

SUSSEX CATTLE SOCIETY

Report of a Meeting of Council held Wednesday, 13/09/2023 at the Society Office

1. **Apologies for Absence** were received.
2. **Complete Forms for Companies House/Charity Commission** these were all completed.
3. **Confirm Minutes of Meeting held 10th May 2023**
The minutes were proposed and approved by those present.
4. **Matters Arising from 10th May 2023**
 - a) **Spring Farm Walk 18th May 2023**
It was agreed that this had been a successful event. It was suggested that perhaps this should become a weekend event to make it easier for members to attend.
 - b) **Autumn Farm Walk 3rd September 2023**
It was agreed that this had been very successful. It was suggested that it might help if the date could be organised a little earlier. It was noted that an early September date was often easier for those with other enterprises on farm and further noted that mid September was the ideal time for the farm walk. It was agreed that the date had to be flexible.
 - c) **Bull Registration Terms & Conditions**
The proposed revised Terms & Conditions were discussed. Noted amendments were:
That bulls would not be inspected exceeding 570 days of age.
Bulls must be weighed by the owner breeder.
Bulls over 12 months of age should be fully registered before competing in the show ring, excluding calf shows/classes.
A new slightly more detailed Veterinary Inspection form including scrotal measurement becoming mandatory.

The updated Terms & Conditions and Veterinary Form were proposed, seconded and agreed by those present. The updated paperwork will be put on the website, circulated to breeders and advised in the Newsletter.
5. **Matters Arising from Annual General Meeting**
 - a) **Shows & Sales**
It was stated that this continued to be a dilemma with many breeders not wishing to send stock to markets and a number of potential purchasers not wishing to buy stock that had been in the market, mostly due to health concerns. Unfortunately this means that there are no public prices seen for breeding stock. There is a possibility of aiming to sell bulls at the Native Day in Ashford in May but vendors would have to agree to attend and to place a high minimum reserve. It might be possible for the Society to pay for the retesting fees of any bulls that were unsold and returned home. It was noted that everyone would have to put a high reserve and agree to this. It was noted that is hard to know what price a better bull is selling for unless there is a public sale at a market. Most bulls being sold in the spring. It was stated that for a sale to be considered to be successful there would have to be a large number forward. It was noted that the North Devons and South Devons managed to have at least one public sale per year. It was suggested two dates in the year possibly April and

September but using online auction facilities. It was suggested that for online selling a 1 minute professional video of each bull should be made. It was suggested using an auctioneer that was linked through MartEye with full data and information on each bull. It was stated that there would need to be a fixed sale date to allow vendors time to get bulls looking right for videoing. It was noted that this may be the time to look forward and go forward using new technology. It was felt that a date, auctioneer and an indication of possible entries needed to be arranged in early January. It was stated that the catalogue needed to be available a month before the sale date. Buyers could bid from home or possibly meet together with vendors at the premises of the auctioneer. It was agreed that this would be discussed further at the November meeting.

6. Finance Report

The balances were reported as Current Account £18,949, COIF Deposit Account £21,749 compared with total balance of £56,814 for the same period last year.

7. Mr. Nigel Ventham Legacy

The Secretary reported that the late Mr. Ventham had left a legacy of £1000 to the Society in his will. It was suggested that Council consider and suggest how this legacy should be used.

8. New Members

The following new members were elected to the Society following a proposal, a second and agreed by those present.

- a) Mr. G. Dinnis, John Dinnis & Partners, Filston Farm, Shoreham, Sevenoaks, Kent
- b) Mrs. F. Lee, G.M. & F.M. Lee, Foxhole Farm, Clayton, Hassocks, West Sussex

9. Judges Panel 2023/2024

a) Proposed Appointments for 2024

The proposals to be put to the shows are as follows: Heathfield, Mr. P. Masters; South of England, an outside breed judge; Norfolk, Mr. D. Masters; Kent, Mr. S. Jenner; Edenbridge, Mr. A. Mummery. It is likely that we will be allocated our own classes at Suffolk and a decision regarding a judge will be made once this is confirmed.

b) Trainee Judges, Criteria for Qualification

IT was reported on the trainee judges activities during the year and reports were made from Herd Competition Judges that had been accompanied by trainees. The following trainees were placed on the judges panel following a proposal, second and agreement by those present.

Mr. Laurence Angus

Miss. Ruth Perry

Mr. Chris Reed

Mr. Leighton Snelgrove.

A simple criteria for what is required from trainee prior to consideration to becoming members of the judges panel was agreed.

10. Herd Competition Report 2023

It was agreed that once again the competition had been a success. It was proposed that the "objection clause" be removed from the rules and this was agreed. A double page spread on

the herd competition would be published in the South East Farmer featuring the winning herds and promoting the breed.

11. Exhibition Trailer

The question was raised asking if this was still a viable and valid expenditure as very few members and/or farmers attended shows or visited the stand apart from those exhibiting or attending as judges and stewards. The estimated true costings were nearly £8000 for 2023 including Suffolk and Norfolk. The question was asked if it continues to be a valid business decision to continue with this expenditure when there is no return on a usefulness or source of potential customers. It was felt that breed promotion could be undertaken in the lines at Norfolk and Suffolk. It was noted that the Society should have a presence at shows and that in the past exhibitors and members had met up at the stand post judging. It was suggested that perhaps the trailer could be used to promote the meat/beef to the public and be managed by breeders that had outlets for their product. Council were asked to consider this and come up with ideas at the November meeting.

12. Any Other Business

a) Social Media

It was suggested that the Next Generation could become involved in this and one individual be responsible for ensuring that there are regular posts, perhaps taking turns on a monthly or perhaps three monthly basis. It may be possible to make a payment to the individuals of £100 per month. A Council member agreed to take this on temporarily until a firm decision is made and they will be added as an "admin" on the Facebook page.

b) Mr. Trevor Stottar

It was reported that Mr. Stottar from South Africa had visited Edenbridge Show and several breeders. There is a possibility that he will be purchasing semen from a new bull.

c) Semen & Embryos for South Africa

It was reported that the daughter of the late Mr. Anthony Evans had been in contact with her regarding assistance in purchasing semen and embryos.

d) Office Management

It was reported that at some point the Secretary will be retiring and that plans could start to be made. Possibly disposing of the office premises with aim to have a working from home system established. Perhaps two new employees, one for admin and one for marketing. The first step towards this would be to have an up to date valuation of the office premises.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 15.35pm