

(Draft) MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ManxSPCA

HELD ON 11TH July 2022 7.30pm

AT ARD JERKYL, EAST FOXDALE

Board Members Officers Present

President	Alex Downie OBE (AD)
Chairman	Phillip Dearden (PD)
Company Secretary	Phillip Dearden (PD)
Treasurer	Debbie Clague (DC)
Assistant Treasurer	Sue Waring (SW)
Board Members	Daren Ward (DW)
	Stuart Mills (SM)
	Lyn Renshaw (LR)
General Manager	Juana Warburton (JW)
Veterinary Surgeon	Megan Joyce (MJ)

Item 1: Formal convening of meeting (Phillip Dearden, Chairman of the ManxSPCA)

The Chairman of the Board called the meeting to order at 19.30 pm. and welcomed all those in attendance,

PD stated that following a period as Acting Chairman he had now been officially appointed Chairman of the Board. He made the following comments.

The last couple of years had been tricky for the Society due to Covid but the Board now felt they were on a good footing, and we are getting to a new normal.

Members were advised that the Board had implemented a period of consolidation in recent years. The focus is now turning to future sustainability and resilience. There had been a need to reinforce the fact that the Society is a safe and proper place for donations. The ManxSPCA had now regained a sound financial footing and was looking to secure a sustainable future. PD stressed this would not involve excesses and extravagance. Monies would be spent on prosaic matters such as repairing the roof, replacing boilers, fixing drains etc, and assessing if solar power could reduce power bills in future.

As well as expenditure on the physical infrastructure, there is a need to look at human resources and the way we work. Training will be re-emphasised following Covid restrictions, and we will have to have a look at how we use IT. We don't make great use of IT, it is difficult to get an algorithm to walk a dog but there are things we can look at – record-keeping, cameras in kennels etc.

PD asked Members for their input. He said it was important for them to be aware that the Board consider Members as owners and the ones to whom they are accountable, and we need you

to feel you are involved in where the ManxSPCA is going. He asked for any ideas to be forwarded to the Society for their consideration.

PD then convened the meeting and proposed the President, Alex Downie, as Chair of the meeting which was unanimously approved by those present.

Item 2: Attendance (Alex Downie, President of the ManxSPCA)

- 2.1 The President asked for confirmation that the meeting was quorate with the required minimum of 20 'A' Members in attendance, which was confirmed by JW.
- 2.2 The President asked all to rise and remember those Members who were no longer with us, which all those present did.
- 2.3 The President confirmed that several apologies had been received from members [see the schedule in Appendix 1].

Item 3: Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 19th July 2021 (Alex Downie, President of the ManxSPCA)

- 3.1 The President confirmed that the Chairman had approved the minutes of the AGM held on 19th July 2021. He added that those present were more than welcome to ask questions about the minutes or other matters once the AGM agenda had been covered.
- 3.2 The President asked the Members for a show of hands from all those in favour of last year's Minutes and again for those against. Those present at the meeting unanimously approved the Minutes of last year's AGM.

Item 4: Receive and adopt the 2021 Annual Report and Financial Statements (Debbie Clague, Treasurer)

The President asked the Members to receive and adopt the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2021 and invited Debbie Clague (DC) to comment.

DC went on to make the following points:

- 4.1 We have had another surplus this year as we did last year.
- 4.2 The continued impact of Covid meant we had been given a Covid-related contribution from Government to help run the charity.

Covid has also meant salary costs have been reduced giving us the opportunity to look at the services we offer. The staff have been fantastic. Rotational working practices have meant a good team of core staff able to work well together reducing costs considerably. However, DC stated the Board may need to consider how this might impact any offerings and commercial efforts in future.
- 4.2 Legacies have been OK this year, but they are difficult to rely on as they are volatile.
- 4.3 DC reiterated what PD had mentioned in respect of consolidation, and that we were now in a very good position to set up the Society for the welfare of animals in the future.

4.4 DC stated the difficulty in controlling income. The charity shops and the Tearooms are covering costs and contributing. DC also acknowledged the role they play in maintaining awareness of the ManxSPCA. Both businesses are monitored monthly to ensure they are continuing to add benefit to the Society.

4.5 It was noted that there had been no major expenses this year.

4.6 DC advised the Board were still considering what to do with the Pascoe's site that had been gifted to the Society last year.

The Members were asked if they had any questions.

Q - Pat Fitzgerald asked if we had considered opening more bank accounts than the two we currently had holding £800K of reserves, stating markets are volatile and this poses a risk?

A – DC replied that this had been considered and we had already approached two IFAs with a view to managing the risk. DC also reiterated that it is the Board's intention to use some of the cash reserves to fund ongoing and future investment in the infrastructure and staffing.

Q – Pat Fitzgerald then asked if there was a 'rule of thumb' for reserves?

A – DC replied it was the Directors' policy to hold free reserves at least equal to 12 months' expenditure. JW stated that this was a common policy in the Third Sector. DC also reminded members that the Board were currently looking at ways to best use the reserves.

PD added the Board were in the process of collating information regarding the cost of improving infrastructure. Once these figures were in and having set aside the 12 months' expenditure, we would then look at how best to invest the free cash we had left.

Q – Shely Bryan asked whether the Society pays attention to investing ethically and were there any red lines we would not cross.

A – DW replied that we would be considering ESG funds.

DC further replied that it was the Board's intention to consider all investments once we had feedback from the IFAs and stressed the importance of looking at the ethics of all future investments before they commit.

AD asked if anyone had any further questions. There were no further questions.

AD then asked the Members to adopt the Annual Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 December 2021. Jacqueline Street proposed the adoption of the Annual Report and Financial Statements, and this was seconded by Claire Baker. AD asked Members for a show of hands from those in favour of adopting the accounts, and then for those against. Those present at the meeting unanimously approved the adoption of the Annual Report and Financial Statements.

AD went on to say Callow Matthewman & Co. had indicated their willingness to remain as auditors. AD thanked David Callin of Callow Matthewman & Co. for coming along tonight and for his continued support, and he acknowledged the good working relationship.

The Members were asked to consider and if appropriate delegate and authorise the Board of Management to fix the auditor's remuneration. Michael Josem proposed the authorisation of the remuneration, and this was seconded by Jacqueline Street. The President asked the

Members for a show of hands from those in favour and then for those against. Those present unanimously approved the authorisation of the Board to fix the auditor's remuneration.

Item 5: Consider and adopt the 2021 Operational Report (Juana Warburton, General Manager)

The President asked the Members to receive and adopt the 2021 Operational Report and asked the General Manager, Juana Warburton, to comment on it.

JW thanked those present for attending. JW then invited Members to watch a video that would give a pictorial overview of the year.

Once the video had concluded JW went on to make the following points.

5.1 We now have several new members of staff at the ManxSPCA. Thanks were then given to everyone who had helped to make the ManxSPCA such an amazing place including the Members, the team, and the Board.

5.2 Praise was given to the team for the amazing job they had done matching animals with their future owners.

5.3 Cats that came to the ManxSPCA generally don't take long to be rehomed.

5.4 JW stressed the need for investment in infrastructure highlighting a need to replace the cattery that was showing its age. JW praised the staff for the great job they had done trying to maintain a good level of hygiene. It was noted that the Isolation Unit was working well.

5.5 The time had come to review the site and make changes where necessary. Solar panels were also high on the list. The challenge would be getting trades people to do the work, but this will be addressed in the coming year.

5.6 JW acknowledged and thanked one of the previous owners of the Pascoe site, who had come to the meeting, stating that through their generosity the Society could look positively to the future.

5.7 Amy Beckett, the Government Chief Vet, had been to see Juana and advise on matters regarding the Animal Welfare Bill that had failed to go through last year. It had gone back to Tynwald recently. Amy didn't anticipate any real political hurdles and expected the Bill to go to the Legislative Council by the end of February next year, and she expected it to be implemented by May 2023.

The Bill will be similar to last year's but with the addition of farm animals, to ensure all animals will be protected under one Act.

There will be an Animal Welfare Register of Offenders.

The inspectors will be provided by DEFA. The ManxSPCA will not be inspectors for now, so JW is hoping this can be changed in the future. Currently, the ManxSPCA are only able to advise and support.

JW hoped that secondary legislation would improve on the existing Bill. Amy thought getting Codes of Conduct legislation would be important for cats, dogs, and horses. JW suggested rabbits be included as they are often badly neglected. Amy agreed rabbits would now be included.

Thought should be given to regulating sanctuaries on the Island, as they can run without a licence.

5.8 JW touched on the equine case where 19 ponies and horses had been mistreated and neglected. The ManxSPCA is delighted that the person in question has now been successfully prosecuted and was in prison pending another prosecution. The business of transferring ownership of the horses and ponies will be processed soon, once sentencing has taken place.

5.9 Wallabies are a hot topic. JW recently wrote an article in the press following the shooting of a wallaby which had then been left to suffer, having been shot by a low calibre gun, and ultimately euthanised by a vet. JW advised that these animals are not indigenous and therefore not protected under Manx law. This has given rise to a significant amount of public debate. The ManxSPCA is calling for scientific research into the impact wallabies are having on the Isle of Man to determine what threat they may pose to other indigenous species.

5.10 Other animals causing a stir.

There are lots of peacocks and peahens roaming free, and they rival cockerels as a problem.

The ManxSPCA will continue advocating for legalisation enabling the castration of cockerels.

The much-maligned herring gull appears to be in some decline on the Island, and the ManxSPCA has had fewer young gulls brought in this year (about 40). These will ultimately be 'soft released' either on site or at Gansey. Praise was given to staff in the aviary for doing a wonderful job. The ManxSPCA generally takes bigger birds that need help, and Manx Wild Bird Aid look after smaller birds and advise that they have been overwhelmed this year.

The ManxSPCA has a good relationship with the Wildlife Park staff who are happy to take unwanted terrapins.

JW introduced staff member Sarah, who had taken on the care of kitten Graih, who starred in the video. Much praise was given to Sarah for taking on this role as it is quite an undertaking as it involves round-the-clock care. Sarah brought a kitten currently in her care, Vecna, to the AGM to introduce her to Members before taking her home. Sarah gave a quick chat about her history.

JW then asked if there were any questions.

Q - Georgina Dale asked about the presence of Avian Flu on the Island?

A - JW replied, during the winter a flock of geese had been found to have an outbreak and they were culled. Since March, the threat level had reduced.

MJ replied advising updates are received from the UK whenever there is an outbreak. DEFA are responsible for dealing with local outbreaks and will investigate any suspicious deaths.

JW asked MJ if it was possible for bird to develop an immunity to the disease? MJ replied this would not happen as strains mutate.

Q - Michael Josem – Have the ManxSPCA given any thought to creating a wish list advising the Government what they would like included in Legislation?

A - JW replied the ManxSPCA were part of the consultation group for 18 months alongside the NFU, Police, the Wildlife Park, and Milan vets. It was felt that this was a disappointing bureaucratic exercise that did not appear useful.

JW believes the ManxSPCA and herself have the opportunity of working well with Amy Beckett, the Government vet.

JW encouraged members to lobby through the ManxSPCA as we have a very big voice on social media.

Q – Rosie Scott asked whether we had a situation with seals now?

A – JW replied not at this time of year. Baby seals become an issue on beaches around September. Educating the public to leave the pups alone is key.

The Manx Wildlife Trust have volunteers who stand with the pups and watch over them. We work closely with them.

Ideally, the ManxSPCA prefers to send seals to dedicated sanctuaries in the UK with good facilities. The small numbers locally do not warrant a seal sanctuary here on the Island and the ManxSPCA team are not seal experts, and are happy to work with other agencies.

Q – Jane Miles appealed for donkeys to be added to the horses and ponies mentioned in the legislation?

A – JW agreed donkeys also need a voice.

The President then asked the Members to adopt the 2021 Operational Report. Michael Josem proposed that the 2021 Operational Report be adopted, and this was seconded by Georgina Dale. The President asked the Members for a show of hands for those in favour of adopting the report, and then for those who were against. Those present at the meeting unanimously approved the adoption of the 2021 Operational Report.

Item 6: 2021 Veterinary Report (Megan Joyce, Senior Clinician, Milan Vets)

The President invited Megan Joyce to comment.

MJ raised the following points.

MJ will be stepping in while Alice Forster, the Practice Director at Milan Vets, is on her six month sabbatical.

ManxSPCA and Milan Vets have a happy and mutually beneficial working relationship. The staff work very well together, and she also praised the staff for the wonderful job they do looking after the animals in their care.

Neutering had increased in the last year for all species.

Last year saw a rise in cases of cat 'flu'. Thankfully the isolation unit helped. There were a lot of feral cats brought in suffering from cat 'flu'. MJ advised there is a need to look at new procedures to stop the spread in future and this will be done.

Training the staff will be re-introduced this year. Staff will be trained at Milan for a week. Training will cover handling, recognition of species and how to identify urgent cases.

The equine neglect case that had been dealt with through the courts had been satisfactorily concluded. Fortunately, this was the only big case during last year.

The President asked if there were any questions. There were none.

The President then asked the members to adopt the 2021 Veterinary Report. Claire Baker proposed that the report be adopted, and this was seconded by Jacqueline Street. The President asked the Members for a show of hands from those in favour of adopting the report, and then for a show of hands from those against. Those present at the meeting unanimous approved the adoption of the 2021 Veterinary Report.

Item 7: Election of Members to the Board of Management (Alex Downie OBE, President of the ManxSPCA)

The President introduced the next item, the election to the Board of Management.

7.1 Sue Waring was retiring by rotation and seeking re-election.

7.2 Debbie Clague was retiring by rotation and seeking re-election.

AD asked for a member to propose and second Sue Waring's re-election. Rosie Scott proposed and was seconded by Claire Baker.

Michael Josem proposed the re-election of Debbie Clague and this was seconded by Claire Baker.

AD welcomed both Sue and Debbie back to the Board.

The President thanked all those involved with running the ManxSPCA and asked Members to put their hands together as a mark of appreciation.

JW suggested Members may like to look at the interesting articles in the archives which were now available to view.

Any Other Business

The President asked the members if there were any final questions, and there being none he drew the meeting to a formal end and thanked those present for attending.

Appendix 1

Apologies received:

Mr S and Mrs B Burrows

Mrs J Bujko

Mr K and Mrs PE Quirk

Mrs C Sugden

Mr M and Mrs V Wenn