



Verderers of the New Forest

Verderers' Grazing Scheme

The Queen's House

Lyndhurst

Hampshire

SO43 7NH

Official Verderer

Dominic May

Telephone: 023 8028 3134

Fax: 023 8028 3101

All Verderers

Advisory Group Members

10 July 2013

MINUTES OF THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2013

Present:

Mr D May (OV)	- Official Verderer
Mr R Deakin (RD)	- Elected Verderer
Mr A Gerrelli (AG)	- Elected Verderer
Mrs P Thorne(PT)	- Defra Appointed Verderer
Mr C Draper (CD)	- VGS Manager (taking minutes)

Item	Item	Action
1. Apologies	All current members were present: the Court has not yet appointed a Verderer to replace Anthony Pasmore (who has recently retired as a Verderer) on the Committee.	
2. Declarations of interest	All members declared their membership of the VGS. RD is a member of the Livestock Society. OV, RD, PT & AG are members of the New Forest Pony Breeders and Cattle Society. All members declared an interest in Item 17.8 and 17.11, grant applications: Mr & Mrs A M & E M Gerrelli; and Mr A Naphine	
3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising	The minutes of the last meeting were approved. There were no matters arising.	
4. Pound rebuild programme – update	Bratley: Work on Bratley Pound is now complete apart from the chute gate and additional rails to join the Pound to the holding pen; it is hoped that these will be completed this week. CD was asked to confirm the status of the Capital Works claim for the Pound. Afternote: a capital works claim for £442.40 for materials only was submitted to NE as it was originally intended that the pound would be built by the Agisters using oak posts and pine rails; unfortunately, the	

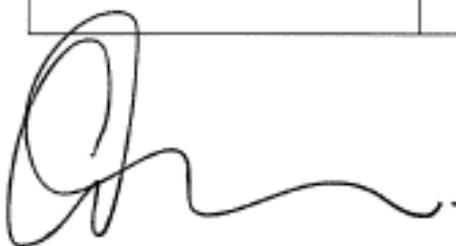
	<p>materials provided were sub standard (the rails were returned; the posts were retained as they were considered to be good value for use for repairs but not adequate for a new build). Subsequently, at the VGS Management Committee meeting on 23 January, it was decided that all the materials should be upgraded to hardwood and that labour costs and the additional cost of upgrading to hardwood, should be funded by the VGS; a sum of £1800 was approved from 2013/14 expenditure. In the meantime, the capital works claim was rejected because work was not completed in year.</p> <p>Bentleys: Work is well underway and is expected to be completed this week.</p> <p>Amberwood: Materials have been delivered and work is due to start when Bentleys and Bratley are complete.</p> <p>Woodfidley: Materials delivered: work will start when Amberwood is complete.</p> <p>CD was asked to provide comparative costings for oak posts as an alternative to the chestnut posts: OV offered to provide details of a supplier.</p>	CD
5. HLS contributions Adjacent Commons – update by VGS Manager	CD chaired a meeting of the owners of the Adjacent Commons on 3 May to discuss the size of their annual contribution to the VGS. The owners felt that this should remain unchanged at the current rate of £28/ha, but deferred a decision until the Autumn when final details of stock numbers on the Commons are available.	
6. Late payment of marking fees by Scheme members	<p>Members reviewed a list of commoners who were late in paying Marking Fees this year. Failure to pay Marking Fees on time is a breach of the Verderers byelaws and the Verderers will prosecute offenders who refuse to pay. VGS members who are late in paying for permanently depastured stock will be excluded from the VGS for that year, unless there are sufficiently good reasons for their failure to pay on time. It was decided that three members of the VGS whose Marking Fees were received after the deadline will have their payments withheld:</p> <p>No action will be taken against a fourth commoner whose cheque bounced because of a change of bank account, as he rectified the situation as soon as he was made aware of the problem.</p>	CD
7. Grant Request: New Forest Pony Enthusiasts Club (NFPEC)	Members considered a revised funding bid from the New Forest Pony Enthusiasts Club. Disappointment was expressed at the lack of a clear marketing strategy for	

	<p>advertising/marketing the New Forest Pony breed. Funding was approved for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trailer banners - £500.00 • Numnahs - £767.00 (note. Wording on numnahs funded by the VGS is to be confined to 'New Forest Pony' and is not to include any personal/ stud advertising) <p>Members did not approve funding for entry fees/clothing as these were felt to be a personal responsibility.</p> <p>CD to inform the NFPEC</p>	CD
<p>8. Grant request by New Forest Pony Breeding & Cattle Society (NFPB&CS) for a 'Futurity Scheme'</p>	<p>Members considered a short paper outlining proposals for a 'futurity' scheme to encourage owners to retain selected colts for use as future stallions. This is in response to the shrinking gene pool in the New Forest Pony breed which has been an unintended consequence of the Stallion Scheme that has limited the number of stallions on the Forest, further reduced due to the economic downturn.</p> <p>It is hoped that the Bloodline Scheme, which was run last year, will eventually provide new stallions with bloodlines that would otherwise be lost, but it is an expensive project and before running the Scheme for a second time there is a need to evaluate the level of success from the first round.</p> <p>The Futurity Scheme is less expensive and simpler to administer, although there is some concern that it may be more likely to support the breeding of stud, as opposed to Forest, stallions. Members took the view that the Breed Society is not taking their responsibility to lead on this, seriously enough and that it therefore falls to the Verderers to step in. The proposal was accepted and a grant of £8,000 was agreed. It was proposed that Agister Maton should assist with the colt evaluation .</p> <p>While the grazing at Long Meadow is not required for the Bloodline Scheme for the time being, it was agreed that it should be made available for the Futurity Scheme, and that funding should be provided to bring the fencing up to the necessary standard.</p>	
<p>9. Grant request by the New Forest LAS: funding for administration costs/ refreshments at training events for 2013/14</p>	<p>Application withdrawn: funding provided from other sources.</p>	
<p>10. Terms & Conditions of VGS:</p> <p>New wording to incorporate decision by the Court on the penalty of £400.00 for</p>	<p>The following wording was approved:</p> <p><i>13.2 A commoner will have £400.00 deducted from his or her VGS payment (or payment withheld if less than that amount) for each 2 year old colt belonging to him or her which runs on the Forest after 1 February, contrary to the</i></p>	

allowing 2 year old colts to run on the Forest after 1 February.	<i>Verderers' Byelaws.</i>	
11. Review age limit for ponies entered in the Welfare Programme (currently 18 years old)	<p>AG suggested that the age limit for ponies entered in the Welfare Programme should be reduced to 16 years old in order to reduce the financial incentive to retain older ponies that are not doing well, until they qualify for the programme. Members noted that this could lead to the possible loss of older mares with rarer bloodlines. On balance it was felt to be too soon to introduce any changes. The current age limit will remain unchanged.</p> <p>OV suggested that a review of the Welfare Programme should take place after three years i.e. at the end of 2014.</p>	
12. Review qualifying period for VGS payment for ponies entered in the Welfare Programme.	It was agreed that a continuously depastured pony removed from the Forest under the terms of the Welfare Programme will qualify for a grazing payment provided it remains on the Forest up until the drift at which that pony comes in. Note: this is an exception to the normal requirement for a pony to be depastured for 7 months in order to qualify for a grazing payment.	
13. Review payment rate for geldings entered in the VGS (currently 0.4 LUs).	<p>Geldings make no contribution to the breed. They often interfere with the stallions when they are turned out. They increase the pressure on grazing. It was therefore considered no longer appropriate to provide a financial incentive to depasture them. It was agreed that no annual VGS payment should be made for geldings with effect from the next (2014/15) Scheme year.</p> <p>This change will be announced at the September Court. RD agreed that he will also raise it at the next meeting of the Staff Committee.</p>	OV RD
14. Review policy on VGS payments for stock removed by the Agisters.	It was agreed to increase the penalty to £150.00 for any animal removed by the Agisters.	
15. Infrastructure costs for car park closures during drifts.	<p>It was agreed that the VGS would fund the provision of barriers at 21 car parks without barriers which are required to be closed for Health & Safety considerations during annual drifts; a list of 60 car parks to be closed has been agreed separately with the FC, most of which already have barriers. Warning signs & cycle route closure will also be funded. CD to liaise with staff at the FC over number of car parks requiring this work, and cost.</p> <p>Afternote: cost of £8,796 for 21 barriers; £1,416.80 for 16 signs.</p>	CD
16. Payment of annual grants	<p>1. £45,000 contribution towards the Agisters' salaries, for the extra work generated by the VGS and HLS: confirmed</p> <p>2. £35,000 for the Land Advice Service: confirmed</p>	CD CD

	<p>3. NF Pony Publicity Group. Members were disappointed that the NF PPG is closing due to lack of support. Sufficient unspent funds were carried forward from last year for the remainder of this year.</p> <p>The Group has indicated that ‘foal shows’ will continue at Beaulieu Road sales with responsibility transferring to the Livestock Society. It was agreed that funding should continue to be provided for these because of their importance, and that the Livestock Society should be encouraged to increase the prize money in order to attract more entries. CD to liaise with Lucinda Lang.</p> <p>4. £6,550.00 New Forest Livestock Society for marketing of the pony sales: confirmed</p>	<p>CD</p> <p>CD</p>
17. Small Grant Applications:	The following grants were approved; payment to be made on completion following inspection by CD:	
1. Mrs McEvoy	£500.00	
2. Mr A Ingram	£2,000.00	
3. Miss R Russell	£1,000.00	
4. Mr & Mrs S Crouch and Family	Application not received - deferred to next meeting	
5. Mrs J Haugh	£1,000.00	
6. Mr Colin Moore	£1,000.00	
7. Mr P D Bessant	£1,000.00	
8. Mr & Mrs A M & E M Gerrelli	£1,000.00	
9. Mr & Mrs M D & A M White and Miss N White	£1,000.00 subject to successful planning permission	
10. Mr R Hunt	Members felt unable to support this application because the main purpose of the grant is to support Mr Hunt’s pig breeding business, rather than his commoning activity.	
11. Mr A Napthine	£1,000.00	
12. Mrs A M Theron	<p>CD to check with Agister Napthine whether the land is used as back up grazing or for riding ponies, and refer back for further consideration.</p> <p>Afternote. Agister Napthine has confirmed that the land is used as back up grazing and the application will be brought forward to the next meeting for further consideration.</p>	
13. Mrs S House	The Verderers felt unable to support this application because there is sufficient land on the holding, not affected by the drainage problem, to support Mrs House’s very small commoning activity.	
14. Mr Tom Hordle	The Verderers felt unable to support this application because the proposed work is to provide water primarily for cattle turned out on the National Trust common. CD to advise Tom	CD

	Hordle to apply to the National Trust.	
18. Any Other Business	<p>Members agreed funding of £1,000 for a leaflet highlighting the risk to Forest stock on the unfenced roads in the Forest. CD to inform Sue Westwood.</p> <p>AG mentioned that Brian Paxton will be applying for a VGS grant towards the cost of providing mains water on his holding. He has requested confirmation that his application will not be disqualified if work starts following his application, before any grant is considered. That was confirmed. AG to inform Brian Paxton.</p> <p>AG expressed concern that the FC appear not to be making full use of the bracken clearance machinery funded by the HLS, and the seasonal licence for Azulux. It was agreed that CD should confirm the FC bracken clearance/treatment programme with Dave Morris, and advise AG.</p> <p>CD raised the subject of 'sightline' fences on blind spots on the Forest, typically on railway bridges/underpasses, but also in other blind access points. Some of these are in need of repair and the FC has asked whether or not the VGS will provide funding. CD to ask the Agisters to carry out a survey by early next week to identify the number and location of any sightline fences.</p> <p>RD raised the subject of membership of the Committee and the need for replacements for Anthony Pasmore, and Pat Thorne. Sue Westwood to be asked to update the matrix of committee membership for consideration by the Court, when a decision will be made.</p> <p>OV thanked Pat Thorne for all her help and contribution to the Committee and wished her every success in the future.</p>	<p>CD</p> <p>AG</p> <p>CD</p> <p>CD</p> <p>CD</p>



C F R DRAPER
VGS Manager

Copy to:

VGS Management Committee
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Verderers