

WALES FEDERATION OF YOUNG FARMERS CLUBS



COUNCIL
THURSDAY, 13th MAY, 2021
'ZOOM'
7.00PM

MINUTES

CHAIRMAN: Miss Katie Davies

VICE CHAIRMAN: Miss Caryl Haf

PRESENT: Katie Davies, (Council Chairman); Caryl Haf, (Council Vice Chairman); Katie Court, (Competitions Chairman); Kathryn Jones, (Finance and Management Chairman); Niall Evans, (International Chairman); Aled Thomas, (Events and Marketing Chairman); Clare James, (Rural Affairs Chairman); Elin Rattray, (Youth Forum Chairman); Sian Healey and Carwyn Pugh, (Brecknock); Iestyn Owen, Carys Thomas and Hefin Evans, (Carmarthenshire); Esyllt Ellis Jones, Bleddyn Davies and Elliw Dafydd (Ceredigion); Gwenno Davies (Clwyd); Beca Glyn, Gwen Thomas and Meinir Owen (Eryri); Andrew Joseph and Elen Williams, (Glamorgan); Katie Matthews and Alistair Morgan, (Gwent); Manon Williams and Anna Prysor Jones (Meirionnydd); Bryony Wilson, (Montgomery); Tania Hancock, Delun Evans and Samuel Kurtz (Pembrokeshire); Matt Price, (Radnor); Rhys Richards, Fflur Powell-Roberts and Elliw Haf Griffith (Ynys Môn); Iwan Meirion, Dafydd Jones, Kate Miles, Rhodri Evans, Hedd Pugh and Jayne Jones (Co-opted); Ed Dungait (NFYFC).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mared Jones (Interim Wales YFC director); Catrin James (Welsh Language Development Officer); Helen Evans (Interim Operations Officer); Rhodri Lewis, (Competitions and Finance officer); Megan Jones (Administrative Assistant); Ffion Wright Evans, (Montgomery County Organiser); Eleri Evans, (Eryri County Organiser), Edna Jones (Staff Association Chairman).

C/61/2021

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

In opening the meeting, Katie Davies welcomed all members to the May meeting of Council.

Representatives were informed that the meeting would be recorded for minute taking purposes and that unfortunately because of technical difficulties Hefin Jones would not be able to provide translation facilities, but members were encouraged to speak in the language of their choice and translation would be provided as and when required. Vevox would once again be utilised for voting purposes with the link noted as being available on the website.

A calendar was shared with members of Council, noting meetings attended by the chairman, vice chairman and director since the last meeting.

Members were informed of the following activities held recently, including;

- YFC Wales virtual Eisteddfod
- Virtual Public Speaking Competitions

- Rural Affairs Conference
- YFC Manifesto
- Podcast Relaunch
- Master Classes
- Numerous meetings had been held since the last meeting, and it was encouraging to see through Social Media that several clubs were meeting again following the current Covid-19 guidelines.

Helen Evans was welcomed back as temporary Operations Officer at Wales YFC.

Congratulations were extended to Sam Kurtz (Pembrokeshire) on his recent election to the Senedd.

C/62/2021

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Emma Rees (Brecknock YFC); Nerys Lewis (Gwent YFC), Delun Evans (Pembrokeshire YFC).

C/63/2021

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members of the committee were reminded of the need to declare any interests they may have in any of business being discussed. Mared Jones declared an interest regarding her current dual role of interim YFC Director and also representing the RWAS as a co-opted member.

C/64/2021

MINUTES

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 18th March, 2021 having been circulated, were confirmed as a true and correct record.

Proposer: Esyllt Jones

Seconder: Aled Thomas

C/65/2021

ACTION POINTS AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

It was recommended that the letter from Eryri Federation regarding changing the membership age range within Wales YFC, previously circulated and discussed by members at the last Council meeting was again referred to at this meeting for any further thoughts and proposals from county federations.

The letter received read as follows:

Dear Katie and Wales YFC Council,

I write to you on behalf of Eryri YFC members to propose the following.

As a County, we would like to propose to Wales YFC and all of the Counties in Wales do discuss changing the membership age within Wales YFC.

Following a discussion in our Exec, and with our clubs, Eryri YFC Members feel that this is the time to make a change, and start the discussion about age within YFC in preparation for September 2021, with hoping that we will be able to start to come back together then face to face.

The discussion has arisen several times over the years and nothing has come of it, the proposal Eryri YFC would like to discuss is to raise the age to 30 years old, numerous members across Wales will lose out if the age will change back to 26 in September.

As we, all know losing nearly a year and a half (by September 2021) of face to face activities has been a massive blow to our members and clubs. And the real truth is we will have to work very hard to rise the clubs back on their feet when we are able to do so. In addition, the last thing any club needs now is to lose its senior members, these members are able to be a massive support to the younger members and officers within the clubs, and to help ensure their success for the future.

Whilst I was researching other Countries like Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland, all three have the membership age until 30 or even older. We liked the Scottish idea, joining at 14 and being a junior member until you are 19, then a senior member until you are 28, and then an associate member still able to compete until you are 30.

The question I would like to ask is 'Don't you think it's time for change to ensure a successful future to the Federation through invaluable support by the senior members?

If you are for change, I believe that now is the time to do so. We should embrace the change for change!

We are proposing the following to Wales YFC Council;

To rise the membership age in Wales YFC from 13 to 30, and leave the members who are under 13 who are already members to continue their membership.

We look forward to the discussion that will come regarding this letter, with hoping that it will have a fair consideration.

Yours Sincerely

Eleri Evans

Organiser

On behalf of Beca Glyn Eryri YFC Chairperson and Eryri YFC members

Comments were encouraged from the floor and extensive discussions took place with contributions from most representatives with many differing views:

Ynys Môn had carried out an interesting Google Poll in two sections which showed that a larger percentage supported raising the age range to 13 at the lower end and also to 30 at the upper end.

The general feeling in Clwyd was also to support the new 13 - 30 proposal. Montgomery, Ceredigion and Sir Gar were of the opinion that it would be easier to continue the current age range of 10 – 28 which corresponds with NFYFC. Glamorgan members felt they would like clarification of how the system would work and to ensure members would not be financially disadvantaged over the last year. They considered it important to have 10 – 13 year olds as members and maybe re-evaluate the programme for that age group. Pembrokeshire were also very supportive of the 10 – 13 year old members as being the strongest attendees throughout the lockdown period, and were not in favour of extending the upper age to 30.

Gwent suggested a compromise of a starting age of 11 as being more appropriate.

Eryri strengthened their case by pointing out that by extending the upper age to 30, it would ensure more focus be given to the social aspect and mental health of that age group, who have been the back-bone of the clubs, and would help them to recover after Covid. It is important to look after the 26+ year old farmers and now was an opportunity to change to

ensure the success of post-Covid YFC. It was also pointed out that after 3 years, many 13 year olds tend to lose interest and drop out whereas if they started at age 13, we are likely to keep them longer as they are more appreciative of what YFC has to offer.

- 1) A proposal was put forward to deal with the proposed change in age range as two separate items (starting with the older age group)

Proposer: Beca Glyn (Eryri)
Seconded: Rhys Richards (Ynys Môn)

- 2) Proposal for current age range (10 – 28) to remain.

Proposer: Aled Thomas (Glamorgan)
Seconder: Niall Evans (Brecknock)

Proposal 1 was defeated.

Council chairman, Katie Davies, thanked Eryri for bringing this matter to Wales level and thanked everyone for their valuable contributions.

Representatives will have time to consider any proposals put forward, before a vote takes place at the July Council.

Any changes would formally be adopted at the federation's AGM in September.

C/66/2021

CORRESPONDENCE

A letter had been received from Glamorgan enquiring whether Council should meet more often – either on a monthly or 6 weekly basis? Elen Williams reported that Glamorgan members were anxious that their voices were heard regarding implementation of changes etc particularly using the virtual platform.

Caryl Haf asked members to refer to the Calendar, pointing out that over the last 12+ months County Staff, County Chairs and Sub-committees have been meeting more often ensuring that there is more communication now than ever. The general feeling of the members present was that the current frequency was more than adequate. Katie, Caryl and Mared assured members that 'nothing is brushed under the carpet' and during the Covid-19 period, a Council meeting can be called with just 48 hours' notice if the need arises.

Kate Miles requested that as trustees, could co-opted members receive more regular information? It was agreed that the weekly Info newsletter could also be sent to the trustees as well as the counties. This was agreed.

C/67/2021

TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM SUB COMMITTEES:

a) Competitions – Miss Katie Court

Council to note:

1. The committee met on Tuesday 30th March.
2. The committee discussed the Virtual Public Speaking and confirmed what days the interviews for Member of the year and Situation Vacant would be.
3. The committee discussed the Virtual Royal Welsh Competitions, particularly the Stock judging breeds. The Committee agreed to stick to the Blue Texel, Section D Cobs and Highland Cattle and the Societies would be contacted to support in providing pictures

and judges' names for Counties. It was also agreed that the stock judging competitions would be done over zoom on Sunday 27th June 2021 and the Chairman's Generation Game on Sunday 10th July.

4. The committee discussed the opportunity to work alongside Cywain on a cookery competition to Wales YFC Members.
5. The committee discussed the Weekend Festival and discussed the possibility of holding the weekend in August – 14th & 15th.
6. The next Competitions meeting was noted as the 25 May 2021.

Council to approve: None

Council discussions and agreement: There were no further discussions.

b) Finance & Management – Kathryn Jones

COUNCIL TO NOTE:

1. Claire Powell has gone on maternity leave (a little earlier than expected) and we all congratulate her on the birth of baby Seren.
2. The committee were brought up to date on what grants had been applied for recently to include another £4000 Powys County Council Rate Grant bringing the running total up to £10,000. Phase 2 of the CRF has opened and a grant of just over £80k has been applied for. This grant is for actual costs and covers operating costs from April to September and costs to help Wales YFC re open. We have included Covid-19 Packs for each county along with equipment for Head Office. There is also a sum included for a project to develop a track & trace system for Wales YFC, Counties and Clubs.
3. Before going on maternity leave, Claire managed to finalise the accounts on behalf of Wales YFC and Ashmole are hoping to complete the audit earlier this year, probably towards the end of this month, early next month at the latest.
4. Work has been long winded and still on going with regards to the changing and authorising of signatures, pin number etc to allow Rhodri Lewis to access Wales YFC bank accounts. Claire before she finished and Rhodri since he has taken over have been in constant dialogue and hopefully all will be sorted by the end of this week.
5. The Organisational Review is well underway by Menter & Busnes and it has been suggested to advertise for a Chief Exec immediately. This is so that the successful candidate is on board ASAP and can be part of the review for as much of it as possible. Even though we are going to advertise very shortly, it could take up to 4 months to have the right person in position. The title and salary were presented in F&M on Tuesday and signed off.
6. The Community Engagement fund is well under way, also being carried out by Menter a Busnes. We have received a very comprehensive plan which has been signed off by F&M.
7. The Sustainability & Resilience is still being discussed and LANTRA have numerous training workshops and packages that they can work with us on.
8. A report was given by Mared the stand in Director with regards to staff position and meetings held and were informed that the report will be much longer at the next meeting due to having spent more time in the organisation.

COUNCIL TO APPROVE: Nothing to approve

Council discussions and agreement: There were no further discussions

c) Events and Marketing – Aled Thomas

Council to note:

1. The YFC Marketplace has been launched. Members have created some short "Meet the Maker" videos that will be shared on our social media to publicize the Marketplace. There will also be an online craft fair for YFC Marketplace members to be held at the end of May.
2. YFC sessions continue to run, with 1 session remaining in May and a further 4 scheduled by June. 2 Young Correspondents 'sessions have recently taken place in conjunction with Bro360 / Golwg, and there is a possibility of members submitting their articles and stories to the Wales YFC website alongside the Bro 360 website. Wales YFC hopes to develop the relationship with Bro 360 / Golwg with these sessions and hope for plenty of interest from Wales YFC members.
3. The new series of podcasts has begun, with 3 episodes already released. The next episode is being released tonight. Going forward a podcast episode will be released every other week, with one Welsh and one English podcast released every month.
4. The committee have requested more consistency with regards to regular social media and website postings.
5. Wales YFC will continue to update the website with regards to the latest COVID guidelines.

COUNCIL TO APPROVE

1. Online craft fair to be held on the 29th of May on Facebook.

d) International – Niall Evans

Council to note:

1. A meeting was held between Wales YFC and the Young farmers in Germany to look at setting up a new exchange.
2. Representatives of New Zealand dairy careers recently held a webinar to provide further information on the opportunities available through their programme. They are willing to open up further places for the scholarship and applications are now open for the programme. Applications close on 1st June.

For Council to approve: None

Council discussions and agreement:

There were no further discussions.

e) Rural Affairs – Clare James

Council to note:

1. We send our thanks to Sian Thomas as she stepped down from the role looking after the rural affairs committee and we welcome Helen, who joins us on secondment for the Royal Welsh Show and previously worked for Wales YFC so has vast experience in Rural Affairs.
2. The Rural Affairs Conference was held virtually this year on the evenings of the 26th and 28th of April. The theme of this year's conference was 'to inspire' and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the inspiring speakers and also CCF for their generous sponsorship.
3. As it is mental health awareness week it is worth noting that a DPJ Foundation mental health in agriculture awareness evening will be held on 29th June at 7pm.

4. I am pleased to announce that the Menter Moch initiative will once again be run this year where 6 members have the opportunity to finish six pigs working alongside a mentor a business. The application closing date is 28th May.
5. The Wales YFC Lamb Scheme - The committee along with Dunbia and Sainsbury have secured a change to the lamb scheme payment grid - seeing lambs weights being paid 15-22kg (before it was 15-20kg). The scheme pays a bonus on all lambs who hit spec whilst the County Federation of which the member belongs to also gains financially.
There is a Wales YFC, HCC and Dunbia meeting on 20th May at 7pm on Welsh lamb.

For more information on these points please contact Helen Evans

Council to approve - None

Council discussions and agreement:

There were no further discussions.

f) Youth Forum – Elin Rattray

Council to note:

1. Since the last Council meeting, the Youth Forum Committee held a fun "Task Master" Evening with Alfie Benbow.
2. Another fun evening is planned for June. A Bingo Evening with Alfie Benbow.
- 3 Members discussed holding a Virtual Careers Fair and Webinars with Agricultural Colleges.

Council to approve: None

Council discussions and agreement:

There were no further discussions.

g) Building Group – Dafydd Jones

Council to note:

Dafydd reported that no meeting of the Building Group had been held since the last Council meeting. The next meeting is to be held in June

Council to approve: None

Council discussions and agreement:

There were no further discussions.

h) Personnel and Remuneration – Caryl Haf

Council to note:

Caryl Haf reported that Nia Lloyd and Sian Thomas had now left Wales YFC and that Catrin James would also be leaving at the end of this month.

The Welsh Development Officer post is being formally advertised in collaboration with the Welsh Government and members were asked to spread the word regarding this vacancy.

Caryl informed members of the current Wales YFC staffing situation as:

Mared Jones (Interim Director)

2 days a week (spread over Monday, Wednesday pm and Friday pm)

Rhodri Lewis (Interim Finance Officer)

2 days a week (Tuesday and Wednesday)

Helen Evans (Interim Operations and Safeguarding Officer)

2 days a week (Wednesday and Thursday)

Tomos Rees (Interim Marketing and Communications Officer)

2 days a week (Monday and Thursday)

Megan Jones (Admin Assistant)

2 days a week (Tuesday and Wednesday)

Claire Powell - Maternity Leave

Ann Hammonds (Office Cleaner) Furlough

Council to approve:

There were no points put forward for approval.

Council discussions and agreement:

There were no further discussions

i) Policy Sub Group – Miss Katie Davies

Council to note:

1. Welsh Language Policy

Council to approve the work on this policy 'en bloc'

Proposer: Dafydd Jones

Seconder: Sam Kurtz

2. E-Safety Policy

This policy is still to be considered by Counties.

Council to approve:

There were no points put forward for approval.

Council discussions and agreement:

There were no further discussions.

In conclusion the Council reports were approved by members present.

Proposer:

Seconder:

C/68/2021

NFYFC

1. An update from NFYFC

Katie Davies welcomed Ed Dungait who reported on the work of the NFYFC. He confirmed that the 'YFC on track' was going well. The National Competition Finals are planned to be held during the first weekend in October but this is still to be confirmed.

Members were encouraged to follow NFYFC on Facebook.

C/69/2021

AGENDA ITEMS & DATE FOR THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of Council was noted as being Thursday, 8th July, 2021 at 7.00pm via Zoom.

C/70/2021

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Catrin James was wished all the very best for the future and was thanked for her contribution to the organisation.

Katie Davies thanked members for the excellent important discussions that had taken place tonight and thanked everyone for their input. She also reminded members about it being Mental Health Week and encouraged everyone to look out for one another.

As there was no further business the meeting was declared closed at 8.57pm.

Signed: _____ **Dated:** _____