

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR AVICULTURE

Minutes of the National Council for Aviculture Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 1st April 2023 at the Fieldhead Hotel, Markfield Lane, Markfield, Leics. LE67 9PS.

- 1. Chairman's welcome.** The Chairman, Barry Mills, opened the meeting at 2.00 pm by welcoming and thanking those attending and that the meeting will be positive despite the low attendance.
- 2. Attendees.** The following were in attendance:
Budgerigar Society: Ghalib Al-Nasser, John Cosby
Canary Council: Keith Ferry, Adam Roper, Chris Smith

Affiliated Societies: Dave Paine – Gainsborough CBS

Apologies Received From:

MC: Robb Brown, Saviour Camilleri, Chris Snell, Terry Tuxford, Bernard Williams

Affiliated Societies: Forth Valley BS, Scots Fancy Specialist Club, South Eastern BC, Trent Valley BS

- 3. Minutes of the AGM held on 9th May 2022.** The minutes of the 2022 AGM were checked for accuracy, and approved on a motion by Dave Paine, seconded by Keith Ferry and approved by those who were present at the last AGM. The AGM minutes are always uploaded on the NCA website.
- 4. Matters Arising.** The important matter arising from the 2022 AGM minutes is the position of the FBF within the NCA. A discussion took place whether to change the Constitution (Rule 3(i)) to reflect the demise of the FBF or have a different approach. It was mentioned that Nigel Hewston, on behalf of the FBF, sent an email informing the NCA of the closure of the FBF after many attempts and to donate their funds to the NCA. However, nothing has materialised as of yet.

Ghalib proposed and seconded by Chris and passed unanimously that we approach the 7 FBF affiliated societies direct and offer them each a seat on the Management Committee for an affiliation fee of £20 per annum. Dave mentioned that the ZFS were not interested but still to send them the letter.

It was also mentioned that the Pekin Robin to be added on the “invasive species” list and the NCA need to support the “against list”.

- 5. Chairman's Report.** The Chairman gave a summary of his written report as follows:

“Our first full year of learning to live with Covid has seen something approaching normality return to aviculture but just as things were looking up Avian Flu’ is now becoming an annual threat not only to wildlife and the poultry industry but also to our hobby. Nevertheless, many shows have returned, albeit with lower entries, and surviving clubs have done their best to get things back on

track. Some new clubs have formed to buck the trend, but we are all aware of the challenges of declining and ageing memberships.

On the bright side, during the pandemic there was a huge increase in the use of social media, Zoom and Teams to maintain contact across the hobby. This helps to advertise clubs, their shows, visits to and reports from individual bird rooms, and exchanges of views on all aspects of the hobby at home and abroad. The latter, of course, if unwisely used, can result in conflict and often unintended consequences disadvantageous to the hobby, clubs and individuals. The positive potential of social media and the skills to develop them should be a growing element of the hobby's future.

The NCA's generous offer of free affiliation and PLI in 2023 for those clubs who remained loyal the previous year has been appreciated across the hobby. Our Secretary will be able to tell us how many clubs have taken advantage of this and how many additional clubs have applied for PLI at the unchanged rate of £60.

Our greatly increased donation of £600 in prize money to the National exhibition gave an extra fillip to the re-instatement of that show and it is my hope that this can continue in 2023. We also donated £100 to the Scottish National last year but the show was cancelled because of the Bird Flu so we hope that it will take place this year.

As ever, I must thank our seemingly tireless Secretary and Treasurer, Ghalib, who keeps our affairs in order and works harder than most to maintain and sustain the hobby in challenging times. I congratulate him on his appointment as President for 2023 to 2025 and hope he will enjoy that role representing the NCA.

I am equally grateful to our current President, Chris Smith, who completes his two years in office at this AGM. For health reasons Chris is drawing back a little in his commitments but will continue for this year at least in his role as Show Co-ordinator at the National Exhibition. His contributions to aviculture over many years have been immense and I hope he will continue with some of them at a slightly slower pace, perhaps, for many years to come.

The NCA itself faces challenges which will require fresh thinking and change. I will welcome your contributions as members and management committee to address those challenges and take us into a changing but hopeful future".

- a. DEFRA Consultation Document – Barry mentioned that this document was discussed at the Canary Council meeting in the morning. The intention is to fight the Avian Bird Flu and this is one step towards that. The difference is between the vulnerable birds (outside like poultry) and domestic birds kept inside in aviaries and observing reasonable bio-security. The CC feels that it was inevitable that we have to register. Fanciers in Northern Ireland and most of Europe are registered. The NCA will make a representation and put it on the website for everyone to consult in addition to making their personal response. The deadline is 31st May. Dave asked who will check and inspect registered premises? Will it be down to Local Authorities to do the checking and who will pay for it? That is unknown at present. Bird keepers could include such queries in their response to the consultation document.

- 6. Treasurers Report and Approval of the Appended Balance Sheet.** Ghalib Al-Nasser presented the Balance Sheet, which showed a higher profit (£2,161.92) than in 2021 (£1,857.11). The increase was mainly due to more societies applying for the insurance scheme than previously. However, the cost for buying the insurance from the broker has risen from £47 to £50 to £53 per Society commencing from 2023. The Balance Sheet is still strong, and it was approved unanimously following a motion by Keith Ferry, seconded by John Cosby.

The Treasurer felt that although the cost of the insurance and rosettes/postage exceed the £60 that we charge we should keep the cost at £60 for next year which was agreed.

- 7. Secretary's Report.** Ghalib Al-Nasser read out his report that he had sent to all the paid-up affiliated societies for 2023, with the AGM agenda, as follows:

“Last year was our first time getting back to some sort of normality after the pandemic with regards to our beloved hobby. All clubs resumed their monthly meetings and the show season was in full swing during the early part of summer where most shows were budgie related shows. The Budgerigar Society club show took place in late September as well as the National in early October. Then came the “Bird Flu” late September/early October and many shows were cancelled due to DEFRA imposing restricted zones in various parts of the country. That sadly affected many of the canary shows which are held from October onwards. It looks as if this “Bird Flu” is going to be with us for some time. I for one had to cancel a budgie show that I run in early October because of the show venue was within the exclusion zone (Bury St. Edmunds).

On the brighter side I understand that the National, a show that we sponsor, was a great success and may it continue. We also sponsored the new Scottish National last December but unfortunately the management decided to cancel at the last minute due to Bird Flu issues. I do hope that they will manage to stage it this year.

One of the newest big issues that the hobby is facing now is the new proposed DEFRA Consultation Document which is under discussion. It is to do with every bird keeper needs to register his premises. We, at the NCA, will be discussing this at the AGM and will make our presentation in due course.

I attended the COM World Show in January in Naples, Italy representing COM-UK in my capacity as COM-UK President. I was joined by Simon Tammam, the COM-UK Secretary, and between us we manned our national stand during the show weekend. It was very nice to meet with our 4 friends from the High Wycombe/South Bucks clubs and also met with another fancier from the Northamptonshire area but the rest of the weekend was flat for us because we were unable to participate with a show team as per our usual. This is due to the DEFRA restrictions since we left the EU. We can only hope that we might be allowed to exhibit next year when the show will be held in Talavera De La Reina, near Madrid, Spain. The show will open to the public between 26th – 28th January.

We did well with the Public Liability Insurance service that we provide to our affiliated societies. Last year 132 societies applied for the scheme. This year with the offer of free insurance to all the societies who applied last year resulted in 79 societies taking up the offer so far plus 10 extra societies

who had to pay for the scheme. The free offer was at nearly £5,000 cost to the NCA. The insurance broker has put up his prices for the second consecutive year as well.

Our AGM is on 1st April and we welcome all of our Life Members and affiliated societies' delegates to attend so hope to see many of you then.”

The President Chris Smith said that the situation with bird movement is imposed upon us by the EU which DEFRA supported and quarantines to be applied. Meetings with DEFRA continue but any legislation is slow coming and have to go to Parliament for approval and an import/export license is needed.

- 8. President for 2023** – The Chairman congratulated the outgoing President Chris for his loyal services to the NCA over many years. Chris then presented the Presidential Chain of Office to Ghalib who was honoured to receive it.
- 9. Election of President-Elect for 2023** – Robb Brown of the British Bird Council was nominated by Chris Smith and seconded by Ghalib Al-Nasser and agreed unanimously.
- 10. To Appoint Honorary Life Vice-Presidents.** Chris Smith, the immediate past President, was nominated to this position and accepted.
- 11. To Receive the Names of the Management Committee.** The following names were put forward:

BBC: Robb Brown, Bob Partridge, Bernard Williams.
BS: Ghalib Al-Nasser, John Cosby, Terry Tuxford, Chris Snell.
CC: Saviour Camilleri, Keith Ferry, Adam Roper, Charlie Gardiner.
- 12. To Elect the Auditors.** Paul Tiller FCCA was again elected to be auditor for the NCA.
- 13. To Determine the Rate of Subscription for 2024.** It was agreed that subscriptions would remain the same as for 2023.
- 14. To Consider any Resolution in Accordance with Rule 14x.** None.
- 15. To Consider any Matter Referred to the AGM by the Management Committee.** None.
- 16. To Consider any other Relevant Business notified to the Secretary at least 14 days Before the Meeting.** None.
- 17. Date and Venue of the 2024 Annual General Meeting.** It was proposed to hold the 2024 AGM on **Saturday 6th April 2024** at either the Charnwood Arms Hotel or the Fieldhead Hotel whichever is available.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 3.15 pm