

Minutes of the Council meeting at the Oriel Davies Gallery, Newtown, on Saturday, 14 March 2020

Present: Anne Brenchley, Mick Green, Kelvin Jones, Neil Lambert, Alison Noble, Keith Noble, Carlton Parry, Giles Pepler, Ian Spence with Clare Ryland as observer.

Apologies for absence: Heather Crump, Rhion Pritchard, Dan Rouse, Jez Smith, Steve Sutcliffe, Iolo Williams

Annoyingly, Plas Dolerw was closed because of a booking error. The room had been rebooked for 21 March to avoid a clash with a rugby match that was postponed. MG got us a room at the Gallery.

		MG welcomed Clare Ryland to the meeting. She has volunteered to take over the role of Secretary at the AGM in November.	
20.01		Minutes of meeting on 23 November 2019 Accepted.	
20.02		Matters arising None that were not on today's agenda.	
20.03		Chair's report Nothing to report.	
20.04		Treasurer's report Given the large surplus from the last conference IMS proposed that the financial support from Beryl Moore, in memory of Derek, should be vired to sponsorship of <i>Birds of Wales</i> . This was agreed by all. The proposal for extra pages to be bought for <i>Birds of Wales</i> was discussed. It was agreed to proceed with the extra pages.	
20.05		Membership Secretary's report It was decided not to purchase a membership database as the cost was prohibitive. AN has now created a new database in Excel, in which each person is a member (up to two per £20 annual subscription) so each member will have their own log in to the Members' pages of the website and each will appear on mailing lists, etc. There are now 358 members and currently, about one new person joins each week, possibly prompted by communications from DR. There are still more members with standing orders than direct debits but the latter are increasing. WOS recently received £1152.03 as Gift Aid. The £1500 set aside to set up a new database will not, now, be needed. Also, with Memberpress being abandoned there will be a saving of c £500 per annum. AN asked for a volunteer to store a copy of the database, updated about every two weeks.	
		To store backups of the membership database.	GP

		There was a question about whether our website arrangement included some cloud storage.	
		To investigate if we have a cloud storage facility.	GP
		There was discussion about the continuation of Members' only pages on the website. It was agreed to continue with this membership benefit for the time being.	
		To reinstate Members' only pages as soon as possible.	GP
		To discuss the possible opening up of the website to all as part of the strategy review.	MG, AB
20.06		<p>Editor's report</p> <p>In the absence of RP, IMS went through the points in RP's report that was emailed to all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The 2018 bird report has been published and Julian Hughes was congratulated. - The issue of Birds in Wales due in the summer should, hopefully, be ready by June or July 2020. One paper is in and other are in the pipeline. 	
		To contact RP to offer to referee papers.	AB
20.07		<p>New book (<i>Birds of Wales</i>)</p> <p>On behalf of RP, IMS went through the paper by RP. It showed the plan for assembling groups of species accounts into tranches and sending these out to volunteers to check for factual or other errors and other comments. Trevor Payne, a friend of IMS, has volunteered to proof-read the tranches to check for good English.</p> <p>RP and IMS will be going to a meeting in Liverpool on 2 April, with the designer, Lucy, and for a meeting about marketing.</p>	
20.08		<p>Birds of Wales species' sponsorship</p> <p>GP informed the meeting that, so far, 94 of 451 species have been sponsored. This has raised a total of £17,350.00 (plus £500.00 from Beryl Moore). There have been no new sponsors lately, so messages to encourage people are needed.</p>	
		To contact DR for pleas for people to sponsor species.	GP
		MG had contacted Gwynt y Mor but has had no reply.	

		To keep reminding people about sponsorship.	All
		To contact Plaid Cymru about sponsorship.	MG
		To contact Pat Lindley about NRW sponsorship.	MG
20.09		<p>BirdFair and Wales Spring Show</p> <p>MG reported that we need to book our place for the BirdFair immediately even though it may be cancelled due to coronavirus.</p> <p>It was agreed that we should apply to go to the BirdFair.</p> <p>KHJ reported that there has been no progress with the Wales Spring Show and it is uncertain if the BTO will be going. We agreed that we would not seek to go to the show.</p> <p>We were reminded that we need to prepare display materials for the BirdFair.</p>	
		To contact Visit Wales for support for attendance at the BirdFair.	MG
		To provide MG with Visit Wales contact details.	KHJ
		To arrange an email group to discuss and prepare display materials.	AN, AB, GP, DR
20.10		<p>Conference 2020</p> <p>KN informed the meeting that the conference will be at the Halliwell Centre, University of Wales Trinity St David. We will have all facilities (with a doubt about the main lecture theatre, though KN is trying to book this). The charges suggest that there should be no need to change the ticket prices (£30 for members, £35 for non-members).</p> <p>The theme is due to be 'Farmland' and KN went through some possible speakers. It was agreed to check the following:</p> <p>Chris Hewson, BTO Arfon Williams, NRW Dave Anning, RSPB And various other possibilities.</p>	
		To invite Ian Newton as the main speaker about farmland birds.	AB
		To draft a programme for the conference and send it to all.	KN
		To consider a Sunday visit to Penclacwydd, WWT, perhaps led by DR. KN asked for suggestions for stalls at the conference.	

20.11	<p>Willow Tit survey</p> <p>Simon Wotton, RSPB, the organiser of the survey was pleased with progress in Wales during 2019. Local coordinators are ensuring fieldwork is done this year.</p> <p>Some publicity is needed in the near future to remind people to do the fieldwork.</p>	
	<p>To ask DR to do publicity for the Willow Tit survey within the next week.</p>	AB
20.12	<p>RSPB consultation about conservation principles</p> <p>NL informed us about a RSPB review of policy about driven grouse shooting and releases of game birds (especially pheasants and grouse). RSPB will be going to consultation and seeking views. WOS needs to receive the request before it can respond.</p>	
20.13	<p>Memorandum of Understanding with Bardsey Bird and Field Observatory</p> <p>This is to enable in kind support, WOS-BBFO, as BBFO is unable to pay an Affiliate Member subscription. The MOU has been circulated. It was agreed to proceed.</p>	
20.14	<p>Membership strategy</p> <p>It was proposed that this be discussed as part of the review of the five-year strategy for WOS.</p>	
	<p>To provide ideas about the initial strategy to MG.</p>	All
	<p>To prepare a draft second version of the strategy for discussion and agreement by the November meeting.</p>	All
	<p>To arrange a meeting in mid-Wales as soon as possible to discuss the strategy. Other volunteers will be welcome.</p>	MG, AN, AB, GP
	<p>To circulate the initial strategy document and arrange a meeting.</p>	MG
20.15	<p>Council succession</p> <p>With MG standing down in November, in the last year WOS will have lost much ecological, policy and conservation experience. Council considered who may be appropriate people to approach to see if they would be interested in joining Council. There will be five vacancies:</p> <p>MG standing down, AB to be proposed as Chair</p> <p>IMS standing down, Clare Ryland to be proposed as Secretary</p> <p>GP, eligible for a second term, willing to seek re-election</p> <p>KN standing down</p> <p>SSu, eligible for a second term</p> <p>There will be nobody reaching the end of a term in November 2021.</p> <p>Various people were suggested to be approached to replace KN.</p>	

		Recently, there had been no press releases. Ideally, a press release should happen with each consultation response.	
		To pass on to AB a list of press contacts.	MG
		To consider a person to take responsibility for the BirdTrack partnership with the BTO.	All
		To consider a person to organise future conferences (after 2020).	All
20.16		e-Media DR sent a report by email to all.	
		To check if HC can remember the Twitter password to pass on to DR.	MG
		To investigate issues around problems with MailChimp.	GP
		An e-newsletter is needed in the near future. DR informed us that Birdguides and Birdwatch magazine will be happy to advertise the new book at the end of any article about birds in Wales.	
		To write an article about Greenland White-fronted Geese.	MG
		To think of items to be put in an e-newsletter and to send them to DR.	All
		GP informed us that the website has been almost completely overhauled in recent weeks and further updates are in the pipeline. He asked for views and up to date information about county areas. He is currently seeking to resolve a problem with the online map of counties. Website usage seems to be about the same level as usual.	
20.17		BTO Cymru There was recently a Ringers' Conference in Wales that was well received. The coronavirus is posing some issues with arranging other engagement meetings. The University of Bangor does not wish staff to meet outsiders (and the BTO rents space from the University).	
		To add a page to the WOS website to encourage members (and others) to engage with BBS and other surveys.	GP
20.18		RSPB Cymru	
20.19		Welsh Birds Rarities Committee No report.	

20.20		Curlew Cymru (Gylfinir Cymru) The Rug estate is interested in headstarting Curlews. A meeting planned for recently did not happen. There will be a future meeting with Lesley Griffiths, Environment Minister, to seek funding for support of Curlew conservation.	
		To put details of World Curlew Day (St Beuno's Day) on 21 April 2020 on the website.	GP
20.21		Any other business	
	20.20.1	Missing meetings All were reminded that (with the exception of the President) any member missing three consecutive Council meetings would be deemed as having resigned from Council.	
	20.20.2	Local Nature Partnerships Small amounts of money have been awarded to local authorities for projects that are similar to the LBAP process but with too little funding.	
	20.20.3	Small conservation grants There have only been three applications for conservation grants this round. Two of them were not appropriate. A Swift project in Radnor will receive funding. There has been a disappointing number of appropriate applications (ie related to priority species).	
	20.20.4	Bursaries	
		To check with JS about progress with advertising for the Derek Moore Student Awards and Student Bursaries within the universities.	GP
	20.20.5	Greenland White-fronted Geese Despite a Welsh Government agreement to do so, they have not yet been removed from the Welsh list of quarry species.	
	20.20.6	Merlin survey There has been no progress with this.	
	20.20.7	Honey-buzzard survey The RBBP is organising a survey this year in July/August. Details have been circulated to pass on to any potential volunteer.	
		To consider adding to the website later in the year.	GP

20.20.8	Second-hand books KN asked if he may dispose of boxes of second-hand books that he has following the 2019 conference. It was agreed he may do so.	
20.20.9	Events calendar on the website CP informed the meeting that he is receiving very little information to add to the calendar from Affiliate Members. Action: GP to remind Affiliates to send meeting details to CP, as well as to web@birdsins.wales	
20.20.10	Membership leaflet (revised) AN showed a draft and will get about 50 copies made as not many seem to be being used.	
20.20.11	Proposed mail shot to all members AN wishes to inform all members, by mail, of all information held about them by WOS, with prompts to update particular items, particularly to move to pay subscriptions by direct debit.	
	To make the mail shot and update the membership database according to responses.	AN
	Ian M Spence	
	17 March 2020	