mr John Brigg, Mr N Brownbridge, Mr A Clark, Dr P Cleland, Mr P Close, Ms R Datlen, Miss R Davies, Mr W Edwards, Mr B Facon, Ms J Field, Mr M Graham, Mr P Guest, Mrs S Gurton, Mr T Gurton, Mr J Harrison, Mrs S Harrison, Ms R Heard, Mrs V Hopkinson, Mrs E Hulland, Mr H Hulland, Mr A Knight, Mrs P Laing, Mr A Leworthy, Mr B Llewellyn MBE, Mrs M Llewellyn, Mr C Mills, Mrs S Mills, Mr T Mills, Mr R Mothersill, Miss E Muggleton, Mrs N Lockett, Mrs C Phillips, Mr D Phillips, Mrs C Preece, Mr M Preece, Mr D Preece, Mrs R Russell, Mrs C Saxby, Mr D Saxby, Mr D Sheppy, Mr M Smith, Mrs Y Smith, Mrs P Stanley, Mr C Sutcliffe, Mr F Sutton, Mr G Towers, Mr J Zentis, Mrs S Zentis, Mr G Walker, Mr C Wardle, Mrs S Wardle, Mrs B Wheeler, Mr M Wheeler, Mr ND Van Wijk, Mr P Van Wijk, Mr A Williams, Ms T Woollatt, Mr S Wright

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Mr C Blockley, Mr H Blockley, Mr A Bomford, Mrs T Bomford, Mr Joshua Brigg, Mrs T Brownbridge, Mrs A Close, Mr R Close, Mr A Gibb, Mrs K Gibb, Mr A Goodman, Mrs R Goodman, Mr M Horne, Mrs S Horne, Ms S Long, Mr A Neads, Mrs P Neads, Mrs H Painter, Mr M Painter, Mrs L Schweitzer, Mr W Schweitzer, Mr J Stanley, Mr R Sullivan, Mrs D Sutcliffe, Mr B Sutton, Ms A Sutton, Mr M Tisdale, Mrs S Tisdale, Mr D Walker, Mrs J Woollatt, Mr G Woollatt

2. Minutes of last AGM and matters arising

The Minutes of the 2018 AGM had been previously circulated.

It was proposed by Mrs N Lockett and seconded by Mr J Harrison that the minutes be signed as a true and correct record. There were no matters arising.

3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman spoke to his report.

Welcome everyone to the 2018 Longhorn AGM. A special welcome to our overseas visitors.

The Society's thanks go to Mr Brian Wragg who judged the cattle at the Society's Show & Sale at Beeston Castle in May. The Society's Show & Sale at Worcester, even though there were fewer cattle than in previous years, resulted in 100% clearance, with the 3rd placed bull Southfield Stalker making 4800gns.

The National Show at the Great Yorkshire Show in July was judged by Bernard Llewellyn who didn't have an easy job with such a good display of cattle in front of him. The cow Southfield Lace was his Breed Champion. The Show had excellent publicity on television and the Longhorns were given a lot of coverage. Everyone taking part presented good cattle.

The Society had probably it's best ever year in the show ring, with success in 18 Interbreeds. The breed is now being taken seriously by judges from other breeds

The Summer visit was to English Farms in Oxfordshire. The herd is organic and practicing mob grazing and Silas the herd manager is doing a good job managing the farm. It was an excellent visit with the ground and cattle looking second to none, and then we had a delicious barbeque lunch cooked by Robert Laycock, the owner.

The type classification scheme has now seen 675 cattle classified in 35 herds since it started, the feedback from members has been very positive.

Sadly we lost a number of members this year; Richard Warner, Professor Craft, Adrian McConnel, Phil Evans and Alan Cheese.

The Regional Groups are doing well, with visits and herd competitions being arranged.

My thanks go to the other Council members for their support this year, and to Debbie for running the Society so efficiently.

Mr Llewellyn stated that the Society's attitude to sales was in a number of members' minds and he felt he had a responsibility to the rest of the membership to raise the matter. He agreed that standards must be raised, but there was an issue with blood testing. Members don't want to do blood tests or get involved. Could Council consider having tested and untested sales

The Chair stated that other breeds were in health schemes. In the past the cattle at Society sales have been poor in comparison with other breeds.

Mr Facon stated that he had been active at the Society's sales at Worcester over the last seven years both buying and selling. He had had TB breakdowns and killing cattle is not a pleasant experience. He related two experiences which he thought should not happen. Firstly that he bought a cow seven years ago for £1300 who recently classified EX95. She is probably worth £3000 - £4000 and when he bought her there were other breeders who knew more about cattle than him around the ring. Secondly he bought another animal for £1200 which was subsequently found to have IBR and was sold as a cull for £700.

Health scheme information was available at the AGM for members. He stated that there wasn't another major breed that didn't have either a health declaration or mandatory blood test for sales.

The best price should be achieved for cattle in the ring. Good prices are achieved in private sales. The way forward is to belong to a High Health Scheme. SAC is giving one year's free membership, Biobest are offering a 50% discount

Mrs Blockley stated that in her experience testing for IBR, Lepto, BVD, Johnes and Neospora cost £20 plus the vet's charges.

Miss Woollatt stated that other breed societies offered assistance to members who show. Longhorn members are small breeders who want keep their Longhorn for the enjoyment of them.

Mrs Stanley stated that show societies have to show some degree of biosecurity, focusing on the separation of cattle from one and four year TB test areas.

The Chairman stated that shows will indeed need to change their ways, and that competitors must make representation to the shows to get them to change.

Mr Sutcliffe stated he had entered a bull at the Newark sale, but had withdrawn it as it was sold privately. The cost of blood and TB testing was £156 plus VAT. He hoped that vendors at the Newark sale would see prices for their cattle that reflected the quality of the stock and their health status. Buyers did not come to sales because they don't want to buy bad cattle. Members have got to realise what their cattle are worth. A two year old bull, ready to work is worth £1200 wholesale on the hook, so by the time it's blood tested, registered and entered at auction is should be worth at least 3000gns.

Mr John Brigg stated that when he started as a land agent he was always taught that anything is worth what a willing buyer is prepared to pay a willing seller. The role of the Society was not to increase the value of cattle.

Mr Facon stated that before long buyers will need a guarantee that animals they buy are healthy and will not buy anything that hadn't been tested. The Longhorn will get a reputation as a 'dirty' breed.

Mr Wright stated he agreed with both Miss Woollatt and Mr Brigg. Longhorn breeders are small keepers who are not wanting to go through disease testing. He said that the breed has got to appeal to commercial buyers.

Mr Sutcliffe asked if auctioneers should make health testing a condition of sale.

The Chair stated that at the Newark sale the Lincoln Red cattle must be health tested.

Mrs Zentis stated that with testing, even commercial buyers will benefit

Miss Woollatt stated that members had the option to attend sales that did not require testing, and multibreed sales were also available.

4. Financial Report

The Secretary presented the accounts and the financial report:

The Longhorn Cattle Society had a year of controlled expenditure, but also invested in the breed's continued improvement. Activity on the Herdbook was slightly up with more females being registered in this financial year compared to the previous year.

Herdbook activity for the financial year was 1,278 (1,196 in 2018) females registered, 995 (1,129) animals birth notified, 50 (61) males registered and 1,624 (1,164) transfers. Excluding deaths, a total of 3,947 (3,558) individual transactions took place in order to maintain an accurate registry.

As a membership based organisation the Society's main income streams remained subscriptions, registrations and transfers.

Secretarial salary, social security and occupational pension expenditure were the Society's largest single outgoing.

Printing, stationery and postage expenditure was reduced in this financial year as no Journal was produced.

Shows and demonstration expenditure includes type classification and DNA testing, both of which have increased in line with the extra activity generated by more members type classifying, and the parent verification of bulls and specified females required to comply with DEFRA Zootechnical legislation requirements.

The Longhorn Cattle Society is a Charity and the Trustees of the Society are entrusted with the role of ensuring the monies held are well managed and that there is a prudent reserve, and then ensure that funds are used to carry out the principal objectives of the Society. It is Council policy to ensure that the routine running costs of the Society are self-funding and that the Society has reserves roughly equivalent to a year's annual expenditure. A budget of £90,911 has been approved by Council.

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mrs Stanley and seconded by Mr Facon.

5. Election of Trustees

Five spaces were available for Council and five valid nominations were received. This meant there was no need for a ballot so Mr B Facon, Mr T Mills and Mrs S Zentis begin their second three year term and Mr G Walker and Mr M Wheeler were welcomed onto Council.

The Chairman thanked Bernard Llewellyn for his time on Council and everyone present gave him a round of applause.

6. Any other business

Mr Sutcliffe stated that the Society had three main sources of income – membership, registration and transfers and not much can be done to influence these figures. One income stream that hasn't been tapped into in the commercial use of Longhorns. There are members who have sold bulls to AI companies. The Buitelaar scheme is using pedigree registered Longhorn semen in dairy herds and the herds are getting a premium of £25 plus a free straw per calf put into the scheme. He stated he had never been a great believer in looking at the fees of other breeds but the Society needs to be aware of what the competition is doing.

Mr Sutcliffe felt that when the bull registration fees were increased a few years ago it was done to improve the quality of the bulls, but this objective hasn't been achieved. Along with the vet's bill, it costs at least £200 to register a bull. If that bull was an Aberdeen Angus it would cost £30 and no vet inspection. The Society increases the registration fees in increments but can't see the point as there's no increase in admin costs.

Miss Woollatt stated that her farm had been shut down with TB and had got the pedigree valuation on a young bull as they are in Wales but in England. In England a commercial rate of compensation would have been paid as the bull hadn't been registered. She suggested that in common with other breeds, bulls should be inspected at sales.

Mrs S Hallfield stated that the breed had no proof of they are worth or how progeny will perform as there is no performance recording.

Mrs Lockett stated that 30 years ago the Society tried performance recording, and also again recently, but not enough members participated to get statistically accurate figures.

Mr Close stated that top pedigree breeders pick bulls on looks but also look at figures. He felt that the Society's bull registration system was one of the best out of all the breeds as it is the only breed that inspects at registration rather than point of sale.

Mrs Hallfield stated that as an 'amateur' breed a vet inspection is vital. She also breeds Stabilisers and they record absolutely everything – birth weight, weaning weight etc an all the cattle have a score.

Mrs Zentis stated it was a legal requirement to give some data about performance recording.

Mr Guest stated that the Society should be an inclusive Society whether a member had two cows or 200 cows. He had received comments to the effect that the Society is not inclusive any more

The Chairman stated that all members are invited to all events but many don't choose to participate.

Mr Facon stated that anyone can stand for Council and that he didn't feel the Society was 'elitist'

Awards

Maydencroft Perpetual Trophy – Bull of the Year

The Secretary reported that there had been 25 registered bulls shown during the year. In third place with 19 points was Wheatlands Ruben from Mr T Mills, in second place with 23 points was Southfield Qnard from David & Angela Blockley. In first place with 28 points was Pointer Diamond King from Mr D Howden. The Maydencroft Trophy was presented to Jamie Brewer by Society President Mrs S Coleman.

Leebarn Perpetual Trophy – Cow of the Year

The Secretary reported that there had been 29 cows shown this year. In third place with 14 points was Wellhead Kir Royale from Mr S Horrocks, in second place with 17 points was Fishwick Queen of the Ring from Mr P Close. In first place with 20 points was Blackbrook Zabrina from Master Bertie Stanley.

Lesley Hutton Perpetual Trophy – Senior Heifer of the Year

The Secretary reported that there had been 23 senior heifers shown this year. In third place with 20 points was Melbourne Park Fizz. In joint first place with 28 points was Carreg Rye Grass and Pointer Dreamer from Mr & Mrs B&M Llewellyn & Mr D Howden respectively. The Lesley Hutton Perpetual Trophy was presented to Bernard Llewellyn and Jamie Brewer by the Society President Mrs S Coleman.

Tetford Perpetual Trophy – Junior Heifer of the Year

The Secretary reported that there had been 42 junior heifers shown this year. In third place with 19 points was Pointer Enough is Enough from David Howden, in second place with 21 points was Carreg Sonnet from Mr & Mrs B&M Llewellyn. In first place with 44 points was Gentons Sara ET from Bertie Facon. Charles Sutcliffe presented the trophy to Mr Facon and Mr Bellew

Paul Lockett Memorial Trophy

The Secretary reported that four members had shown Longhorn cattle in their own right for the first time in 2019. The winner was Chris Wardle who collected the Paul Lockett Memorial Trophy from Nicky Lockett

Frank Sutton Young Handlers Competition

The Secretary reported that five Junior members had taken part in stockjudging competitions this year. In third place was Coby Horrocks, in second place was William Edwards, and in first place was Rhianydd Davies. The Frank Sutton Trophy was presented to Rhianydd by Society President Mrs S Coleman

President's Award

The President's Award was presented by outgoing President Sarah Coleman to Mr Bernard Llewellyn MBE.

The Chairman announced that Mrs Nicky Lockett would be the Society President for 2020 and 2021. The Chairman thanked Mrs Coleman for her time as President. Mrs Coleman was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for coming and closed the AGM.