

**Minutes of the Cross Party Assembly Group for the Horse  
Held in Conference Room 24 Ty Hywel  
On Tuesday 8 December 2015 at 6pm**

Present:

Angela Burns AM (Chairman)  
Stuart Burns (Support Staff Angela Burns)  
Janet Finch-Saunders AM (Vice Chairman)  
Lee Hackett (BHS Director of Equine Policy)  
Keith Meldrum (WHW)  
Rachel Evans (Director Wales CA)  
PC Richard Lewis (South Wales Police)  
PC John Harrison (South Wales Police)  
Alan Pearce (Equine Transport)  
Phillip York (SWHP)  
Karen Morgan (Caerphilly CBC)  
Elaine Griffiths (BHS Welfare Wales)  
Jan Roche (Secretariat)  
Colin Thomas (Hill Pony Imp Society)  
Helen Manns (British Driving Society)  
Nic De Brauwere (Redwings)

Apologies:

Mark Weston (BHS Director of Access)  
Jenny MacGregor (SWHP)  
Tony Evans (WHW)  
Graham Capper (Equine Consultant)  
Maureen Lloyd (STAGBI)  
Huw Rhys Thomas (NFU)  
Lee Jones (BCBC)  
J Staley (Commons)  
ED Gummery (WPCS)  
William Jenkins (NFU Cymru)

1. Angela Burns welcomed everyone to the meeting. The AGM procedure took place with Angela Burns being proposed as Chairman by Alan Pearce and seconded by Nic De Brauwere. Janet Finch-Saunders was proposed as Vice Chairman by Alan Pearce and seconded by Angela Burns. Jan Roche was proposed as Secretariat by Angela Burns and seconded by Lee Hackett.
2. Apologies were received and noted.
3. The minutes of the last meeting were noted. There were no matters arising.
4. Commons Pony Update: Phillip York introduced Karen Morgan from Caerphilly CBC. He outlined the current situation regarding the contraceptive vaccine programme. 250 had been darted to date and if possible another 250 needed to be done as soon as possible, He thanked Colin Thomas for his

assistance in obtaining agreement on some of the commons. License had been applied for regarding import for the improved vaccine from the USA and this had been granted.

Karen Morgan then gave an overview of the situation – proving ownership was a major issue as always as was finance for any clearing operations. The LA needed to work with a charity that could re home equines and the situation was historical and had been going on for many years. Public interest was high and many calls were received on a regular basis. The contraceptive vaccine may provide an immediate solution to stop further overbreeding. There were approx. 300 to 500 ponies on local commons in that LA area – many of which would possibly not have owners.

Some commons have worked well with LAs and charities and also put management plans in place. Colin Thomas said that one common in the Brecon Beacons area had kept up management levels and had any issues in hand as a result.

The new vaccine needed 2 doses 3 years apart, equines reverted to normal cycling in most cases and there was a zero withdrawal period regarding slaughter. The cost was between £50 and £60 per dose approx.

Janet Finch – Saunders mentioned the management that worked well for the Carneddau ponies. Angela Burns felt action would be needed for the early part of 2016 as a short term measure with the crisis that was approaching. She would therefore write to the Minister Rebecca Evans and highlight matters along with suggesting a meeting to discuss things first hand with members of the Group. Copy would be sent to the Group as soon as possible.

5. Evaluation of Submission request regarding Commons issues: Some members had responded and from those responses Angela will prepare a document which will be circulated for input. Colin Thomas mentioned that Aberystwyth University had recently prepared a DNA study on the true Welsh pony. He was attending the launch and would report back.
6. Value/Celebration of the Horse in Wales: Rachel Evans felt that mention should be made of the equine success in Wales alongside the issues in hand. Helen Manns said that any celebration could be used to highlight the obvious problems and the need for financial support to alleviate those problems. There were other items that the group also needed to look at as were suggested:

Riding School Rates

Licensing of Livery Yards

Licensing of Sanctuaries

Animal Health and Welfare Strategy

Equine Tourism/Access

Future amendment to legislation was then discussed – any new National Equine Database was currently delayed.

Keith Meldrum had attended several legislation meetings and agreed when asked by Angela Burns to do a presentation at a future meeting looking at future legislation - which was in place as such but not in force as of January 2016.

There would be one more meeting of the Cross Party Group for the Horse before dissolution prior to the 2016 elections. It was decided to look at three potential enquiries at that meeting – passports/equine ID, value of equine industry/benefits and issues surrounding licensing of equine premises.

7. AOB: Karen Morgan thanked those around the table for their support in the past and said she would be happy to attend future meetings if possible.  
The meeting closed at 7.30pm

