

BRIEFING NOTES FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR MLSBG COMMITTEE MEETING 12th JAN 2022

AGENDA ITEM 5(c)

REPORT OF THE MEMBERSHIP FEE SUB-GROUP

1. That the current individual and family memberships remain as they are
2. That Members who require postal only communications (eg for AGM papers) will be charged an additional £5 pa to cover postal, printing and stationery costs.
3. That Life memberships will no longer be offered.
4. That Current Life members will remain as members, with no subscription payable.
5. That the committee reserves the right to offer Honorary Memberships.

In addition, we suggest that:

1. We write to those members who are currently postal only and tell them that, after the AGM, the charge for their membership will now include an additional £5, and ask whether they now have an email address we could use to avoid the additional charge
2. We write to current Life members reassuring them that their membership will continue with no further subscription required. For those who have been members for more than a period we will also ask them to consider making a donation to the Group. That period to be determined by the committee: if it is 8 years, that means possibly 15 members will be asked for donations, though some of them are on committee or otherwise known!

CK, MK, BL 4/1/22

AGENDA ITEM 10

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT BREED SOCIETY SUB-GROUP

Current Position:

The MLSBG is an unincorporated Manx Loaghtan interest group that does not have a legal personality and has no formal standing in terms of zoological management of the breed, this role being invested in the Rare Breeds Survival Trust, whom DEFRA view as the official body for advice and guidance about the breed.

From the 2021 edition of the CFB:

MLSBG total membership 76, of which 35 or 47% members registered pedigree stock in 2021
CFB Manx Loaghtan flocks with registered stock 112 (1560 animals), of which 56 flocks (50%) with 450 animals (29%) are not members of MLSBG.

Independent Breed Societies:

To become officially recognised by DEFRA as the breed society for Manx Loaghtan sheep, the MLSBG would need the legal status of being a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee or a charity within the purposes of the Charities Act, approved by the Charity Commission.

To become a charity, MLSBG's proposal would need to focus on "the advancement of environmental protection" and/or "the advancement of animal welfare".

As an independent breed society, MLSBG would need to do three things:

- (i) run a flock book in accordance with EU Zoological rules (DEFRA are following these rules post-Brexit) i.e. a flock book with an “A” register of pedigree animals and a supplementary register of pure bred animals with a provenance of three generations of pure breeding that have been inspected as “true to type”, whose off-spring can be graded up over three generations to the “A” register by crossing with pedigree Loaghtans.
- (ii) Have a breed conservation plan such as our Selected Mating Scheme.
- (iii) Become a legal entity, charity or company, with the relevant legal framework and officers as required.

The cost of commissioning Grassroots to manage our independent flock book would be about £160 per year based on current registration changes.

Isle of Man Companies:

The Manx Loaghtan Sheep Breed Society Ltd is a company limited by shares on the IoM Government Register of Companies. It filed accounts in 2021, showing 2000 shares available at £1 a share, but only two shares were held, one by George Steriopulos and one by Doug Bolton. The Company Secretary is Samantha Leonard. Its purpose is stated as to “promote Manx Loaghtan Sheep”. There is no balance sheet in the filed Annual Return, suggesting the company is not financially active.

The MLSBSLtd website states that it manages a register of pure bred animals, as an animal has to have evidence of three generations of antecedents to be deemed “pure bred” to be eligible for its products to be sold under the Place of Designated Origin regulations for Isle of Man Manx Loaghtan Lamb.

In passing, the Isle of Man is still notionally in the EU, for the purposes of product registration with regard to the PDO definition, as Boris’s Brexit arrangements excluded our Crown Dependencies.

If a MLSBG based company or charity were to be formed, its governance would need to comply with Isle of Man Government as well as UK Government rules and regulations. On previous history there is the possibility that there would be a legal challenge from the MLSBS Ltd.

Advice to MLSBG Committee:

The legal, financial, and administrative requirements needed to set up a company or charity, as the vehicle to allow MLSBG to become a recognised breed society, is significant and is probably beyond the current level of commitment of the Group.

As the RBST views MLSBG as the “subject expert” in Manx Loaghtan matters and RBST is the DEFRA recognised authority on Manx Loaghtan breed matters, the Committee is advised that there is no benefit to be gained by becoming an independent breed society.

JH, PG-R, ST

4/1/22