



*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*

MINUTES OF THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4th November 2016

Present:

Mr D May (OV)	- Official Verderer
Mr R Deakin (RD)	- Elected Verderer
Mrs D Westerhoff (DW)	- Natural England Appointed Verderer
Mr H Mills (HM)	- Defra Appointed Verderer
Mr D Readhead (DR)	- Elected Verderer
Mrs T Woodley (TW)	- VGS Administrator

IN COMMITTEE in the Verderers' Meeting Room

Item	Item	Action
1. Apologies	None	
2. Declarations of interest	<p>OV, DR and RD declared their membership of the VGS. RD and DR are members of the New Forest Livestock Society. OV, DR and RD are members of the New Forest Pony Breeders and Cattle Society. HM has a tenant who is in the VGS and is a fencing contractor. HM has an interest in NFLAS. OV is a subscriber to the New Forest Hounds.</p>	
3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising	<p>Minutes of the last meeting were approved.</p> <p>Matters arising</p> <p>OPENING OF THE VERDERERS' INCLOSURES The FC supplied a report illustrating how much additional land had been made available to the de-pastured stock as a result of the opening of the Verderers' Inclosures. OV interpreted this report to mean out of a total of 1785 acres of Inclosure 306 acres has been put back to heath with the remainder being open to stock, probably resulting in 350-400 acres of grazeable area when the grass returns to the areas where the trees have been felled. A concern was raised about the remaining stumps not being removed.</p> <p>CONDITION MONITORING OF THE NEW FOREST Julie Melin-Stubbs of the NFLAS had contacted Jenny Thomas from NE to find out if a condition assessment is needed. Jenny Thomas had replied to say there was no requirement within the HLS agreement to repeat the survey. DW informed the committee that NE is monitoring this in real time with their on-going surveys. OV reported that NE is actively monitoring the heather for signs of cattle overgrazing.</p>	

4. VGS Cross checks – Due diligence	<p>TW supplied a report highlighting all those commoners with over 20 animals that had increased their herd size by over 10% in the last year. This report also showed the combined herd sizes of family members and those commoners who are near the upper £6000 threshold. It also reported new 2016 commoners who had paid marking fees but not turned out. TW felt that these checks showed a general increase in numbers rather than a reallocation of existing animals.</p> <p>TW is continuing to receive confirmations from cattle commoners that their animals have fulfilled the qualifying time period.</p> <p>DR has one more invoice to put in from the NFLS for micro-chipping at the last sale.</p> <p>TW to contact the Pony Publicity Group to see if they have a claim for 2016.</p> <p>TW to check reflective collar stock levels and re-order if needed.</p>	TW TW
5. Pound rebuild 2016 and 2017 Proposals	<p>TW reported on the 2016 rebuilds – TW to inspect pounds when invoice is submitted and make sure the project has been completed within budget.</p> <p>2017 pound rebuilds – Sandhole Bridge, Sloden, Latchmoor and Pilley were put forward and approved by the committee. TW to obtain quotes from D Bessant.</p>	TW TW
6. Small grant applications	<p>The committee felt a change is required to the VGS small application grant form for 2017 to include a section for Agisters' comments. Clarification is also needed about if the applicant receives over €7,500 per year in agricultural state aid.</p> <p>Grants of varying sums were approved to the following members of the VGS:</p> <p>Ms H Kitcher – Barn for housing cattle Mr R Johnson – Barn for housing cattle Mr R Gray & Son – Cattle handling equipment Miss K Dovey – Trenching for the provision of water to holding Mr J Moore – Connection of electricity to holding Mr M Eccles & Miss M Hall – Connection of electricity to holding Mr A & D Goodall – Fencing for cattle handling pen Mrs P Mabbutt – Cattle handling system Mr & Mrs A Gerrelli – Concrete base for cattle winter quarters Mr B Ingram – Chain harrows Mr K Mansbridge – Hurdles for pony handling</p> <p>Refusals:</p> <p>Mr R Surplice – Fencing of back up grazing</p> <p>Deferred until next committee meeting:</p> <p>Miss K Harrison – Barn for housing cattle</p>	TW
7. Fallen Stock Wagon Report	<p>TW submitted her 2016 inspection report for the fallen stock wagon. OV was impressed with the increase in numbers of animals collected by the NFH and reiterated what a good service this was to the forest.</p> <p>TW to send invoice to NFH for the annual lease.</p>	TW
8. Sightline Fencing/ Driftway Fencing	<p>TW reported on the completed Driftway fencing project for 2016. Completed works were inspected in September by TW and Agister Rix and payment issued to the contractor.</p> <p>Proposals for 2017 driftway and sightline fence projects will be asked for from the Agisters at the next staff meeting.</p>	TW
9. Verderers' Water Troughs	<p>The committee gave consent for remedial works to be carried out to the ground under and around the Verderers' water troughs. A budget of £5000 was set for the project. TW to contact Robert Stride for quotes.</p>	TW

10. Incinerator Grant application	A grant application was received from the New Forest Hounds for a new incinerator. Committee agreed to part fund the project with a grant of £15,000. TW to notify NFH	TW
11. VGS Rule Breeches	Three VGS Rule breeches were discussed by the committee. Mrs Tillman failed to remove a cow carcass from open forest in August. The committee agreed this was a direct breach of the VGS rules and voted to withhold Mrs J Tillman's VGS payment in full. Mr D Dibdin had made an encroachment by placing a gate post on open forest – Mr Dibdin has assured the committee it will be removed next week – TW to check compliance before issuing VGS payment. Mr J Gray has been making repairs to his forest boundary fence to ensure it is stock proof – TW and Agister Maton to make final inspection before issuing VGS payment.	TW
12. Purchase of Agisters' Trailers	The committee agreed to VGS purchasing the replacement of Agisters' stock trailers at a cost of £15190. TW and DR to place order with New Forest Farm Machinery – 3 month lead time will result in this being paid for in 2017. DR to give TW a disclaimer form for not being VAT registered.	TW & DR
13. AOB	DR is due to attend a site visit at Holmsley Railway Bridge with NE. He asked if there were any issues NE would need to be made aware of. OV suggested the Head Agister also attend the meeting.	DR
14. Date for next Meeting	To be advised	TW

T Woodley
VGS Administrator

Copy to:
VGS Management Committee
Verderers