



**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF
THE VALAIS BLACKNOSE SOCIETY**

6th November, 2023 (Virtual meeting) 7pm

Draft Minutes

Present: Raymond Irvine (Chairman), Jamie Wood (Vice Chairman) Chris Slee, Phil Garrod, Polly Glyde, Kate Little, Adam Kirkbride, Steve Dace, Tom Hooper and Melissa Christie.

In attendance: None

Minute No. 2023/

151. Apologies: None

152. Confidentiality of Council Meetings: It was agreed that all Council members would sign a statement confirming that they would treat Council matters as confidential until information on the subject is published. All personnel matters are strictly confidential at all times.

153. Minutes from Meeting on 9th October, 2023: These were agreed and signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Jamie Wood and seconded by Phil Garrod.

- i. **Trainee judges update:** Housekeeping arrangements were agreed for the day. The appeal by an unsuccessful candidate was not accepted. We will stay with the original eight successful candidates.
- ii. **Swiss grading training event:** No response has yet been received. Kate to chase up.
- iii. **Graders Rules:** The Judges' Pathway document will be amended to highlight the fact that those UK members who attended the Swiss grading training will not be recognised by the Society as graders and none of their scores will be put onto the Grassroots registry. The wording will be as follows:

Only Members invited by the VBS Council to attend the Swiss grading training will be recognised as an official society affiliated grader. Furthermore, only grading scores awarded by official society

affiliated graders at society events will be recognised on the VBS Grassroots Flock book.

154: Grading scores for unregistered sheep: Unfortunately at Skipton Grading event two sheep were graded that were not registered in the Society flock book, so their scores are of no value. It was agreed that in future all entries need to be via Grassroots and no changes/substitutes will be allowed subsequently.

155. ET Policy:

i. Email from Grassroots on 1st January 2024 arrangements and Registration Fees: The following was agreed:

- The ban on ET progeny being registered will apply to all lambs born from 1st May 2024 onwards.
- The fees sheet will be amended to deal with the ET rules. The question of rams being registered later with no penalty was raised but no change was made.
- The quality of the chip needs assessing as the current one only deals with parentage verification.

ii. Conservation Panel Arrangements: A working group of Mel, Jamie, Polly, Chris and Kate was agreed to work through the arrangements and report back to the Council.

156. Annual Magazine:

- **Show results** – These have been done and are ready to go.
- **Articles** – Polly will circulate a list of who needs to do what.
- **Adverts** – An Octopus message to all members is ready to go.
- **Publisher** - Need two quotes for an A5 size document this year.
- **Publication date** – Probably in February. Need to arrange how it will be dispatched and the cost.

157. 2024 Elections: It was resolved to adopt the following procedures. Proposed by Kate Little, seconded by Polly Glyde.

- **Nomination Procedure:**

1. Any person wishing to stand for the Council must be a fully paid up Gold member of the Society for the preceding three years. There is no limit on how many candidates may stand for the election.
2. A nomination form must be completed, which will include a section for a short profile detailing the candidate's background, especially where it relates to agriculture, experience as an breeder or owner of Valais blacknose sheep and what contribution they feel you can

make to the work of the Council (for example, as the new treasurer) – no more than 250 words. The form should be signed by two nominating fully paid up Gold members for the past three years.

3. The Society is particularly keen to recruit council members from across the whole UK (the Council currently only has one Scottish and no Welsh or North Irish members).

- **Election rules:**

1. Six weeks before the election date of 23rd February 2024, ie on 12th January 2024, the Society will advertise (via an Octopus email and on the Society website and Facebook page) for candidates who must meet the criteria set out above. Two weeks will be given for submission of the nomination forms, which will be attached to the advert – deadline 26th January 2024. No late submissions will be accepted. Any nomination form not fully completed and signed, will be rejected.
2. Three weeks before the election date (2nd February 2024) the names and profiles of the candidates will be published in the same three places and a Google voting form will be sent out to all paid up Gold members (as at 31st January 2024).
3. The deadline for voting will be 23rd February 2024. No late votes will be accepted. Any votes received from non paid up members will not count in the election.
4. There are six vacancies to be filled in the 2024 election. Consequently each paid up Gold member of the Society (by 31st January 2024) may vote for up to six candidates, in no particular order.
5. The results of the election will be published in the usual three places on 1st March 2024 and the successful candidates will be informed individually, with guidance on taking up their place.
6. Should any candidate drop out for any reason mid election, they must inform the secretary on secretary@valaisblacknosesociety.co.uk as soon as possible, so that the paperwork and voting form can be amended. If a successful candidate stands down within three months of the election date, the Council will invite the next highest placed candidate in the election to take up the vacated place.

- **Explanation for the website/Facebook page** – An explanatory article about what council members do will be written for these sites as well as for the magazine.

158. Finance:

- **Next year’s budget** – The Society’s costs have been steadily growing with an increased number of grading and show and sale events. We will need to review event entry fees and sponsorships in order to cover costs. It was resolved to accept the 2024 budget. Proposer Tom Hooper , seconder Kate Little.
- **Subscriptions by direct debit** – this is proving to be more complicated than expected and is unlikely to be in place now before the beginning of 2024. We will proceed with it however, for both subscriptions and registrations.
- **Bank account** – currently at £46k which is down on the opening budget with more expenditure expected before the end of the year.
- **Membership subscriptions** – It was decided that the Gold membership fee would remain at £75 for 2024 provided it was paid in January. The subscription after that would be £80 for the year. The Silver and Bronze membership would remain unchanged, but the overseas membership would increase to £100. Message to members required.

159. Agency Contract with Grassroots – It was resolved to accept the two year unchanged agency agreement offered by Grassroots. Proposer Jamie Wood. Seconder Mel Christie.

160. Any Other Business:

- Questionnaire following BB23** – It was felt that the proposed set of questions from the BB23 committee needed rethinking as it was too long and detailed. It would be unlikely to be completed by many members. Seek questionnaire used by Scott Starkweather in the USA.
- New Director of the Ltd company** – Now that David Hodge has stepped down a new director is required. Decided to wait until after the 2024 elections.
- Director’s insurance** – It was agreed that this type of insurance at £200 pa was necessary to provide reassurance for potential candidates.

Date of Next Meeting: 4th December 2023.

Signed: **Date:**
Chairman

