

Minutes of the 2017 Montbeliarde UK AGM held on Tuesday 5th September at The Boars Head, Sudbury, Derbyshire at 7pm

Chairman Pete Wood welcomed everyone present and took the meeting.

Apologies

These were received from John Harvey, Paul Dixon, Stuart Cadamy and Robin McMurrich.

Minutes of the last meeting

These had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting and were duly taken as read.

Matters Arising

There was nothing to consider that wouldn't be covered elsewhere in the meeting.

Correspondence

The secretary apologised in advance as there were a number of items to raise and cover but she felt with only one meeting a year it was important the members were given the opportunity to know what was happening;

- Richard Bostock from Cogent had written to ask if we would consider publishing an available bull list on the society website, updated at each proof run. The secretary said currently we uploaded info received from any AI company but this was not all encompassing - the only way would be to 'purchase' the data from Holstein UK/ NBDC - the floor agreed for the secretary to investigate associated costs and logistics and report back.
- WWS had written to ask if we can offer UK figures/conversions on Spanish Monty bulls they wish to market - this can only be done if they are registered with us and processed through NBDC.
- The NBDC (which has replaced CDI) have a users forum on 10th October at Stoneleigh- the members agreed it was important that a representative (the secretary) attended.
- Alta and Holstein UK have been in touch regarding issues with DNA profiles tied to bull registrations, Weatherby's who handle the DNA profiling are still using microsatellite technology for profiles whereas European convention is now SNP profiles - after some discussion it was agreed Montbeliarde UK needed to write to Alta to say we required the microsatellite format in the short term, meanwhile the secretary will look at alternative suppliers to Weatherby's who can work with SNP profiles as this is the way the technology is progressing, and it is also the technology used in genomic profiling.
- A letter had been received from DEFRA outlining changes to our breed society obligations for data provision, in particular relating to live animal movements, the secretary will respond as necessary and consult with Holstein UK for any data needed.
- The secretary has been in negotiations with a member in regard to a large volume (circa 500-700 registrations, and also with Holstein UK who agreed to a 20% discount on this number, the secretary also planned to travel to the farm to help the member with the necessary paperwork - the members agreed this was important and maybe we could do more to help encourage registrations etc, including sending around a spreadsheet to help members to complete registration backlogs.

Chairman's Report

Peter Wood began by saying he had enjoyed his two years at the helm, although the industry and his own circumstances during this time had made the role somewhat more challenging. The new website and face book have gone from strength to strength and are invaluable tools and he urged members to provide information for them - it was mentioned Workman's had a consignment soon at H&H, Carlisle which should be promoted.

Unfortunately registrations are down significantly, circa 400 in the previous calendar year versus 700 in other years - this was somewhat worrying and despite the incentive of lower fees, which have still not (but will very soon be) moved back up the agreed figure from the 2016 AGM of £8.

The Society's show attendance continues to be an important element, this year UK Dairy Expo, UK Dairy Day, and the SW Dairy Show. Our own Open Day is a pivotal and a very well attended event- he thanked the Wilson's for making the 2016 event such a success.

Pete concluded by thanking the secretaries and all the committee as well as everyone else who had helped promote the breed and run the Society during the last twelve months.

Secretary's Report

This mainly involved covering the audited accounts which had been circulated, and for which there were no questions raised from the floor. The net result was a £1172.94 loss on the year, with bank funds standing at circa £20,000. The membership felt this was acceptable although if possible we could do to stop the erosion of funds at a significant rate.

The Full Montey had again furnished a small profit and consensus was that this continues to develop and improve with each issue, it has been well received and is a great advertisement for the breed and any dairying enthusiasts.

The loss of the Direct Debit facility created a little extra work and maybe a small delay in invoice settlement but neither were significant or tangible.

The secretary finished by expressing concern over a little lack of impetus and enthusiasm within the breed and society- raising the question of how going forward does the society grow and continue to develop?

Election of Officers

Michael Wilson nominated Andrew Cotton as Chairman, seconded by Rob Warburton, with no other nominations Andrew was elected, he then thanked Peter Wood for his sterling efforts over the last two years and presented a hamper to Pete and Kath as a sign of the Society's appreciation.

Rob Warburton nominated and Fiona Bridge seconded Pete Wood to return as Vice Chairman which he duly accepted as there were no further nominations.

Again Rob and Fiona stood on to nominate The Farm Organisation continue in their administrative role as Secretary/ Treasurer for the coming year, to which they agreed.

The existing list of 17 committee members were then discussed, it was agreed this was a very static list, all will be contacted and informed that unless they confirmed their intention to continue as committee members they would be removed. Three new names were put forward as additions - nominated by Pete Wood and seconded by Andy Cotton - Richard Buxton, Janette Prince and Ferreol Roche.

Adoption of the Constitution

Post the circulation of the proposed constitution and with no issues or amendments raised the Constitution was adopted and duly signed by all necessary parties. Rob Warburton asked if it had been verified and the secretary explained it had been checked over but there was no legal cover on such documents, Rob was happy that we had covered ourselves as necessary.

Any other business

- Peter Bridge brought up the opportunity to again send a young person to compete on our behalf at the Paris show- it was agreed this should be encouraged, we will ask interested parties to register interest via the website and facebook over the coming months - all being well then organising an on farm competition/ training day / eliminator early in December, it was felt somewhere up the M6 corridor would be an ideal venue, perhaps at Graham Morton's.

- Pete Wood brought up that a Midlands artist has painted a Montbeliarde cow and will be selling prints, both at the Open Day and through the website - members agreed this was acceptable, perhaps with a small commission to Montbeliarde UK
- Show stands for the coming year were discussed - UK Dairy Expo at Carlisle (with stock from Messrs Wilson) and UK Dairy Day for 2018, will be booked, attendance at the SW Dairy Show will be gauged after this year's show, and it was agreed to not attend the 2018 Dairy Tech show in January being introduced by RABDF. Having show classes at UK Dairy Day in 2018 was also discussed - interest to be gauged via tick boxes on an upcoming newsletter - two classes for a heifer in milk or a cow in milk.
The secretaries could not attend this year's SW Dairy Show so Andrew and Teresa Cotton will take the stand and set it up, and they along with others will come along to Dairy day to promote the breed.
- In a similar vein the appetite for a society sale will be gauged by another newsletter tick box.
- The issue of membership was also discussed, the secretaries continue to try and tidy up the membership list - which will include removing anyone who hasn't settled membership invoices this year. The Vice Chairman urged committee members to go out and knock on doors, and proposed a Next Generation initiative - offering a 50% membership discount for the first year to new members under the age of 30. It was also felt by the membership that holding a Winter/Spring meeting for the membership would perhaps rally interest and engage more people. Peter Bridge suggested a 2018 trip to Southern Ireland for members only.
- Genomics- continues to offer opportunities and challenges, a letter from Helene at Jura Betail was read out outlining the service and cost / practical implications of the service they could offer. The secretary did mention that it may give the society the added lynchpin for members, however there was a note of caution regarding who owns the data once it is gathered - never the farmer. To proceed this topic the membership present agreed we would gather info on demand by another tick box on the newsletter before pursuing the service provider further.

With no further business the meeting was closed, with the Herds Competition results announced by Chairman Andrew Cotton after the meal, with Anna Cadamy making the presentations.