

EQUESTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF SHETLAND



SHETLAND EQUESTRIAN FACILITIES WORKING GROUP

Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday 3rd November 2009 held in the Hayfield House meeting room, Lerwick at 7.00 p.m.

Present

Graham Wishart - Shetland Riding Club (Chairman SEFWG)
Vaila Stevenson - South Whiteness Riding Club (Minute Secretary SEFWG)

Kirsty Budge – Dunrossness Riding Club
Margaret Leslie – Dunrossness Riding Club
Dorothy Sales – Filsket Riding Club
Helen Thomson - Pony Breeders of Shetland Association
Susan Goodlad - Shetland Pony Riding & Driving Group

Abigail Robertson – Chairman, Equestrian Association of Shetland
Bob Kerr – Shetland Islands Council

Apologies

Elaine Laurenson – Clickimin Open Riding Club (Secretary SEFWG)
Karlin Moar - Clickimin Open Riding Club
Susie Nicolson - Equestrian Association of Shetland
Sonja Flaws - Pony Breeders of Shetland Association
Vikki Robertson – SPRDG
Marianne Hughson - Shetland Riding Club
Marion Slater - South Whiteness Riding Club
Roselyn Fraser – Whalsay Riding Club

Adoption of Minutes

The Minutes of 21st March were proposed by Helen and seconded by Vaila.

Matters arising from minutes

Graham noted the contact details of new members to add to our contact list.

At our last meeting it had been suggested that we send a letter of support to the Cunningsburgh Show Committee. This had not been done to date as the Show Committee had a meeting scheduled to discuss their proposal for SRDP funding, which Abigail was due to attend as a committee member.

Abigail informed us that the Show Committee had agreed to appoint AB Associates to do their feasibility study. Included in Cunningsburgh's proposal was the intention to create a new area, which could be used all year round by various equestrian groups. They also mentioned a possible indoor facility. We were able to view and discuss their proposed plan on screen. (This plan had been presented by Willie Ross to the group of SEFWG members visiting the show ground in January and viewed by the group at the meeting of 20th January 2009). It includes a sizeable area designated for horses, comparable to the area of the Cunningsburgh football pitch sited nearby. It was noted that there appeared to be a sewer on site and that it would have the benefit of access to the hall across the road. There was some discussion around the size and height of the horse pens shown. The Show Committee were proposing post and rail fencing for the boundary of the horse area and had wondered about asking Andrew Hughson for a quote.

Helen informed the group that she had recently attended a meeting of the Pony Breeders of Shetland Association and had been informed that some individuals on the west side of Shetland were not happy with Cunningsburgh as a site as they felt it was too far south. Vaila had also had this view expressed to her by a couple of members of the South Whiteness Riding Club, but did accept that was not necessarily the majority view. It was pointed out that the roads were good and also that Cunningsburgh was only 10 minutes south of

Lerwick. Graham felt that at some point there would need to be a public meeting to discuss whether the Cunningsburgh proposal was feasible.

Abigail informed us that Cunningsburgh would welcome a letter of support from ourselves to add to their submission. Graham will ask Elaine to advance a letter. The Show Committee should receive a report from AB associates by 11th December and the intention is to apply for SRDP funding by the end of the year. Margaret, who has experience of SRDP grant applications through her work with the NFU, made the point that there might be benefits from working together with the Cunningsburgh application. She was able to inform the group that 'cohesion' is the term used and it may be that this would give the application more points i.e., if we were to make a subsequent application we might look at lodging it in conjunction. Margaret will endeavour to find out more. She could tell us that lots of funding had gone to equestrian groups. We were aware that Cunningsburgh were aiming for a certain submission date. Graham wondered if there was a possibility of including a phase B or second phase. Margaret was able to summarise the SRDP application process and informed us that ultimately a project would be given a green, amber or red light. If Cunningsburgh receives a green light it may be that this could make our case stronger.

Bob informed the group that likely funding for our project might come from the council, SDRP and possibly Sport Scotland. He made the point that match funding from other sources would be a bonus.

Bob had previously advocated the group making links/ joining the Scottish Equestrian Association, as they were the governing body linked to Sport Scotland and flagged up details of an SEA Coaching Conference at Ingliston which might interest members or their groups. The details are on the SEA website. Abigail could tell us that membership of the SEA had been agreed earlier by the EAS. The SEA had suggested Sports Group Membership and the EAS are currently working to put together their application.

Quality of Life Funding

Abigail had spoken to Michael Duncan who had agreed to await the outcome of the current meeting with regard to proposals for use of the funding. He had been made aware of the fact that Girlsta had fallen through therefore our previous proposal for using the funding was no longer valid. It was felt that if we were to look towards an application to the SRDP it might be possible to use some of the Quality of Life funding to work for us, perhaps also through AB Associates. We discussed a timescale for using the money and felt the end of September would be realistic. Abigail is to apply for a further extension on behalf of the EAS.

It was decided that we should find out a bit more about AB Associates' remit and how much detail was to be included about the indoor facility. Abigail said she would speak to Willie Ross, let him know where our group stands at the moment and get his views on working together etc. We again considered inviting Willie to our meeting but felt it might be better if our proposals were more concrete before doing so.

Changes to Representation from EAS

Eve Eunson was proposed in a letter from the EAS as their representative. Votes were cast anonymously, resulting in 6 votes for and 0 against. Eve was therefore accepted.

Feedback from Clubs on User Requirement Specification

Graham shared 2 different layout sketches provided by Shetland Riding Club, which included a 60m X 30m arena with a viewing area, toilets, kettle etc. Their idea was that lean-to type buildings/ add-on sheds could accommodate toilets etc. thus reducing costs. Graham shared Autocad drawings he had produced, based on the Shetland Riding Club sketches. The group felt that these provided a useful starting point for thinking about layouts and asked if Graham could e-mail them to everyone. Abigail felt storage for equipment should be at least larger than the current EAS container.

Dorothy questioned whether there were any size restrictions for a building on the Cunningsburgh site. It was thought there were none.

We wondered about a price range for a building of this type. Graham said he'd already taken the liberty of giving the draft drawings to Marianne in the hope that she could obtain an approximate price to give us more idea of cost. The group were in agreement and also discussed obtaining a guide price from Shaun Casey (locally) or Paddy and Anjo Casey (in Orkney). Marion had mentioned the latter contact at the last meeting so Graham said he'd speak to her in this regard.

The idea of sharing with other groups was again mentioned. The Archery Club remains a possibility. Graham is to speak to Archery club members to gauge their interest and required specifications. Helen also reminded members of the Dog Club interest and the fact that they have indicated that they could provide a significant amount of funding.

Future Fundraising Suggestions

We decided to defer this in the main to the next meeting. Susan said that her husband had spoken to Andrew Blackadder who said he could identify at least 3 potential sources. Bob suggested that in his experience an annual raffle could be a considerable money earner.

AOCB

Proposed change of use for Seafield hockey pitch

Graham had received a phonecall from Neil Watt and at a subsequent meeting, Neil informed him of the 'Councils' plans for a new Eric Gray Centre. Seafield is currently the preferred site and the proposal is to build in the top 2/3 of the hockey pitch currently allocated for equestrian use. This proposal is to go to the Services Committee on the 26th November, and if approved will proceed to the full council. Obviously utilising this site for building would be a large blow to the equestrian community and Neil Watt was aware of this. Consequently there may be some level of financial recompense which could be made available; particularly as there is awareness of our representative group, that the equestrian community have been decanted previously from another site and that we are actively seeking an equestrian facility.

Neil Watt was aware of the Cunningsburgh proposal and had also consulted Abigail about this and the remaining Seafield site. Abigail had informed Neil that the remaining bottom third of the Seafield pitch would not be large enough for any equestrian event and they had talked about council funding towards a replacement. The council wouldn't go as far as erecting a building unfortunately!

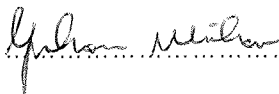
Bob had recently become aware of the Eric Gray proposal. He gave us some detail and felt that we could view it as an opportunity i.e., additional money to be spent on relocating the equestrian community. It might be the case that council funding could be matched by funding from the SRDP.

Vaila asked Abigail if there had been any discussion of other sites such as the ground at the Marts/ Staney Hill, rented from the council for horse grazing. Staney Hill had not been discussed. Vaila went on to state that she was concerned, given the money spent on the facility in Walls in far from central location, that we ensured we got the location right. At the same time she said she completely understood why the Cunningsburgh site, with groundworks prepared, placed it ahead of the other options and why it was well suited to move ahead most quickly. There was some further discussion around sites with the general feeling being that we needed to push ahead and that Cunningsburgh was in fact fairly central. It was noted that we'd already agreed at the last meeting that Cunningsburgh was a central location.

Abigail reported that Michael Duncan had recently requested a meeting with Bob, Graham, Neil Watt and herself to inform him of what's happening with regard to the Quality of Life Funding etc.

Date of Next Meeting

Set for 19.00 hrs, Tues 15th Dec, venue to be agreed.

.....  Chairman