

3 To receive the Board of Trustees Report

- 3.1 In the absence of the Chairman, Mr Bill Cubbon, Mr Downie asked Mr James Stevenson (JS) to deliver the report of the Board of Trustees
- 3.2 JS referred to the copy of the report that has been circulated prior to the meeting and explained that he was happy to field any questions that arise
- 3.3 Mr Ken Greenhalgh commented that he found the report quite confusing in that it refers back to the first person singular therefore making it appear not a report of a Board, rather an opinion of one individual
- 3.4 Mr Greenhalgh also raised the question in relation to qualifications of animal behaviourists and noted there are various qualifications individuals can hold most of which are by experience where individuals are capable of giving their advice to the situation if required
- 3.5 Mr Greenhalgh proposed to make the move to not receive the report and that it be suitably amended by the Board and re-presented without the references in 'singular'
- 3.6 Mr Downie asked the membership if they would like to second the move to which no one spoke out
- 3.7 Mr Downie asked if anyone had other questions regarding the report at which point JS apologised for the 'singular' nature of the report. It was intended to communicate the wishes of the whole of the Board as agreed at a Board meeting. Mrs Cath Cubbon stated that not all the Board agreed with the report, in particular Mr Bill Cubbon. JS suggested that any questions relating to qualifications should be put to Mr Martin Howell (MH)
- 3.8 MH explained that there is a lot of confusion as to what constitutes a behaviourist versus a trainer. In the latter half of this year MH had done a lot of research in to this area and talking to people – expert behaviourists. The feeling was that the ManxSPCA could do a lot more for its animals, in particular dogs but not forgetting the cats. Advice has been sought from the RSPCA and the Dog's Trust, amongst others, and the voice coming back is that it is a confusing area where anybody can call themselves a behaviourist – an area that is not independently regulated. The prime organisation that people look up to is called the Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors. The requirements are that you have to have studied behaviour to degree level, for example, among lots of other requirements (educational and practical). Research has been conducted and the Head of Behaviour and Training made a visit to the ManxSPCA which made a positive impact on the team (Kennels staff and volunteers). Last week three team members (and MH joined them) went to the Dogs Trust in Manchester and it helped to open their eyes to see there is a better way – another level we can go to, to improve the chances of the dogs being rehomed
- 3.9 Mr Greenhalgh came back stating that the Chief Executive of the Dog's Trust has made very positive comments about the staff at ManxSPCA. Mr Greenhalgh does not feel that the skills of the staff are fully utilised, having been a life member for 12 years, and thinks this is something that needs to be addressed. Mr Greenhalgh made a plea to make sure that the staff are fully involved and their skills and commitment are full recognised and utilised; and that we recognise the talent we already have on the Isle of Man

- 5.5 The ManxSPCA partook in a Tynwald Select Committee hearing that is looking at introducing new animal welfare legislation
- 5.6 The ManxSPCA continues to foster a lot of dogs that require medical treatment which incurs quite a degree of cost but provides dogs with a loving home and frequently extended life. It is a balance. RC have had a number of conversations with LR about how we restrict the terms of reference for fostering, and the scheme has been abused on occasions. The ManxSPCA has to use every pound donated wisely and make it go as far as it can
- 5.7 In terms of surgeries, cat operations are slightly down. There were more operations and preventative work on small animals, particularly on rabbits. RC congratulated all the staff involved in the Small Animals Unit
- 5.8 The Aviary has had significant problems, with unacceptable levels of mortality. Wild birds are difficult to treat – the very fact that they have been caught usually means that they are very sick. The facility has been re-vamped and improvements made
- 5.9 RC stated that from a personal point of view he feels rewarded to come and work at the ManxSPCA and noted how dedicated the staff are. RC offered a big well done to Lyn Renshaw and the rest of the staff and looks forward to another year ahead
- 5.10 Mr Downie asked if anyone had any questions?
- 5.11 Mrs Janice Beggs asked why Cisco was sent to Scotland and not put to sleep? RC replied that the dog was sent to Scotland because, in his opinion, it was a dangerous dog. It would have been his recommendation to have the dog put to sleep. Mrs Beggs stated that she feels the vet should have the final decision in these circumstances
- 5.12 Mrs Cath Cubbon pointed out that this was an issue that was dealt with last year and that it was decided that the vet would have the final say. RC clarified that this was in relation to Luna
- 5.13 JS noted that there was a change in the procedures as a result of the operational review. Part of the change was a very clear mission statement which slightly changed the spectrum in which the committee ran. It was not resolved in the most desirable way, but it was resolved. During the review the Board agreed a set of very strong overriding principles one of which was not to put a healthy animal to sleep – that includes physical and mental health. As a result of that it was determined that we should have a clear set of procedures that lived by that value, given none have existed previously
- 5.14 Mr Downie asked how many of the Trustees had been circulated with the change to the review? JS replied that all the Board members were involved. Mr Downie stated that Members of the ManxSPCA are entitled to see the change to the review. JS replied that this was in the Board report. Mr Downie stated that this was not the first time the Society has had a difficult dog and the Society's veterinary adviser has always been the final arbiter. He added the review should be approved at the AGM. JS stated that the review was an overriding route map, and the Members do not vote on day to day decisions.
- 5.15 Mrs Joanne Oldbury stated that the Members of the Society are the owners and they elect a Board of directors to act on the Members' behalf. At last year's AGM it is minuted that the accepted and voted protocol is for a sub-committee of five people, including RC, LR, Andy Firth, the Kennels manager and

one independent person who has worked closely with the dog to make the decision on the outcome for the dog. Mrs Oldbury stated that this is what she had voted for, and not for the Board to make its own decisions. She then asked for a full run-down of the incident from when the dog left the Kennels to when the incident happened – and what broke down. She stated that she had heard via social media that the dog had given three warning growls, and so why was it not removed from the situation? Was the lady's injury a bite?

- 5.16 Becky Sansom confirmed it was a bite. She then asked for it to be noted that she was in charge that day. Cisco had an 'ask a member of staff first' sticker on his kennel, however the dog walker (not present at the AGM) did not come and ask and 'went behind her back'
- 5.17 MH gave a run down of the incident as follows: MH explained that he was in the room that day. He made it clear that he was not an expert dog handler or a behaviourist, and that he had been invited to the meeting. About ten minutes into the meeting when the dog was say next to MH it grumbled when MH ran his hand down the dog's lower back. MH stopped immediately. MH confirmed that the dog was not on a lead. MH mentioned to a member of staff that the dog had grumbled, and nothing happened. The dog wandered around freely in the room - half of the people he had never met before, MH included. MH considered that the dog was no threat to anybody. The dog then sat next to someone else and grumbled again. MH was told that the dog had just been neutered, although he didn't know that he still had stitches in at the time. The dog got on the sofa; was told to get off the sofa. He quietly grumbled again and, again, other than stopping stroking him no other action was taken. With hindsight, somebody should have taken him out of the room, particularly the member of staff. With hindsight it's easy to blame people. The dog had been in the room for 1 hour and 10minutes – far too long for any dog to be in that situation. MH was sat next to the lady while she was stroking the dog. The lady was bent down and suddenly moved (to move her chair) and the dog whizzed round and did a snap, then stopped. MH thought they had banged heads. The lady went out and MH did not get to see her but thought she had a bad cut. The dog was immediately taken out of the room and MH asked what would happen to him. The initial response to this incident would be to have the dog put down and MH asked did anyone want to know what actually happened in the room, and what protocols should be followed. Mrs Joanne Oldbury stated that the members had agreed a clear protocol in which the decision was to be left to a sub-committee. She added that the injury was not as a result of a snap and that the lady has had to have reconstructive surgery as a result of the dog latching on to her face, and that she would be scarred for life. She stated that the Society had as much responsibility to the public as it does to its animals, and that the reputational damage to the Society would be huge if the dog bit again. MH stated that the decision was left to the Society's vet, the behaviourist (although he said he was using this term carefully) and the Sanctuary Manager; but due to social media pressure they took the decision to delay for a few weeks. During that period of grace it came to light that there wasn't a qualified behaviourist to contribute to that decision, so it was suggested that the Society find a qualified behaviourist. The Board started to look for a behaviourist and a benefactor came forward to fund this. Mrs Joanne Oldbury stated that the sub-committee of five already existed and that Andy Firth was named
- 5.18 RC referred MH and the membership to point 5.9 of the previous AMG minutes as follows: 'Mr Cox also confirmed that on some occasions dogs may need to be put to sleep if there is a risk of injury to the staff but this is not a decision which is quickly or lightly made. There is a sub-committee comprising of Mr Cox, Andy Firth, Sanctuary Manager, Kennels Manager and one member of staff who has worked with the dog'. This has been working practice for some years and was simply reaffirmed at the last AGM

- 5.19 RC stated that he has never referred to Andy Firth as a behaviourist and Andy Firth does not use this term – he calls himself a dog trainer. He has many years of experience of difficult dogs, and his input is as an outside agent
- 5.20 Becky Sansom stated that Kate [the lady who was bitten] came into the reception area and her face was horrific. She went to the hospital with Kate and after several hours she was told that Kate would need reconstructive surgery. She added that staff were being put at risk by a dog that has caused that much damage
- 5.21 MH stated that he had built up a rapport with Kate. He added that the Board had not made the decision to give it a month's grace – this was a management decision. MH continued that a proposition was put to the Board regarding having a behaviourist look at Cisco on site. Management advised that this would not achieve anything because even if the behaviourist put forward a positive report the dog would still need to be sent off Island for rehoming; and any programme suggested by the behaviourist would not be able to be implemented by the Kennels staff. So the alternative was to take the dog off Island to a behaviourist to see what we could learn – if the behaviourist thought he was a dangerous dog he would be put to sleep. A very well respected behaviourist has stated that this is not a dangerous dog, and that he was put into the wrong situation. MH added that RC has previously stated that any dog has the ability to be dangerous if placed into the wrong circumstances; and that the resources were not on Island to sort out that particular problem. The behaviourist, David Ryan, is happy to take the dog on-board with all the liability – as a member of the Association of Pet Behaviourists he is insured. He has stated that the dog should only go to a person who understands Rottweilers and can read their body language. At the moment the dog is being worked on by a former Army dog handler, and there have been no incidents. It [the incident at the ManxSPCA] was a snap bite
- 5.22 LR commented that herself, RC, Andy Firth, the Kennels Manager and the other staff member who was involved with the dog all took the decision to have the dog euthanised, however LR clarified that a snap decision on whether to have a dog put down is never made and all reports are reviewed, and conversations held, before a final decision is made. The incident happened on the Tuesday and on the Thursday information about the incident was leaked onto Facebook. The Sanctuary and the staff were threatened. The Society had worked hard with the dog's ex-owner who has now wiped the floor with the charity; and LR herself was threatened as well as the Sanctuary. She added that she was not prepared to put the Sanctuary and its animals at risk. Due to the social media frenzy, including a 'Cisco needs help' page, the decision was made to hold back on a decision until the media had died down. The decision would have remained the same. The dog was not able to be rehomed on the Island. The Society would have been annihilated whether it put the dog to sleep or it didn't. The dog had growled at staff before, and this is documented, and staff were at risk
- 5.23 Mr Downie asked for an update on the lady who was bitten. LR said that it was uncertain whether the Society would be sued and at the moment it wasn't being. Becky Sansom said that the staff had nothing to do with the decision [to take the dog off Island]. MH stated that another issue was one of a lack of confidentiality. He himself does not go on Facebook but is aware of inaccuracies in what has been stated. The Dogs Trust and the RSPCA go through about six stages before a dog is put to sleep, and if a dog bites it is not automatically put to sleep. The Board agreed that if David Ryan had stated that the dog needed to be put to sleep he would have been. The dog has gone to a specialist centre. Jane O'Connor commented that the Dog's Trust (who state that they never put a healthy animal down) are selective about what dogs they take in and a large percentage are turned away because they have behavioural or health issues. The ManxSPCA does not turn dogs away. Mrs Joanne Oldbury circulated

a picture of the injury and stated that the Society was lucky that such pictures had not been leaked to the press

- 5.24 AO noted that 5.9 in the 2014 AGM minutes is at odds with the minutes from the March 2014 and July 2014 Board meetings. The internal minutes refer to 'a behaviourist' but do not name Andy Firth
- 5.25 Mr Downie commented that the policy was voted on at the last meeting and have been reaffirmed at this meeting. This was further underlined by Mrs Cath Cubbon. AO stated that 5.9 was a weak statement in that it named individuals rather than roles – what would happen, for example, if RC were to leave tomorrow? Mr Downie stated that it would be up to the Members to call an EGM
- 5.26 MH stated that the main problem was that it was understood the trainer was a behaviourist. This area has moved on over the last 15 years, and when asked for his background and qualifications by LR, Andy Firth refused. We had no alternative but to seek a behaviourist. MH's personal view is that the others on the committee are fine, but a qualified behaviourist is needed. Mrs Janice Beggs asked if the vet's advice about a dog that had caused a significant amount of damage to a face should have been listened to. MH replied that we should not be looking for 'an eye for an eye' and that in his opinion there was a degree of personal blood lust kicking in. RC said he took issue with this and that there was no blood lust at the [committee] meeting, and that the decision was taken on the basis of many factors including staff safety. MH replied that he had already complimented RC and that he had not been referring to RC
- 5.27 Mrs Cath Cubbon pointed out that it is the members who make the decisions which the Board follow. In future Mrs Cubbon would like it proposed that the ManxSPCA carries on in agreement with the statement in 5.9 of the previous AGM minutes. MH requested an amendment in that the people involved be referred to by title, which was overruled

Proposed by: Ray Cox Seconded: Ken Greenhalgh

Carried
Against - Alan Ormsby and Martin Howell

- 5.28 JS commented that when this item was discussed at the Board meeting consideration was taken into account to reduce the exposure to the staff and the ManxSPCA. The fact the dog had to remain on the Island a lot longer was out of the ManxSPCA's hands. The decision wasn't all about the behaviour of the dog, it was also about looking for a way to reduce the exposure of bad publicity. There was also enormous risk to the staff
- 5.29 Mrs Ann Vickers asked RC if he could honestly say that the dog could be turned around so that it would never bite again. RC said he could not provide such an assurance, and circumstances played a big part with Cisco, but he would very much welcome the input of a behaviourist. MH's proposal has merit, but we don't have access to people like David Ryan on the Island. MH stated that the decision to get a qualified behaviourist involved was applauded by the Police. Jenny Corrin suggested that an extra dog unit was needed to accommodate difficult dogs. Becky Sansom added that the Kennels is getting more and more difficult dogs, and they are struggling to rehome them and handle them.

Mr Downie asked for a vote of thanks to RC and the staff be put forward by the members

Proposed by: Janice Beggs Seconded: Joanne Oldbury

Carried Unanimously

6 Election of Four Members to the Board of Management

6.1 As required by the Articles of Association, two members of the Board Mr J.D. Ledgerwood and Mrs S. Waring retire from the Board of Management by rotation and will be seeking re-election. Mrs P. Kelly and Mrs V. Wardhaugh stood down from the Board of Management during 2014 and 2015

Members are required by the Articles to elect **four** members to act as Directors for the next three years

Nominations for appointment to the Board have been received on behalf of Mr J.D. Ledgerwood, Mr A. Ormsby, Mrs S. Waring and Mr M. Wilson only

There being no other nominations, the Members referred to above will be asked to serve on the Board of Management for the next three years

6.2 Mr Downie noted that it is customary on this occasion for those who have been nominated to introduce themselves to the membership

6.3 Mr David Ledgerwood introduced himself and commented he has been on the Board for the past three years. Mr Ledgerwood has been a dog walker since 2006 and got involved with Board as he could see there was room for improvement. Mr Ledgerwood has also been involved with the small animals and cattery and would like to continue to his work with the ManxSPCA

6.4 Mr Alan Ormsby was co-opted onto the Board in September 2014. Mr Ormsby works for the Scheinberg family and one of his roles is to co-ordinate their charitable giving. Having seen the ManxSPCA's plea in the Courier for more money he put together a report to his employers who agreed to funding of £569,000 over a three year period, and hopefully beyond that. Mr Ormsby has had two dogs from the ManxSPCA; and he is committed to helping the Society and to using his skills

6.5 Mrs Sue Waring has served on the Board for twelve years and had hoped to step down, however, following the resignation of the Treasurer offered to step in again. Mrs Waring explained there is a lot of work to do on the job and expressed that she is happy to stay on the Board but would like to find a Treasurer in future. She said she would be happy to stay on as an unpaid assistant to the new Treasurer in the future (and do more with the gardens!)

6.6 Mr Mike Wilson's involvement with the ManxSPCA started just over a year ago when he was looking for advice on dogs. Mr Wilson now owns three thee legged cats (all success stories from the Society) and has been driven by the general lack of good will towards the ManxSPCA – heard from business colleagues and associates around the Island. It was suggested to Mr Wilson by the management team that he opt to join the Board. Mr Wilson is a technology consultant who works remotely with the majority of his clients being based off Island. Mr Wilson pointed out that he has cleared his schedule so he can invest as much of his time as possible in the ManxSPCA over the next 12 months

6.7 Mr Downie stated there being no other nominations the members referred to will be asked to stand for the next three years

7 To consider and approve the Special Resolution – increase the limit of the Capital Expenditure that can be authorized by the Board

7.1 In the absence of the Company Secretary JS informed the membership that the numbers in the articles are out of date and are being met too frequently to allow certain projects to be done even with restricted funds. JS asked that the sum of £25,000 to be replaced by the sum of £30,000 on any single capital item and the overall authorised accumulative for a year to go from £75,000 to £100,000

7.2 Take for example of the Chill (Out) Rooms which the ManxSPCA has received funds for. These are restricted or ring-fenced funds. That project is already in excess of the limits in any one sum. These limits should apply except for capital expenditure relating to gifts and donations given for specific purposes and shall not be subject to requirements

Proposed: Jacqueline Street Second: Sue Maddigan

Carried Unanimously

8 To consider and approve the Special Resolution – increase the number of Trustees that can be elected to the Board

8.1 JS proposed that the number of trustees that can be elected to the Board go from nine to a maximum of eleven. JS explained that the main reason is that there are occasions where there are resignations and the Board may need to get more people to help. This will allow more flexibility if there is a specific requirement that comes up to allow the Board to have the facility to bring someone new in. Voting quorum is currently five

8.2 Mrs Sue Maddigan read that this resolution was agreed in 2011 but didn't turn out to be correctly processed so therefore we are going back to cancel that and re-instate it

8.3 Mr Downie noted that it gives flexibility for an overlap if someone resigns or they want to bring someone new in. A quorum will be a majority

Proposed: Ray Cox Second: Jane O'Connor

Carried unanimously

9 To consider and approve the expenditure for the Kennels Chill (Out) Rooms

9.1 MM informed the meeting that the Chill (Out) Rooms were given £45,000 by Support Adoption for Pets but to get the work done the Society will have to have some power lines moved which will cost an additional £10,000. MM asked for approval to spend an additional £10,000 with the £45,000 which is already ring-fenced

Proposed: Jenny Corrin Second: Janice Beggs

Carried unanimously

At this point there was a short break whilst the Poll Cards were filled out, collected and counted.

10 Any Other Business

- 10.1 Mr Greenhalgh presented a copy of a letter from the staff to the Board. Mr Greenhalgh explained that the letter sets out a large set of concerns by the staff a lot of which needs to be addressed. The letter was sent to the Board on the 29th May 2015 to which no acknowledgment or reply has been made. There are 17 signatures on the letter out of 21 staff. Mr Greenhalgh explained that morale amongst the staff is very low and this is an issue that the Board needs to get hold of very quickly and talk with staff and find out their concerns before the ManxSPCA gets into a crisis situation
- 10.2 JS noted that in the minutes from the previous Board meeting the letter was discussed and the issue has been raised and is being taken seriously by the Board. It is hoped that with the new General Manager, Juana Warburton, on board a lot of these issues can be addressed
- 10.3 MH gave a point of correction and noted the letter has not been signed by 17 individuals – some of the names have been counted twice. The Board all agreed that communication needs addressing; and utilising the training budget will be important as well
- 10.4 Jenny Corrin took this opportunity to thank Matt Archer and Mike Thompson who worked with the sheep through the night with lambing
- 10.5 Debi Michelson welcomed Juana to the ManxSPCA on behalf of the membership
- 10.6 There were no further questions

Resolutions

1 To approve the Minutes of the AGM held on 16th June 2014

26 for – proxy votes
1 for - at the meeting
1 against - at the meeting
1 abstention – at the meeting
Carried

2 To approve the Board Report

27 for – proxy votes
28 for - at the meeting
2 against - at the meeting
1 abstention - at the meeting
Carried

3 To approve the Annual Accounts

27 for – proxy votes
32 for - at the meeting
0 against

0 abstentions
Carried unanimously

4 To consider and approve in principle the Special Resolution – Increase the limit of the Capital Expenditure that can be authorized by the Board

25 for – proxy votes
31 for - at the meeting
1 against - at the meeting
2 – abstentions - at the meeting
Carried

5 To consider and approve the Special Resolution – Increase the number of Trustees that can be elected to the Board

23 for – Proxy Votes
20 for - at the meeting
1 against - at the meeting
4 – abstentions - at the meeting
Carried

6 To consider and approve the expenditure for the Special Resolution – Kennels Chill (Out) Rooms

26 for – Proxy Votes
33 for - at the meeting
0 against
2 – abstentions - at the meeting
Carried

Mr Downie declared the meeting closed at 21:45 and thanked all for attending.

JS thanked the president for chairing the meeting.