

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 17th October 2012 at 9.30 a.m. in the Verderers' Hall and the Library, the Queen's House, Lyndhurst.

PRESENT:	Mr Dominic May	Official Verderer
	Mr R Deakin	Elected Verderer & Staff Committee Chairman
	Mr A Gerrelli	Elected Verderer
	Miss D Macnair MBE	Elected Verderer
	Mr C Maton	National Park Appointed Verderer
	Mr B Dowsett	Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
	Mr A H Pasmore	Elected Verderer
	Mr D Readhead	Co-opted Elected Verderer
	Mrs P Thorne	DEFRA Appointed Verderer
	Mrs D Westerhoff	Natural England Appointed Verderer
IN ATTENDANCE:	Miss S Westwood	Clerk to the Verderers
	Mr J R Gerrelli	Head Agister (to 2012/6167)

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2012/6280 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The Minutes of the Court held on Wednesday, 19th September 2012 were approved and signed by the Official Verderer.

2012/6281 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

The Official Verderer, the Elected Verderers, including Mr Readhead together with Mrs Thorne and Mr Maton all declared an interest in the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme.

Mr Gerrelli declared an interest in matters concerning campsites.

Mr Maton advised the Court that he undertakes contract work for the Forestry Commission and therefore declared an interest in such matters.

Mr Barry Dowsett advised the Court that he is a Forestry Commission Voluntary Ranger.

2012/6282 CONDITION OF STOCK RESUME

The Head Agister reported that stock remains in excellent condition.

There are very few pigs on the Forest as there is a very light acorn crop this year. An extension to the pannage season is therefore unlikely to be necessary.

Cattle have only just started to return home. Some commoners have expressed concern that cattle remaining on the Forest may result in less food for the ponies during the coming winter, however the Head Agister did not feel this is likely to be a problem.

Miss Macnair commented that she had recently taken in a pony to worm with ivermectin. She said that the pony appeared to have a larger than usual threadworm/hookworm burden and it was suggested this may be due to the very wet weather.

2012/6283 STOCK LOSING CONDITION AND REMOVED FROM THE FOREST RESUME

No animals were removed from the Forest in September due to poor condition.

The total for the year to date therefore remains at 209 compared with 267 at this point in 2011.

2012/6284 MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE RESUME

	Forest	Common	Total
Ponies	4089	793	4882
Cattle	2280	879	3159
Donkeys	86	68	154
Pigs	105	105	210
Sheep	0	136	136
TOTALS	6560	1981	8541
Total PCD	6455	1740	8195

2012/6285 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT RESUME

There are no byelaw enforcement issues at present.

The Head Agister left the meeting.

2012/6286 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS RESUME

The Announcements and Decisions were approved.

OPEN COURT – 10.00 a.m. in the Verderers' Hall

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Mike Seddon, Acting Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest
Mr Mark Street, Area Land Agent (New Forest)

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER

2012/6287 VERDERERS' ELECTION

There will be an election of two Verderers next month when the terms of office of Dionis Macnair and David Readhead come to an end. We of course hope that both will seek a further term of six years, but other candidates may seek election. Nominations for candidates are required by noon on the 12th November. Nomination papers can be obtained from the Under Sheriff Jim Kennedy at solicitors Blake Laphorn in Chandlers Ford. If there are only two candidates, an election will not be necessary. If there are more than two candidates, the election will be held on Friday 30th November, at four polling stations: Lyndhurst, Lymington, Ringwood & Fordingbridge. After the polls close at 8pm, counting will take place that evening, and the result will be announced in the Verderers Hall when counting is complete.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2012/6288 RTA REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2012

The Agisters attended 18 accidents in September compared with 14 in September last year.

The total killed and injured was 13, compared with 10 in September last year.

8 ponies, 2 cows and 1 donkey died and 1 pony and 1 cow were injured.

13 accidents occurred in the dark, 1 at twilight and 4 in daylight.

13 involved cars or light commercials.

9 drivers were local – i.e. they live in or close to the perambulation of the Forest. 1 driver came from West Yorkshire, 1 from Fareham and 2 from Christchurch.

5 accidents were not reported.

In view of the number of accidents, I am not going to list them, but our weekly reports which contain all the details, are provided to the press.

I do however want to provide details of the hit and run incidents.

The first was on the 8th September in which an Iron Grey Colt Foal is believed to have been left in a ditch all night with a broken back. The colt was discovered at 7.10 a.m. in Summer Lane Beaulieu.

Also on the 8th September a donkey foal was hit in Avenue Road, Brockenhurst. The animal escaped injury. The driver was seen to stop to check on the donkey but then drove off. Unfortunately the witness was unable to take a note of the vehicle involved.

On the 13th September a red steer was found injured and subsequently destroyed by Agister Lovell. The accident happened at Hilltop and was reported at just after 11.00 a.m. It is believed the accident occurred the previous night.

Also on the 13th a dead grey mare was reported by a passing motorist at Burley Road, Hincheslea. The report was received at 07.40 hrs.

On the 19th September, Agister Napthine received a call to say that a vehicle had struck a pony at Bramble Hill. The vehicle failed to stop. Agister Napthine attended the scene but failed to find anything injured.

PRESENTMENT BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR OF THE NEW FOREST

There were no presentments from the Deputy Surveyor at this Court.

PRESENTMENTS

2012/6289 SHEEP ON THE FOREST AND COMMONS
Presentment by Mr Geordie Cook

Mr Cook again raised the issue of sheep on the Forest and Commons. He continues to believe that their presence in the Bramshaw area is illegal. He asked the Court to bear in mind his previous comments and he once more stressed that he believes the only animals that should be turned out are those for which rights of common were registered under the 1964 New Forest Act.

2012/6290 DITCHEND BROOK
Presentment by Dr David Hewitt – Retired Consultant in Public Health Medicine and Chartered Information Technology Professional – formerly Director of Public Health to the Winchester Health Authority and Associate Medical Director at the Royal Hampshire County Hospital. Past Chair of the Association of Litigation and Risk Management based at the Royal Society of Medicine, with 30 years experience at Main Board level management in the public sector.

Mr Hewitt provided a written copy of his presentment but his words in Open Court did not

include everything in his written submission.

Mr Hewitt said he lives at Forest Lodge, Godshill, Fordingbridge. He said his presentment mainly concerns the restoration work carried out by the Forestry Commission at Ditchend Brook.

Mr Hewitt said he has walked and ridden in the area for the past 7 years. He is concerned at the state of part of the Forest and the works which have been carried out. He said there is a noticeable deterioration in the cover, resulting from what he felt to be the over zealous burning of gorse and the restoration works that have been undertaken.

Mr Hewitt said there are no birds and little wildlife; there are no fish in the brook which he described as 'dead'. The brook was lined by gorse along the cutting but now there is no cover and there is a man made drain with bends in which nothing can survive.

5 trees which were left including 1 good holly have now died. The Forestry Commission states this area to be a fine example of restoration works but the trees have been left standing in water and as a result the leaves are now brown and falling off. Since the works have been carried out there are stagnant pools on the green area known as Ditchend Shade and the piece in front of Pitts Wood which doesn't drain. The ground is getting wetter and an area that was lawn now has increasing heather cover.

Mr Hewitt said in his opinion the place has been wrecked. It looks like a building site. Although grass is beginning to grow back it is inhibited by gravel.

Mr Hewitt said he believes the area will recover but he is concerned about other places such as Latchmore. He went onto say that in his opinion Policy sometimes gets the better of reality. He said he has seen it in the NHS and other public sector organisations which become obsessed with policy and opposes any interference. In respect of Latchmore Mr Hewitt said in his opinion, the internal control system was pushed aside but as a result of opposition to the scheme it has now become necessary to go over the due diligence process and that has resulted in the need for a planning application. He added that he is concerned at the arbitrary decision making that he can see going on.

Mr Hewitt finished his presentment by stating that he is concerned at the decision making process, concerned at the damage that has been caused to the Forest and he called upon the Verderers to bear in mind the points he has made when consulting on matters over which they have locus. He ended by saying he knows some Verderers share his concerns.

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2012/6291 SHEEP

DISCHARGE

It is accepted that sheep rights on the Commons were not captured and included in the Atlases prepared under the 1964 New Forest Act. Sheep are, however, entitled to be in the Forest in certain areas and the National Trust permits them to be turned out on its commons in the Bramshaw area of the New Forest. It is generally accepted that animals are entitled to move from one piece of common land to another under the right of vicinage and the Court felt that no action is necessary in respect of the sheep depastured in the Bramshaw area. If stock is gaining access to private property, it is always the responsibility of the owner/occupier of the private land to fence against legally depastured stock.

2012/6292 DITCHEND BROOK DISCHARGE

Members of the Court expressed varying views on the works that have been undertaken at Ditchend. All agreed however that this has been a difficult year weatherwise and that it would be wrong to come to any conclusions yet.

It was agreed that it is important to revisit restoration sites from time to time to ensure that the desired results have been achieved or to agree remedial works which may be necessary.

The Deputy Surveyor agreed that Mr Hewitt is correct that some trees have died. However, it was noted that a number of hollies have died in various places in the Forest. He added that he is very happy to look at some completed schemes, including those where work was carried out several years ago. He stressed that the Verderers input is important and problems will be added to the snagging list for action. He stressed that this has been an exceptionally wet summer and asked that the Verderers bear this in mind when requesting site visits.

The Court felt it is important to find out the reasons why the trees at Ditchend have died. Mr Pasmore said he will visit the site to ascertain what species of trees they are and also to investigate the report that there are pools of water. Mrs Westerhoff offered to prepare a report. The Official Verderer said he will also look at the site next time he is in the area. The Official Verderer went on to say that the HLS Board visited Ditchend on 27th October 2011.

It was agreed that a snagging tour would be helpful and a suitable date should be agreed in due course.

Action
MS

NEW SUBMISSIONS AND OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2012/6293 SOUTH WEST WATER METERING PROJECT – BROCKENHURST & DISCHARGE
LYNDHURST

The proposals to install water meters to every property in the Brockenhurst and Lyndhurst area were considered.

Concern was expressed at the use of plastic housings for the meters in areas where they are sited in gravel or where they are likely to be driven over. The Official Verderer reported that at his property, the plastic frame surrounding the lid broke up as a result of it being driven over, and the lid no longer had a frame to sit on, leaving a very dangerous hole in which an animal could easily become trapped and break a leg.

At North Weirs, Brockenhurst, where there are a number of meters to be replaced, all the meters will be in gravel. The Court agreed to consent to the works providing that metal housings are used where meters will be in gravel.

Action
MSt

2012/6294 ELECTRICITY SUPPLY TO BROOMHILL FARM, EAST BOLDRE DISCHARGE

The proposal to provide a permanent underground electricity supply to this property was approved subject to the standard three conditions of safe working conditions, satisfactory re-instatement and compensation for any loss of grazing.

2012/6295 ICE CREAM TRADING RESUME

The present two year agreement for ice cream trading locations is due for renewal at 1st January 2013 and the Forestry Commission sought a further agreement for three years on the basis that the consent has not proved to be contentious.

The Verderers, however, expressed concern at two of the sites where it is felt the locations of the Ice Cream Vans may be hazardous to the public as well as livestock. The vans at Janesmoor and Hatchet Pond are close to the public highway and the mix of children, passing vehicles and livestock is felt to be highly undesirable. As all responsible authorities are mindful of health and safety, the Verderers suggested that consideration should be given to re-siting these two vans in the adjacent car parks and they requested the matter be resumed to the November Court in order for this to be given full consideration.

Action
MS

2012/6296 CROWN LANDS CYCLE NETWORK RESUME

The Forestry Commission sought consent for the cycle network for a further three years. However, concern was expressed that the new cycle network signs which have been installed as part of an HLS project do not include the no-cycling element of the signage. This means that at the junctions which suffer from the most trespass off the official route, there is nothing to tell cyclists where they are not allowed to go. The Court felt strongly that this puts the Rangers and other FC staff who are trying to police cycling at a considerable disadvantage. Cyclists simply claim they didn't know they could not use a certain route because there is nothing to tell them they can't.

Mr Readhead proposed that the no-cycling element of the signage be installed as agreed and as a matter of urgency.

The Deputy Surveyor said he will go back to the relevant FC staff to find out exactly what signage has been erected and where.

Action
MS

Mr Pasmore commented that the last time the cycle network was approved, no conditions were included in the consent. He felt that this time, the Court should state that it expects cycling to be properly controlled. He also felt it is important to once more stress that the only new routes that will be allowed will be to replace present routes which are considered to be more damaging to the Forest.

The Deputy Surveyor said that the instruction to all staff is to encourage cyclists onto the network. In reply to a query from the Official Verderer, the Deputy Surveyor confirmed that again as agreed, the cycle network map is handed out without charge although where it is possible to charge, for example through certain cycle hire outlets, a charge is levied.

The Deputy Surveyor concluded by saying that where damage is caused by cyclists, action will be taken.

The Court decided that it would prefer to wait for a report on progress in respect of no cycling signage before giving its consent for the cycle network for a further three years.

Action
MS

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST COURT AND PREVIOUS COURTS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2012/6297 CAMPSITE OPENING TIMES & WARDEN OCCUPATION TIMES DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor confirmed that the Forestry Commission normally expects wardens and campsite staff to arrive no more than 10 days in advance of the opening date of their site and to remain no longer than 10 days after the closure of the site. As far as staff numbers are concerned, that very much depends on the size of the site but up to 7 is considered reasonable.

If it is necessary for staff to be on-site outside these dates for security or other reasons, the Forestry Commission will bring a request for a variance to the Court.

2012/6298 SEASONAL PITCHES ON CAMPSITES DISCHARGE

The Forestry Commission was asked to speak to Forest Holidays regarding caravans that apparently were not moved on Denny and Aldridge Hill Campsites last year. At present it is not known if the same issue arose this year. Mr Street said he has asked the Estates Keeper, Mr Graham Wilson to take photographs of the sites so there is evidence of what is where. Monitoring of the sites by the Forestry Commission is continuing.

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2012/6299 SNAGGING LIST RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor reported on progress as follows....

Queen's Meadow - The Deputy Surveyor said he has yet to respond to Mr Pasmore regarding Queen's Meadow but that he would do so as soon as possible. *(Note: An email was sent to Mr Pasmore, cc the Clerk on 19th October setting out the plan of action).* He said the works are not complete. Some wood has yet to be cleared. Larger fallen deadwood will however be left. It is definitely work in progress.

Action
MS

Ocknell - Mr Stride (FC) is organising the removal of cut timber, however, the site is extremely wet and so at the moment there is a limit to what can be done.

Turf Hill – the dumped tyre reported by Mr Pasmore has been removed. Some stumps have been lowered but Mr Pasmore felt that the work is not satisfactory. He asked if the machine that has been used previously to grind down the stumps is available? The Deputy Surveyor was unable to provide an answer and added that if it is not available the work has to be done by hand. Mr Pasmore said he will go back and check what has been done.

Other actions remain on the Snagging List.

The Official Verderer asked the Deputy Surveyor to bring copies of the list for all Verderers to each Court.

Action
MS

2012/6300 PENNY MOOR AND LATCHMORE RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor reported that no further progress has been made in respect of these two projects.

As regards Penny Moor, Mr Pasmore said that at the recent OFAC meeting it was reported that rare plants have now been found in the drain which have stopped work. The Commoners' representatives are far from happy at the variations to the agreed works but the Deputy Surveyor said that if something happens such as the unexpected discovery of rare plants, there is no option but to stop work until a solution can be agreed.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2012/6301 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON PUBLIC ACCESS AND FREE ROAMING STOCK RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor asked that this be discussed at the next Court. The Clerk will circulate copies of the paper to all Verderers.

Action
SW

2012/6302 CONCRETE CLEARANCE ON BEAULIEU AERODROME DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer asked for an update on progress with this project which has been funded by the HLS. He suggested that more work should be done and asked if the problem is a lack of money or lack of staff resources? If it is a question of funding, the Forestry Commission was advised it is welcome to apply for more from the HLS.

It was suggested that Natural England may be concerned about plants that like limestone! Some of the old manholes need finishing off as they are at present rather hazardous. The Deputy Surveyor added that he wants to get the area mapped so it is possible to see what has and hasn't been done.

Action MS

2012/6303 FALLEN TREE OUTSIDE LONG MEADOW RESUME

Mr Deakin said he believes the tree has not yet been removed.

Action MS

2012/6304 FOREST HOLIDAYS STRUCTURE DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor advised the Court the Forest Holidays has been re-structured. The cabin side of the business now has a different partner but the camping and caravanning part of the business in the New Forest, known as 'Camping in the Forest', remains unchanged and continues to be a partnership with the Forestry Commission.

2012/6305 WATER ON THE HILLTOP TO IPERS BRIDGE ROAD DISCHARGE

Mr Readhead asked if the work the Forestry Commission has agreed to undertake to remove the standing water which is very close to this road could be brought forward. In places the water is actually running across the road and its presence is a hazard to motorists and stock. The Deputy Surveyor noted the request.

Action MS

The Deputy Surveyor left the meeting

The order of items on the agenda was varied as the Deputy Surveyor needed to leave the meeting early.

FURTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST COURT AND PREVIOUS COURTS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2012/6306 ROUNDHILL WATER TOWER RESUME

Sembcorp Bournemouth Water wish to retain the tower and are unwilling to create a reservoir which would take up more space than the present tower and would require upgrading of the pumping system.

The consent for this structure is due for renewal in 6 years time and concern was expressed that if agreement was given for refurbishment of the existing tower now, the Water Company would be reluctant to take it down so soon afterwards.

However, after further discussion the Court did not agree on whether the tower should be replaced. It was suggested an outline plan of what a reservoir would look like would be useful.

All members of the Court were unhappy with the present structure and in particular the surrounding fence which is considered to be visually intrusive and unacceptable. The matter was therefore resumed until November to provide time for the Water Company to submit further proposals.

2012/6307 HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE PLAN RESUME

The plan has been promised for 2 – 3 weeks time. In view of the proposed works on Roger Penny Way, the plan is considered to now be urgent.

2012/6308 ROGER PENNY WAY RESUME

The Highway Authority is resurfacing Roger Penny Way. The proposals that have been provided to the Forestry Commission and the Court are not entirely acceptable. There is nothing in the proposals in mitigation for damage to verges which is virtually unavoidable given the very wet weather. Indeed, damage is already being caused on the diversion routes. Proper reinstatement of the verges must be agreed. Mr Street and the Clerk will contact Hampshire Highways in this respect.

Action
MStr / SW

2012/6309 CAMPSITE SURVEY RESUME

Mr Street is still awaiting the GIS maps from Jonathan Cox.

Action MStr

2012/6310 HAMPSHIRE STREET LIGHTING PFI – STAKEHOLDER BRIEFING DISCHARGE

Mr Dowsett attended the briefing on behalf of the Court. He reported that the plan is to change the present sodium lights to LED's. Most of the lamps are in the residential/communal areas of the larger villages. The only lamps likely to be of interest to the Court are those on the outskirts of the villages and where there are verges grazed by Forest stock. Mr Dowsett felt the works are unlikely to result in a significant impact on the Forest. Replacement of the lamps and standards are to be on a like for like basis. Protection of the verges and ensuring the safety of commoners' animals are the priority and Mr Dowsett said he will ensure that the officer in charge of the project at Hampshire County Council, Julian Higgins PFI Policy & Communications Team Leader, is made aware of the Court's concerns in that respect.

- 2012/6311 DUR HILL CABLE DISCHARGE
- Mr Street confirmed it is a BT cable and that it has now been buried.
- 2012/6312 SSSI WINTER SITE VISIT DATES DISCHARGE
- A copy of the proposed winter site visit dates was circulated to all members of the Court with the request that they let Ms Sarah Oakley know if they will attend.

ENCROACHMENTS OF INTEREST TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

- 2012/6313 ENCROACHMENTS INVOLVING THE FORESTRY COMMISSION INCLUDING ENCROACHMENTS LIST UPDATE AND REPORT ON ANY NEWLY IDENTIFIED ENCROACHMENTS RESUME
- Action
MStr
- There are no new encroachments and the list of outstanding encroachments is getting shorter.
- In **Burley**, where stones and kerbs have been removed from outside properties on the Open Forest, works will now be required to ensure that verges are not damaged by vehicles. Ditches, banks and dragons teeth will be required and this is in hand.
- A purge on estate agents signs is the next priority.
- The fence at **Home Farm Ashurst** has now been put back to its correct position.
- The fence at **2 Honey Lane, Burley** has also be returned to its correct position.
- Miss Macnair repeated that she is most concerned at the damage that is being caused outside **Little Hay, Burley**, because of a sign advising riders to use a grassed area.

FURTHER BUSINESS CONCERNING THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

- 2012/6314 A31 FENCING AT PICKET POST DISCHARGE
- The Court raised no objections to the proposed further fencing works on the A31 in the vicinity of Picket Post.
- 2012/6315 TREE IN CROCKFORD CAR PARK DISCHARGE
- Mr Gerrelli reported that it appears someone has planted a tree in Crockford Car Park. Mr Street said he will investigate and if necessary the tree will be removed. Action
MSt
- 2012/6316 BRACKEN CONTROL DISCHARGE
- Mr Readhead wished to thank the Forestry Commission for the excellent bracken control work which is being undertaken using the new machines. He did, however, ask if it would be possible for the work to be done in May in future as it is believed that if bracken is dealt with then, re-growth is reduced.
- A discussion then took place on the merits of the various methods of bracken control – cutting, rolling, spraying. Each appears to have

advantages and disadvantages but all are dependent upon considerations such as the bird nesting season and weather conditions.

The licence for Azulox (spray) which has been used on the Forest for some years has reportedly expired. The manufacturers did not intend to apply for a renewal because of the cost but such is the level of objection from customers that they have now decided it is worth while.

The Forestry Commission wishes to increase cutting of bracken.

Mr Street left the meeting

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

2012/6317 INCIDENTS ON THE WEIRS DRIFT RESUME

The Head Agister, Jonathan Gerrelli and Agister Robert Maton were asked to join the meeting to give their account of two incidents at the Weirs drift involving members of the public.

In one incident an elderly couple reportedly fell in a ditch and in the other incident a female cyclist was caught on a footbridge by some ponies and was injured.

Because claims have been made against the Verderers in respect of both incidents, further details will not be included in these minutes. It is, however, to be recorded that the Verderers will refute the claims made against them in respect of these two incidents.

The Clerk was asked to liaise with the insurers, and to keep the Official Verderer and Mr Richard Deakin, Chairman of the Staff Committee, fully apprised as the matter continues. Action Clerk

The Head Agister and Agister Maton left the meeting.

OTHER MATTERS ARISING

2012/6318 NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY OPERATIONAL PLAN REDEFINING THE TRANQUIL AREAS DISCHARGE

There was nothing to report at this meeting. The item will be resumed at a later date when further information is to hand.

2012/6319 ROCKFORD FARM RESUME

Mrs Westerhoff reported that at the recent auction, Hampshire County Council made a successful bid for part of Rockford Farm. It is understood it has purchased Lot 3 which includes a barn and is adjacent to the Common. Lots 1 and 2 were not sold.

A meeting is to be held on 31st October to set up and agree the remit of a group who will manage the property which is considered to be ideal for use as a commoners' holding.

2012/6320 MARKING OF CATTLE DISCHARGE

This item was resumed from the April Court. It was agreed the present policy for marking cattle will remain unchanged i.e. cattle must be marked and paid-for at the same time.

2012/6321 STALLION BLOODLINE SCHEME DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin reported that 6 colts will be moved from Long Meadow into the old stallion grazing in New Park. The fillies have been removed from the grazing and have gone back to their owners.

The Stallion sub-committee will meet to discuss whether the scheme should be repeated.

ENCROACHMENTS

There were no encroachments to discuss.

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME & VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME

2012/6322 HLS BOARD MEETING & VGS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE DISCHARGE

The HLS Board met on the 3rd October. The Clerk was asked to remind Mr Draper to circulate the minutes to all Verderers.

Action
CD

The VGS Management committee meets on the 16th November.

MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

There were no matters to discuss.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

2012/6323 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR SEPTEMBER 2012 RESUME

The financial statement for September 2012 was approved.

2012/6324 AUDITED ACCOUNTS RESUME

The draft Audited Accounts were circulated. Members of the Court will be asked to approve them at the November Court. Any queries should be addressed to the Official Verderer or the Clerk.

2012/6325 MARKING FEES RESUME

The level of marking fees for next year would usually be discussed and agreed at this meeting. However, the audited accounts have only just been received and the budget has yet to be prepared. It was therefore agreed that the Clerk will make preparing the budget for the next three years a priority. Marking fees will be discussed as soon as possible after the budget is available with a view to making an announcement in the November Open Court. If necessary a special meeting will be arranged.

STAFF MATTERS (including the Staff Committee)

2012/6326 POUNDS

RESUME

Mr Deakin raised the question of funding pound repairs. There was a general discussion on the pros and cons of using hardwood or softwood for the building of pounds. It is understood the HLS/VGS will pay for new pounds by way of a capital items application but repairs and maintenance to existing pounds will presumably be covered from the Verderers' general fund. A maintenance budget is therefore required and the Clerk asked Mr Deakin if he would be able to provide some costings for inclusion in the 3 year budget. The Official Verderer said he thinks there may be some VGS funding available for pound maintenance.

TRAINING

HEALTH AND SAFETY

There were no matters under the above headings to discuss.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2012/6327 NORTHERN COMMONS

RESUME

Mrs Westerhoff referred the Court to a paper she had prepared concerning the condition of the Bramshaw Commons. It appears that the condition of the commons, as respects Natural England's assessment, is not as dire as first thought.

2012/6328 RE-SEEDED AREAS

DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin referred to the re-seeded areas, some of which are now more heather than grass. He suggested consideration should be given to how they are valued and he questioned the priorities, namely historic, cultural or landscape. This is a matter for further discussion and consultation with Natural England.

Action
DW

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 13.23 hrs.