

Special meeting of Lincolnshire Bird Committee held via Zoom at 7.30pm on January 28, 2021

Present

Phil Espin Joy Croot, Nick Tribe, Phil Hyde, Mike Harrison, Andrew Chick, Bill Sterling & Jim Wright

Chairman's introduction

PE outlined the agenda, noting that it was an amended version to the one supplied to him by JW. Its purpose was to discuss the way forward in printing and distributing a book, *Birds of Lincolnshire*, compiled by team members Colin Casey, John Clarkson, Philip Espin and Philip Hyde.

Declaration of personal interests

PE and PH declared personal interests as team members of the editorial and writing team and potential financial beneficiaries of the project if the committee decided not to fully fund the publication. JW said he had contributed photographs and had proof-read a draft of the book/ submitted a report on its contents but was not a member of the editorial team.

Appointment of co-ordinator for the project

PE volunteered to steer the project to completion. His appointment was approved - and applauded - by committee members. In response to a question from JW, PE confirmed that he had capacity to store the books at his home, but he hoped a substantial number would be sold at an early stage through an agreement with the prospective printer, who would distribute them direct to purchasers.

Consideration of printing arrangements

PE noted that the original proposal to publish/print via the online company, Lulu.com, had been dropped on the grounds of quality and price. There had been at least four complaints about the quality of binding of the *Lincolnshire Bird Atlas*, printed by Lulu.com. It was therefore proposed to proceed with Swallowtail Print which had provided from a schedule of quotes from 200 to 500 copies which included one of £6,309 for supply of 500 copies.

PH noted that the quality of the draft supplied by Swallowtail was "light years ahead" of that supplied by Lulu.com.

PE expected the project to make a profit - theoretically as high as £10,000 but likely less than that but greater than zero.

The proposed recommended retail price (RRP) would be £40 with a discount offer to LBC members of £20 per copy.

He predicted the value of the book would hold up well in any after-market.

PE further noted that Colin Casey had contacts with a national bookselling company to facilitate sales.

NT said that a similar recent project by Nottinghamshire Bird Club had resulted in sales of 400 copies so far (RRP: £45) from a print-run of 500.

PE noted that similar books for Norfolk and Hertfordshire had RRP's of £69.99 and £38.99. He added that the RRP of *Birds of Lincolnshire and South Humberside* (now out-of-print and in black and white) in 1989 had been £12.50, which scaled to £33 at today's prices.

Free complimentary copies will be given where legally required and deemed appropriate (see Appendix 2)

Ownership of project

PE invited committee members to consider three options, of which he was recommending option 1.

The other options were put forward to ensure the book would be published if LBC decided not to fund it wholly or in part.

a) Option 1 LBC take full financial control of the project and purchases 500 books.

b) Option 2 LBC takes a 50 per cent financial stake in the project, the other 50 per cent to be invested between the authors.

c) Option 3 The committee take no financial stake in the publication and buys books from the authors to meet member-demand and the delivery of free copies at a price of £17 a copy.

It was overwhelmingly agreed that (a) Option 1 should be adopted, so there was no discussion on (b) and (c). **Note:** Because of their personal interest, as Team Members, PE and PH refrained from voting. JW_r abstained from voting.

It was further agreed to proceed by placing an order with Swallowtail at the earliest opportunity. AC cautioned that this should be subject to approval from treasure John Watt who was not present at the meeting. (NB PE subsequently spoke with JW the following morning and JW agreed with all resolutions passed).

There was a lengthy discussion about an offer by Colin Casey to underwrite the project to the full amount to safeguard the club's interests should it prove commercially unsuccessful. BS identified a contradiction in simultaneously projecting a profit and preparing for a loss. PE explained all eventualities needed to be considered. BS queried the appropriateness of a single individual underwriting any loss, given that the club was financially strong enough to cover such an eventuality. JW_r and PH noted that Colin had been gracious enough to make the generous offer and the committee should be mindful to accept it. PE stated in his opinion that Colin had made the offer in order to ensure the continued rapid progress of the project should the committee have any qualms that might delay it. PE said he thought Colin was unlikely to take offence if the offer were to be declined, given that the committee had fully supported the project going ahead with no delays. Resolved by three votes to one that CC's offer to underwrite should be gratefully acknowledged but politely declined. PE and PH again abstained as did two others.

There being no further business, the chairman closed the meeting at 8.35pm

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APPENDIX 1

CHAIRMAN'S OPTIONS STATEMENT FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE

Option1

1. My preferred solution would be for the club to buy 500 copies.
2. C. 30 copies will be given away free to contributors, libraries, reviewers etc
3. so the rest would therefore cost £6039 / 470 = £12.85 each
4. We offer all members a copy for £20 (Retail £40) plus postage via an online form
5. Authors can buy as many as they wish at cost of £12.61 each
6. After all members orders, free copies and Authors orders are completed we would keep a few in LBC stock
7. All the rest would be offered to national book sellers such as Wild Sounds and local outlets.

Option 2

1. A second possibility is that the club and the authors go halves taking 250 copies each at £12.61 a copy or £3,155. If the club sells 200 copies to members it will make a profit on its investment immediately. C. 30 copies will be given away free and the balance will be kept in stock.
2. Authors would then dispose of their 250 copies between themselves and probably the balance would be disposed of as in 7 of option 1.

APPENDIX 2

FREE COPIES LIST

Colin Casey Current team 1
Philip Espin Current team 1
Phil Hyde Current team 1
John & Nicky Clarkson Current team 2
Graham Catley Entry writer 1
Charlie Barnes Map provider 1
Jack Levene Wildlife Recorder support 1
The Librarian RSPB 1
Paul Learoyd LWT Banovallum House 1
The Librarian BTO Library 1
The Librarian BOU (Alexander)Library 1

Fionnuala Deasy Natural History Museum 1
National Libraries Legal requirement 5
Paul French Reviewer British Birds 1
Alan Ball ex LBC Recorder 1
Howard Bunn ex LBC Recorder 1
John Badley ex LBC Recorder 1
Steve Keightley ex LBC Recorder 1