

Kent Ornithological Society. Executive Committee Meeting

Minutes of Executive Meeting held 12th January 2018

West Faversham Community Centre. Faversham

Present: Martin Coath (Chair), Jack Chantler, Chris Cox (President Elect), Mike Henty, Robin Mace, Norman McCanch, Murray Orchard, Ray O'Reilly, Chris Roome, Brendan Ryan

1. Chairman's Welcome

MC welcomed Chris Cox to the meeting as the President Elect.

MC noted the Committee's thanks and appreciation of everything Don Taylor had done on behalf of the Society over many years, now that he had stepped down as President and is moving away from the county. MC also mentioned the excellent support that Stephen Wood had given the Committee over the years, serving as secretary and to the C&S sub-committee. His contribution was greatly appreciated and the committee thanked him for all his work.

2. Key matters for decision or discussion

2.1 KOS Conference

CR provided a review of the KOS conference held in November including an analysis of feedback from participants. The number of attendees was above the breakeven number resulting in a small surplus. The conference was very positively received. Plans were well advanced for the next conference on 3rd Nov 2018. Mark Avery and Andy Clements had already been booked. The possible theme would be migration although this and a number of other things needed to be firmed up. The venue will be Chaucer College, Canterbury. There is an ambition to get more women and younger people involved.

2.2 AGM

BR set out requirements for the AGM as per the Society's rules. There was a discussion about linking the AGM to the conference to overcome previous problems with the quorum. It was decided to persist with the AGM in April but to consider linking the AGM to the conference at some point in the future.

The AGM was agreed to take place on 12th April 2018 subject to the availability of the hall.

Hazel Jackson who had been well received at the conference to be approached as potential speaker.

There was also a discussion about other aspects of the society's rules and the need to review them to ensure that there was sufficient flexibility to run the Society in the digital age.

Action

BR to book venue and confirm date

CR to contact Hazel Jackson

BR to research Charity Commission requirements and undertake a review of the Society's rules

NMc Give notice of the AGM in the Newsletter

2.3 Vacant posts on committee

It was agreed that Chris Roome would become Vice Chairman, subject to ratification at the AGM.

Brendan Ryan would take over as Hon. Secretary, again subject to ratification at the AGM.

There was a discussion about the role of website manager. A note from Barry Wright indicated that Alan Fossey was keen to be involved and Stephen Wood had indicated that he was interested in retaining some connection with the committee possibly through some involvement in the website content. How such an arrangement would work with the retained service of BennettMatthews was discussed.

The Committee was minded to retain the services of BennettMatthews but that we needed people with ornithological knowledge to manage the site content and the relationship with BennettMatthews and provide direction on the evolving design of the site.

Action:

BR to liaise with AF and SW over way forward

2.4 Draft Accounts 2017

MH explained the draft accounts and the key issues and exceptions arising from them. Production costs for KBR 2015 had been lower than anticipated resulting in a write-back of £462. We had been prepared to make a loss on the conference in line with the net cost of holding indoor meetings in previous years so making a small surplus exceeded expectations.

The Committee confirmed its approval of a grant (500 Euros) to sponsor Kentish Plover in the forthcoming European Breeding Bird Atlas.

The Committee approved the accounts subject to audit.

2.5 Attracting younger people to KOS

CR introduced the item explaining how we were missing out on opportunities to connect with young birders in the county. Examples were given of some enthusiastic young birders in the county but there was a feeling that much potential was being missed.

It was suggested that Next Generation Birders should be invited to contribute to a future newsletter.

No conclusions or actions arose from the discussion but it was agreed that we should have a single membership rate £12 for all age groups including those over retirement age.

3. Updates

3.1 Kent Bird Report

KP updated the committee on progress on producing the 2016 KBR. Anticipated publication early summer (May/June) 2018. The new IOC taxonomic order to be adopted. Articles to include Breeding Black-winged Stilts, Chinese Pond Heron and Oriental Turtle Dove. Gavin Coultrip has taken over role of Photographic Editor.

3.2 Treasurer's report

All relevant matters had been discussed in item 2.4 above. No report.

3.3 Conservation and Surveys sub committee

MO highlighted the gap left by Steve Wood's resignation both as Secretary for the sub-committee and as the Kent contact and coordinator for the Rare Bird Breeding Panel. MO was to consider how to re-organise the committee to account for this change. MO identified potential candidate for the RBBP role which was agreed by the Committee. MO to discuss with the prospective representative.

A brief discussion was had about the impact of the proposed solar farm at Graveney.

Action:

MO to discuss role of RBBP Representative with potential candidate

3.4 Editorial and Records Committee

BW had circulated a note before the meeting outlining the new line up of the records committee. Malcolm McVail had stepped down and Matt Hindle and Ray O'Reilly had joined the committee.

3.5 Newsletter

NM reported on the move to six issues per year but suggested that there remained a shortage of articles coming forward. Chris Hindle's contribution in providing the records promptly was acknowledged. NM was considering returning to using articles about foreign trips which had featured in newsletters in the past. They may now be more relevant now that trip reports weren't included on the KOS website. The appeal to younger birders was discussed and the possibility of having an article from Next Generation Birders. It was also suggested that there should be an appreciation of Don Taylor's contribution to Kent Ornithology in a future newsletter. Chris Cox offered to write the article.

3.6 Communications and publicity

BR reported that no progress had been made on setting up a Communications and Publicity Sub-committee. Limited activity of had taken place on Twitter but KOS Facebook page goes from strength to strength and is being well used by members and non members. Communications to be a main discussion item on next Executive Committee agenda.

3.7 Kent Breeding Atlas

The Committee discussed how best to reduce the remaining stock of books, mindful that as the data became older sales were likely to diminish. It was agreed in the first instance that copies should be offered at discount (£10 each) to KOS members via the website, to members of Local RSPB groups and Kent Wildlife Trust. Thereafter free copies would be distributed to schools and libraries in the County.

Action

CR to arrange for price to change on the website/Paypal link

CR to contact Local RSPB Groups

4. Administrative Matters

4.1 Apologies

Received from Barry Wright

4.2 Minutes of last meeting held 9th March 2017

Minutes agreed

4.3 Matter arising

CR reported that progress in finding a home for the KOS library and archive was slow with a number of bureaucratic obstacles being encountered at Kent University. As well as a complete set of KBR (held by CR), we now had copies of Birds of Kent (2 volumes) , James Harrison and The History of the Birds of Kent, Norman Ticehurst. (donated by Sussex OS & held by BR).

4.4 Frequency of Committee Meetings

It was agreed that we should seek to set meeting dates in May (17th) and in September (20th). People were happy to continue to meet at Faversham.

Action

BR to liaise with MC to confirm dates and book venue

5 Any Other Business

MO raised the outstanding issue of the storage of the records archive. Agreed to add as key agenda item for next meeting.

6. Date and time of next meeting. 17th May 2018 7.00pm

6.1 Agenda Items for next meeting

Communications and publicity

Records Archive- storage

