



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

28 January 2013

MINUTES OF THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2013

Present:

Mr D May (OV)	- Official Verderer
Mr A Pasmore (AP)	- Elected 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

Serial	Item	Action
1	Apologies. All members present	
2	Declarations of Interest. All members declared their membership of the VGS. RD is a member of the Livestock Society. RD & AG are members of the Stallion Scheme. PT declared an interest in Item 16, funding for the 'Hot Branding' project. RD declared an interest in Item 15, provision of a short term loan to the NFLS.	
3	Approve, subject to any necessary amendment the Minutes of the last VGS Management Committee Meeting held on 16th November 2012. The Minutes of the last meeting were approved.	
4	To agree the rate of payment per LU for the Verderers' Grazing Scheme on the commons, as recommended by the VGS Advisory Group. The Management Committee considered a formal proposal submitted by Mr Phil Marshall of the National Trust which owns the majority of the commons. His offer was accepted on the conditions stipulated in the offer subject to amendments as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment by the NT to the VGS of £61,849 per year (an increase from the previously agreed £28 per hectare) to fund annual payments to commoners at the rate this year of £80 per Livestock Unit (LU). • The total sum provided for grazing payments in future years to be limited to the amount paid this year. The Management Committee stipulated that, in line with a similar arrangement for the amount available for commoners on the Crown Lands, this amount should not be increased. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Management Committee stipulated that the Commons' LU rate in future years is not to exceed the rate paid on the Crown Lands after adjustment for the difference in Marking Fees. • Additional Conditions for Commoners turning stock out on the Bramshaw commons: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Payment for cattle on the Bramshaw commons will be conditional in future years on cattle being removed for a minimum of 90 consecutive days in the December to March period. 2. Commoners who remove cattle for the whole year or more than 8 months at Bramshaw will still be eligible for VGS payments on them. This condition was approved subject to commoners qualifying for membership in the normal way, including the payment of marking fees. 3. Each commoner is limited to VGS payments on a maximum of 10 ponies in 2012/13. Future limits will be decided annually; (the Management Committee did not consider it necessary to set a future maximum limit on number of ponies, because such annual limit will depend on the success or otherwise of the grazing scheme. <p>These three conditions do not apply on Hale or the Western Commons.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Agisters would continue to ensure, as far as possible, that commoners pay the appropriate Forest or Commons rate. The Management Committee, however, did not accept the NT's proposal for monitoring and reporting on stock grazing on the commons as these were not considered practical.</p> <p>The Management Committee noted the proposals for: NT commoners who do not join the VGS; and Two separate grant funds for new and young commoners.</p> <p>CD to inform Mr Phil Marshall of the decisions.</p> <p>(RD left the meeting after this item)</p>	CD
5	<p>To review any other recommendations by the Advisory Group following their meeting on 10 January 2013. There were no other recommendations requiring consideration.</p> <p>OV asked CD to conduct an audit of all VGS applications, starting with the top 5% by stock numbers. This audit will be carried out with the Agisters after February's Staff Committee meeting.</p> <p>OV asked CD to make any grants or outstanding payments due for this year, before the end of February.</p>	CD
6	<p>To consider a small grant application from Mr R Gray at Lush's Farm towards the £12,693 cost of a new agricultural building to enable cattle to be kept in when the ground outside the holding is poached. A grant of £2,000 was approved from 2013/14 expenditure, with conditions. OV, AP & CD to draft the</p>	CD

	letter to Mr Gray.	
7	To consider funding for the rebuild of Bratley Pound. Estimated cost is £1,500 plus VAT = £1,800. Approved £1,800 from 2013/14 expenditure.	CD
8	To consider funding for a programme to rebuild 2 pounds a year during the lifetime of the Scheme. Estimated cost for materials and labour is £3,600 per pound; total £7,200 per year. Approved for annual expenditure of £7,200. CD to take forward through the Staff Committee.	CD
9	To consider funding the rebuild of Turf Hill pound with materials paid for by the NT. Not eligible – not in HLS Scheme area. It was suggested that the proposal should be submitted to the National Trust.	
10	To consider future requirement for Long Meadow and funding for a new fence along the boundary with Water Copse Inclosure; estimated cost is £4,000. A decision on this was deferred. It was agreed that the future of the Bloodline Scheme should be included for consideration as an agenda item at the Verderers' Court in February. PT was asked to liaise with Dionis Macnair & Agister Maton over production of a briefing note for the Court.	PT
11	To consider a request from the Agisters for a short section of drift fence at Hurst Hill between the bridge and Brick Kiln Inclosure to assist with the management of stock, total distance 120 metres; estimated cost is £600. Approved £600 from 2013/14 expenditure. CD to take forward.	CD
12	To consider a request from the Agisters for a short section of drift fence at New Park Pound, by the old Buckhound Kennels, total distance 42 metres; estimated cost is £200. Approved £200 from 2013/14 expenditure. CD to take forward.	CD
13.	To consider funding for underpass gates at Whiteley Wood. Estimated cost of 2 gates plus fitting: £500.00. Approved £500 from 2013/14 expenditure. CD to take forward.	CD
14	To consider funding for fitting radio chargers in the Agisters' five Land Rovers. Estimated cost is £60 per vehicle. Approved £300 from 2013/14 expenditure. CD to take forward.	CD
15	To consider a request for a short term loan of £12,000 over 4 years from the New Forest Livestock Society, to bridge a funding shortfall for installation of a roof on the sale yard at Beaulieu Road. This proposal was not accepted. The consensus was that the provision of a loan was not an appropriate use of VGS funding. The Management Committee was also mindful that the project had previously been considered, and had not been supported (<i>minutes of the Verderers' Grazing Scheme Management Committee Meeting held on 21 April 2010</i>), and noted that the VGS has already funded mains water and electricity for the sale yard. CD to write and inform Mr Readhead.	CD
16	<i>Mrs Thorne left the meeting while this item was discussed.</i> To approve payment for the Hot Branding project conducted by Kit Thorne. CD to liaise with Kit Thorne and Graham Ferris and report back on reasons for the increase over the original estimate. It was noted that payment must be made to Miss Thorne by the end of February.	CD

17	<p>Funding bid from New Forest Pony Enthusiasts Group (deferred for more information from November meeting). The application was not accepted in its current form. CD to write back and advise the NFPEG that the Management Committee would be happy to support a bid for funding, but it was not considered appropriate for the VGS to be paying for competition entry fees. Any grant should support a clear marketing policy/programme aimed at promoting the New Forest Pony breed.</p>	CD
18	<p>AOB.</p> <p>Poaching at Brook. A briefing note prepared by Georgianna Watson at the Land Advice Service was presented. This provided information on the size of the RPA land parcel on which the poaching has occurred, together with the area of poaching; the areas are 777 acres, of which 401 is open habitat and 376 acres is woodland, and 2 acres respectively, with the poached area calculated as 0.5% of the open area. As such it is well below the 10% maximum limit set by the RPA. However, as the area is classified as a SSSI, NE has the authority to require action to prevent further damage. The Management Committee now realise that this is a Natural England issue, not an RPA issue.</p> <p>A grant application from the New Forest Pony Breeders and Cattle Society for myotonia testing of forest-run stallions. The Management Committee rejected the application. Whilst the importance of testing for this disease was recognised, the Management Committee took the view that the Society has ample funds available in its considerable reserves, without the need for additional funding. CD to write back.</p>	CD
19	<p>Date of next meeting. No date was set for the next meeting which will be convened as required.</p>	

C F R DRAPER
VGS Manager

Copy to:

VGS Management Committee
Advisory Group
Verderers