



**Minutes of Committee meeting (17<sup>th</sup> September 2020)**

**Held by Zoom Conference 7.00 – 9.00 pm**

<b>Present:</b> Susanna Grunsell, Robert Taylor, Martin Winrow, Gerald Wells, Mervyn Davies, Stephanie Greenwood, Trevor Hulme, Rachel Jenkins, Mick Colquhoun, Chris Robinson.		
<b>Governance:</b>		<b>Actions</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies:</b> Gareth Morgan, Frances Weeks, James Hitchcock, Stephanie Greenwood (leaving at 7.45pm).	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Conflicts of interest:</b> Members to signal potential conflicts regarding agenda items – none declared.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Minutes of previous meeting (18<sup>th</sup> June):</b> approved.	
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Actions arising from meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020:</b> No actions arising other than those from - <i>Agenda items for email response/discussion only.</i></p> <p><i>Several outstanding actions on hold from Feb and Jun due to current circumstances and will be monitored and carried forward (RT).</i></p> <p><i>Actions to be progressed:</i></p> <p><i>From June 2020:</i></p> <p><i>9. Document retention policy (MW)</i></p> <p><i>19a. Wye Salmon Association (DW)</i></p>	<p><b>Robert</b> to carry forward and monitor outstanding actions</p> <p><b>Martin</b> to progress document retention policy</p> <p><b>Dan</b> to confirm position re. Wye Salmon Association</p>
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Committee Secretary vacancy - update and discussion of next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advertising and personal approaches agreed from June meeting have all failed.</li> <li>Discussion on interim/temporary approach favoured rotational role and sharing of secretarial components (Agenda preparation, Minute taking, General correspondence) within Committee.</li> <li>Inducement by remuneration/honorarium for the role considered largely unsatisfactory in principle and financially, but</li> </ul>	<p><b>Martin &amp; Chris</b> to seek further clarification from</p>

	<p>further clarification of Charity Commission and auditor's positions on the issues and options for possible resolution required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement that a full time Secretary is essential to the Club and that continued vacancy of the post (or other essential administrative roles) could ultimately lead to the dissolution of the organization.</li> <li>• Exec. To discuss further and report.</li> </ul>	<p>Charity Commission</p> <p><b>Exec</b> to discuss vacancy further</p>
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>Treasurer's report (circulated with Agenda):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget and Annual Charity return completed; tax refund claim remains outstanding (MW).</li> <li>• Income impacted by continuing decline in membership (over 4-5 years), current restrictions on income and higher costs, but financial reserves substantial and return of income streams depressed by Covid can be anticipated.</li> <li>• Recovery of (Indoor) Zoom meetings costs in future discussed. Options include, donations, increased membership subscription and virtual raffle. Agreed that all Indoor meetings by Zoom to remain free for this year. Ideas for other income sources commensurate with balancing a future budget welcomed.</li> <li>• Possible use of third-party booking facility for Zoom meetings has potential for donation collection and wider audience participation and increasing membership; to be investigated</li> </ul>	<p><b>Martin</b> to progress tax refund</p> <p><b>All</b> to submit ideas for income sources</p> <p><b>Martin</b> to investigate third-party booking facility</p>
<b>7.</b>	<p><b>Planning/strategy meetings – review; agreement on need for further meetings and potential items for discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee agreed the value of such additional meetings especially in complementing the scheduled formal Committee meetings, particularly given that they can be more frequent when achieved by Zoom.</li> <li>• Agreed also that the previously cancelled, 15 April informal meeting to introduce new Committee members to the working of the Club, should be rescheduled by Zoom for the next meeting (October). Date and availability of new Committee members and former presentations/speakers to be arranged.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Robert</b> to make arrangements for October Zoom meeting</p>
<b>Conservation:</b>		
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>Curlew Action project:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project aims align closely with those of Herefordshire Curlew Forum but extend the scope to educational and promotional efforts to a wider public and in advocacy to government. Discussed and agreed to write indicating support for their aims and objectives and donate £200.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Martin</b> to progress donation</p>
<b>Events:</b>		

9.	<p><b>Review of September indoor meeting and arrangements for remainder of current programme:</b> RT presented feedback from September meeting (copy of presentation attached with Minutes).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were an estimated 70 attendees, primarily HOC members, but also those of other invited wildlife organisations. The virtual nature of the meeting was favoured over real meetings, for several reasons, and comments were overwhelmingly positive. There were minor technical improvements/enhancements suggested (RT to explore).</li> <li>• Social aspects, inevitably missing, might be addressed via breakout groups “rooms” in the margins of the main virtual meeting, or supplemented by real social events in summer.</li> <li>• Potential concerns that speakers may have if the audience extends widely beyond the Club need to be addressed.</li> <li>• General agreement that all remaining Indoor meetings of the 2020/2021 winter season will be remote and free of charge to participants.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Robert</b> to explore improvements to Zoom procedures</p>
10.	<p><b>Indoor Meetings 2021/22 -identification and agreement on potential speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A list of potential speakers and subjects collated from RT’s request to Committee was presented; six speakers are required including for the Dr Walker memorial lecture.</li> <li>• Agreed that, as in previous years, Committee is circulated with list and based on relevance/interest/importance/preference, speakers/subject are rated to aid selections.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Robert</b> to collate and circulate details of speakers</p>
11.	<p><b>Field meetings – discussion and agreement about future for current programme:</b></p> <p>Current government restrictions taken at face value indicate that no more than six persons from different households can meet outdoors. Although this enables informal groups of up to six birders to meet, it cannot be justified as a club activity. Some organisations have circumvented the rule of six by subdividing groups, thus justifying convening meetings of &lt;30 pre-booked attendees. Additionally, invoking “exercise” as the basis of the activity or declaring the meeting “non-social” are potential justifications for exceeding the rule. It was agreed that given the present apparently deteriorating Covid situation nationally, it was not advisable to start Field meetings in any form at present. Situation to be kept under review at future Committee meetings.</p>	
<p><b>Communication and Publicity</b></p>		
12.	<p><b>Newsletter: review of production and distribution process; consideration of advertising arrangements and potential items for November edition:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frances content to comply with any changes considered</li> </ul>	

	<p>necessary. A return to two proof-readers considered desirable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No changes to production of distribution suggested.</li> <li>• Potential items for Nov. edition to include one targeted specifically for younger readers; format and structure at Frances's discretion.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Frances</b> to develop item(s) for younger readers</p>
<p><b>Records &amp; Publications:</b></p>		
<p><b>13.</b></p>	<p><b>Records working group – update:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of descriptive statuses of species for the Systematic List in Annual Report completed.</li> <li>• Validation of county BirdTrack records – ongoing (MC, CR)</li> <li>• Revisiting historical records - the potential long-term aim of a county avifauna.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>14.</b></p>	<p><b>Rarities sub-committee – update:</b></p> <p>Report as supplied with Agenda:</p> <p>The Rarities subcommittee met on 26th August and were able to deal with the majority of sightings reported in the first six months of 2020. After some additional descriptions and photographs were obtained nearly all have now been assessed. One observer remains untraceable and one description is outstanding.</p>	
<p><b>15.</b></p>	<p><b>Annual Report – update:</b> Due to the novel circumstances this year, preparation of the AR is some two months in advance of previous year with proof reading scheduled for end of October. Number of print copies required is reduced (c310). Print run quotation to be obtained.</p> <p>Distribution issues: cost of potential increase in copies to be posted might be offset by third party distribution (MW to provide estimated number to be distributed and area to be covered/SG obtaining quote) and/or Committee volunteers.</p>	<p><b>Mervyn</b> to obtain print run quotation</p> <p><b>Martin</b> to indicate requirement and <b>Susanna</b> to obtain quote</p>
<p><b>Any other business:</b></p>		
<p><b>16.</b></p>	<p>Some intermittent technical problems with the website, particularly with drop down menus have been reported; any further issues to be referred to RT.</p>	<p><b>All</b> to report any problems with website to Robert</p>
<p><b>Date of next Committee meeting: 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020 by Zoom conference call.</b></p>		