

**MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 22nd March 2017 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 B Dowsett	Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
	Mr J Greenwood	Elected Verderer
	Miss D Macnair MBE	Senior Elected Verderer
	Mr G M H Mills DL	DEFRA Appointed Verderer
	Mr A H Pasmore	Elected Verderer
	Mr D Readhead	Elected Verderer
	Mrs D Westerhoff	Natural England Appointed Verderer

APOLOGIES:	Cllr E Heron	National Park Appointed Verderer
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IN ATTENDANCE:	Miss Sue Westwood	Clerk to the Verderers
	Mr Jonathan Gerrelli	Head Agister
	Lord Manners	Official Verderer Designate

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2017/9166	WELCOME TO LORD MANNERS	DISCHARGE
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The Official Verderer welcomed Lord 'Willie' Manners who will be taking over as Official Verderer from the 1st May.

2017/9167	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	RESUME
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The Minutes of Court held on 22nd February were approved and signed.

2017/9168	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	RESUME
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The Official Verderer, and Elected Verderers Mr Deakin, Mr Greenwood and Mr Readhead all declared an interest in the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme, the Verderers Grazing Scheme, and the Basic Payment Scheme. Mr Pasmore declared an interest in the Basic Payment Scheme.

Mr Deakin, Mr Readhead and Mr Greenwood are members of the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association committee. Mr Deakin is also Treasurer.

Mr Deakin and Mr Readhead are Directors of the New Forest Livestock Society. They are also members of the New Forest Stallion Syndicate.

Mr Dowsett is a Forestry Commission Volunteer Ranger.

Mr Greenwood is employed part-time by Cadland Estate and therefore has an interest in the Stallion Grazing. Mr Greenwood also has a stallion of his own.

Mr Hallam Mills declared an interest in HLS Schemes as his Estate is in Higher Level Stewardship. The Estate is also involved in the Better Boundaries Project, run by the New Forest Land Advice Service with support from Natural England. Mr Mills is also a Patron of the New Forest Trust

Mrs Westerhoff is a tenant of the Forestry Commission.

- 2017/9169 **CONDITION OF STOCK – REPORT BY THE HEAD AGISTER** **RESUME**
- Whilst stock is generally still in good condition, some animals have suffered a little in recent weeks as the weather has become wet and it is still quite cold. A lot of ponies have lost condition in the past month.
- This is the time of year when stock is always at its lowest ebb and won't improve until the grass starts to grow, which is always later than everyone hopes.
- The situation is far from drastic and the Agisters are removing stock which falls below the required standard.
- Some animals are suffering from lice - particularly young ponies. They are being treated by their owners as necessary.
- 2017/9170 **REPORT ON ANIMALS REMOVED FROM THE FOREST** **RESUME**
- This very useful report had been circulated prior to the Court.
- 2017/9171 **PONIES DE-BARKING BEECH TREES IN MARK ASH** **DISCHARGE**
- All but one of the ponies thought to be responsible for de-barking beech trees in Mark Ash have been caught. Of the ten ponies caught to date, evidence is available in respect of six. The other four are at the moment being regarded as guilty by association. The owner of two of these ponies wishes to remove them from the Forest anyway and the remaining two are currently in New Park whilst agreement is reached with the owners as to their future. The one remaining pony, thought to be implicated in de-barking trees, will be caught as soon as possible.
- The Head Agister has asked the Forestry Commission's Volunteer Ranger who is monitoring the damage to look out for new damage.
- The Court expressed concern that the monitor is not recording the damage in sufficient detail. Some of the de-barking has been carried out on fallen timber and that is not unusual throughout the Forest.
- The Court was disappointed at the delay in implementing the study to analyse why some ponies have started to de-bark trees. The study included possibly blood testing the ponies guilty of the damage to find out if they were nutritionally deficient and therefore drawn to eating tree bark. Now that the ponies have been removed, their nutritional plane will have altered as they are no longer on the Forest and so even if they are still available, blood testing now may prove to be a waste of money.
- This matter will be discussed again later today in the presence of the Forestry Commission.
- 2017/9172 **STOCK DEATHS - OTHER THAN ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS** **RESUME**
- This very useful report had been circulated prior to the Court.
- 2017/9173 **MARKING FEES** **DISCHARGE**
- Marking fees are coming in well now. Payment by bank transfer is currently being accepted on a trial basis.

2017/9174 REPORT ON MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND RESUME
COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
Forest Ponies	957	538
Forest Cattle	456	246
Forest Donkeys	42	16
Forest Pigs	0	0
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	1455	800
Common Ponies	148	112
Common Cattle	318	313
Common Donkeys	18	3
Common Pigs	0	50
Common Sheep	30	0
Total Common Stock	514	478
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	1455	800
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	484	428
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	1939	1228
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	1969	1278

2017/9175 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT

DISCHARGE

No new byelaw offences have been reported.

2017/9176 ANNOUNCEMENT

RESUME

The Announcement was approved.

2017/9177 RURAL CRIME CONFERENCE

DISCHARGE

Mr Mills reported on his recent attendance at this conference where he reminded the Police of the need to advise the Agisters promptly when they receive a report of an incident involving a Forest animal. The Assistant Chief Constable confirmed the Police have the necessary maps and information and will ensure they do so.

The Head Agister confirmed that at present everything is working well.

2017/9178 CATTLE DEATHS ON PENN COMMON

DISCHARGE

A Penn Common commoner has lost 5 or 6 cattle. Autopsy points to poisoning. The National Trust is investigating whether the spray used on bracken may have caused the deaths although it is a product that has been used on the Forest for years without any problem. Approximately six months elapsed between the spraying and the deaths of the animals.

Mr Readhead said he lost a pony at Blackfield, where bracken spraying had also taken place. He said he would be interested to hear if the National Trust is able to provide any further information.

It was agreed the Forestry Commission should be asked to liaise with the National Trust, as the same product is used on the Crown land.

Action
Clerk

The Head Agister left the meeting.

OPEN COURT – 10.00 a.m.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Bruce Rothnie, Deputy Surveyor
Mr Paul Gurgeon, Land Agent (New Forest)

The Head Agister opened the Court with the usual proclamation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER

2017/9179 NEW OFFICIAL VERDERER

I am very pleased today to welcome our new Official Verderer, The Lord Manners. He is shadowing me for a handover up to the end of April, and he will start the new role on 1st May. His father was Official Verderer in the 1980s and the family has been in the New Forest for over 200 years. Lord Manners practised as a solicitor in the City of London, retiring in 2014. He now farms in the Avon Valley. He is chairman of the Trustees of the Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy and a trustee of a number of other local charities.

2017/9180 GARDEN WASTE

We are approaching the time of year when we will all be cutting our lawns and sorting out our gardens after the winter. Please may we remind residents that lawn mowings are very dangerous to ponies and donkeys and they must not be left where the animals can get to them. Tipping your grass cuttings over the fence or emptying a bag on the Open Forest may be a cheap and easy way of disposing of your garden waste, but it can result in a very sick or even dead pony. Mown grass left in a heap heats up, and when eaten, the resulting gasses that accumulate in the stomach of a pony or donkey can result in a very painful death for the unfortunate animal.

2017/9181 OPENREACH LEGAL SEPARATION FROM BRITISH TELECOM

Over the last few years, the Verderers have come in for much unwarranted criticism over the ineffective roll-out of broadband in the New Forest. I have informed the Court on many occasions that actually the inefficiencies and unwillingness is to be found within BT Openreach itself, an organisation which in my experience exhibits all the inefficiencies of a nationalised industry without the democratic accountability. For example, it was in October last year that the Verderers received its first application for consent for a broadband box, and we granted it: in fact it was my local one at Hatchett Gate. Six months later we are still awaiting our broadband box.

Nationally too there has been much dissatisfaction with BT Openreach, so much so that on 10th March the regulator Ofcom announced that it has forced BT to legally separate Openreach. Ofcom Chief Executive Sharon White described it as a "significant day for ... broadband users".

2017/9182 THE NEW FOREST

Today I rode my horse to Court, much like our forbears would have done before the advent of the motor car. It occurred to me that we mostly notice the forest through the car window, as if watching it on television, only seeing the bit closest to the road as we whizz past. This morning, however, I was able to take in the early morning beauty, the bird life of Beaulieu Heath, the hidden backwoods of the driftway between Hawkhill and Frame, across the railway, past the drift pound, and up through Stubby and Parkhill skirting herds of deer, to emerge in Lyndhurst at Beechen Lane. A real pleasure. It has reminded me that this is a working forest, commercial tree plantations and stock management rubbing along side by side. It also reminded me why we all agree to serve as Verderers, in order to preserve this unique place.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2017/9183 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 2017

The Agisters attended 12 accidents in February.

5 ponies died and 1 was injured. 1 cow was injured. 4 ponies and a donkey were reportedly involved in accidents but nothing was found.

9 accidents occurred in the dark, and 3 at twilight.

2 drivers are known to be local. There were no hit and runs.

The number of animals killed and injured to date is 12, compared with 10 in the same period last year.

2017/9184 THE SPEED CAMERA VAN

We have data for January and February.

In January, 158 motorists were caught speeding on the unfenced roads, in February 253 were caught.

PRESENTMENTS

There were no presentments at this Court.

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

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

2017/9185 BROOMY PLAIN VERGE RESTORATION PROPOSALS

RESUME

The Court approved the scheme as presented subject to obtaining the advice of the Agisters about whether it is better to have the ditch or the bank against the road. This is to do with safety, particularly when drifting commoning stock across the roads. The Clerk was asked to discuss this with the Agisters and advise the Deputy Surveyor of their thoughts and also to provide Agisters Napthine and Rix with the details of the works.

Action Clerk

The Court was concerned about the number of dragon's teeth which are proposed (because of the more "urban" feel they will create) but understood the need to prevent over-running by 4x4s. When the verge protection works are implemented, the minimum number of dragons teeth possible will be used.

Hampshire County Council and the Forestry Commission's new Verge Restoration Officer will liaise with local businesses and residents in advance of the works commencing, in order that everyone understands the need for the works. In addition, efforts will be made to minimise any detrimental effects the works may have on local businesses.

As respects the removal of concrete on Stoney Cross as mitigation for loss of habitat and compensation for loss of grazing, the Verderers are keen that some of the concrete along the straight mile is eventually removed in addition to part of the areas of concrete adjacent to the road leading from the A31. The National Park Authority archaeologists are currently undertaking a study to see if there are any areas which they feel should be

retained for historical reasons. It was pointed out that under the HLS verge restoration project, there is an opportunity for more concrete to be removed.

The Deputy Surveyor confirmed that Hampshire County Council engineers will construct the passing places with the Forestry Commission managing the concrete removal and verge restoration.

Mr Readhead proposed the scheme as set out in the documentation be approved and Mr Dowsett seconded the proposal which was carried unanimously.

2017/9186	TRACK AND CROSSING PLACE AT MATLEY	RESUME May Action DS
	The Deputy Surveyor will investigate and report in May.	
2017/9187	SWAN GREEN PAVILION	RESUME
	Mr Grugeon explained that his assistant, Michael Graham has been in touch with the ecologist who has been studying the bats, bugs and beetles with a view to obtaining his final report. Upon receipt of that report, a planning application will be submitted for the demolition of the pavilion.	Action PG
2017/9188	ACCESS LICENCES	RESUME
	A meeting will be convened between the Official Verderer, Mr Heron and Mr Grugeon to discuss some proposed new wording of the licences and accompanying letter.	Action OV/EH/PG
2017/9189	WOODGREEN CRICKET CLUB	RESUME June
	Natural England has responded to requests by the Cricket Club to consult on drawing up a management plan.	
	The Club has suggested to Mr Grugeon that the cladding on the pavilion be extended down to the ground which will enable them to use the space underneath for secure storage. The Court felt this is acceptable.	
	As respects the practice wicket, the Club is proposing to obtain a purpose made tarpaulin with sleeves on all sides to accept scaffold poles. This will mean the tarpaulin can be weighted down but the poles will not be visible. This was also felt to be acceptable, subject to the tarpaulin being a dark green colour. The tarpaulin should not overlap the wicket onto the grazing.	
	The agreement between the Cricket Club and the Forestry Commission is with the solicitors. Once it has been returned, Mr Grugeon will bring it to the Court for approval.	Action PG
2017/9190	HIGHCLIFFE TO CALSHOT COASTAL PATH	RESUME
	The plan provided shows the path exiting onto the Forest at Moonhills Gate, crossing the Forest following the track to where it meets the B road, Summer Lane, and then following the road.	
	The Court was unhappy with the proposal for several reasons. Firstly, members of the Court feel that walkers won't walk out to the road but will follow the fence line down to the cattle grid causing erosion on the Open Forest. Secondly, people are unlikely to walk down the road because it is too dangerous and this will result in erosion on the Forest on or close to	

the verges.

Verderers' consent is required because the path will be a new 'recreational facility'.

It was agreed that an alternative route is required. Mrs Westerhoff and Mr Readhead agreed to talk to Mr John Truswell at Natural England.

Action
DW/DR

The public consultation commences shortly and there is a need to progress the proposals as quickly as possible. The Clerk will provide the Deputy Surveyor with contact details for Mrs Westerhoff and Mr Readhead.

Action
Clerk / DS

2017/9191 NEW PARK FENCING

DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor said he believes the work on the fencing is now complete. Discussions continue about constructing a box gate to prevent ponies accessing New Park Plantation and thence through the Inclosure fence into New Park.

2017/9192 PONIES DE-BARKING BEECH TREES IN MARK ASH

DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor was appraised of the earlier discussion.

Mr Deakin said the Agisters are to be congratulated for their quiet, consistent approach to catching and removing the ponies thought to be responsible for de-barking the trees.

A further discussion took place concerning the way that the monitoring is being done and the Deputy Surveyor was asked to ensure that the monitor provides a more detailed report. In particular, it is important to know if there is any new damage which might indicate ponies are still at large which are de-barking the trees.

The Deputy Surveyor echoed Mr Deakin's earlier comments about the Agisters and he thanked Jonathan and his team for a great job.

In the January HLS Board meeting, the go-ahead was given for the study to try to find out why certain ponies de-bark trees. However, due to Natural England's request that three quotations be obtained for the work, no-one had been appointed. The Deputy Surveyor was advised that it is felt it may now be too late to undertake the study as the ponies which are known to have been responsible have now been removed. If it is still intended that the study be undertaken, there is a need to get on with it as a matter of urgency.

2017/9193 GATE CATCHES

DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor said he enquired as to the provenance of the 'trombone' catches which are now being used in the Forest and was advised that the British Horse Society and members of the Access Forum recommended them. In addition, Natural England believed they are the best handle for multi use. The HLS paid for them in the first instance.

Several members of the Court, however, said that they believe from both personal experience and anecdotal evidence from friends, that the trombone catches can be dangerous when operated by horse riders and it was suggested that their use should be restricted to gates where access by disabled people, particularly those in wheelchairs, is likely. On other

gates, particularly where wheelchair access is physically not possible, it is suggested the old fashioned (and significantly cheaper) spring catches should be fitted.

The Deputy Surveyor said he would like to take the issue back to the Access Forum. Mr Mills who represents the Court on the Access Forum, agreed to advise the Forum of the Court's views.

Action
DS/HM

2017/9194 SEAT IN MARK ASH

RESUME
May

The Deputy Surveyor said that one of the FC Rangers put a note on the seat asking whoever put the seat out to contact them. In due course a member of the family got in touch. The family, which has a strong connection with the Forest, admitted they erected the seat without seeking prior consent. It was sited so that the wife of the person who died can sit and look out over Mark Ash wood. The Forestry Commission is in discussion with the family about moving the seat to within Anderwood Inclosure. The Court expressed the preference that it be put on Crown Freehold at Bolderwood.

Action
DS

Mrs Westerhoff commented that a seat seems to have appeared at Pipers Wait near the Reservoir which she did not remember seeing before. The Deputy Surveyor said he will investigate.

Action
DS

The policy of both the Forestry Commission and the Court, is that seats are not allowed on the Forest. It was pointed out that the inclosures are not permanent and they may not, therefore, be the best place for seats either. Seats are a recreational facility and do, therefore, require Verderers' consent.

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2017/9195 REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE LIST

RESUME

A new problem was reported at Holmsley which needs to be added to the list. Between Holmsley Ridge and Holmsley Inclosure, rows of stakes which would have been used as part of the mire restoration are standing proud now that the infill has washed away. They need to be removed.

Action
DS

It was queried whether it is still normal practice to cut the strings on the top bales when heather bales are used as infilling in order to prevent gaps being left where animals may trap their legs. This was an agreed procedure when mire restoration works were first approved. It is accepted that there may be times when cutting the strings is not desirable. The Deputy Surveyor will get some feedback from the HLS team.

Action
DS

An update is needed on the works at Queen Bower and also Widden Bottom.

Action
DS

ENCROACHMENTS

2017/9196 ENCROACHMENT LIST

RESUME

An updated list was provided.

2017/9197 CROWDERS

DISCHARGE

Several vehicles are still regularly parked on the grazing outside this property. Mr Gurgeon and Mr Marsh will visit and speak to the householder.

Plans are awaited for car free defence work outside Fritham House. A solution to the problem of how to ensure access is still available for the drift was discussed and it was agreed a lockable barrier will provide the answer. This matter will be picked up by the newly appointed Verge Restoration Officer who is due to take up her post in June. This item is to remain on the Encroachment list.

2017/9198 FENCE AT KINGS COPSE

DISCHARGE

It was reported that the owner of a property has cut back some hollies and erected a fence 1 meter out from the original fenceline. Mr Marsh (FC) is dealing with this encroachment but as the land on which the new fence has been erected may not be Crown Land, the CDA will be asked to intervene. This item is to remain on Encroachment List.

ACTION LIST

2017/9199 ACTION LIST

RESUME

An updated action list was provided. It was pointed out that the Action List and the Encroachments List appears to have become muddled. It was agreed that the lists need to be sorted out.

2017/9200 THE ROYAL OAK AT FRITHAM

DISCHARGE
to action list

This establishment continues to generate a huge amount of verge parking and as a result the verges in the vicinity are badly damaged. The Deputy Surveyor said this is another matter for the newly appointed Verge Protection Officer and he will discuss it with her when she takes up her post.

2017/9201 MOGSHADE CUTTING

DISCHARGE
to action list

Joyriders are continuing to drive up and down the bank and on the verge going west, causing significant damage to the grazing. The solution may be a short run of dragon's teeth. The Deputy Surveyor will pass this to the relevant staff and the matter will be added to the Action List.

2017/9202 TURF HILL INCLOSURE

DISCHARGE
to action list

A site meeting with the Beat Team has yet to be arranged to discuss the removal of the ruts.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2017/9203 NON-CONDUCTING GOALPOSTS AT LADYCROSS

RESUME

The Forestry Commission was asked to find out whether the 'goal posts' that were erected over the track down to the railway line at Ladycross a year ago are still required. They were erected to protect the overhead cables whilst timber was being extracted. If they are still required, they need tidying up otherwise the Court would welcome their removal.

Action
DS

2017/9204	INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE FLYING DRONES ILLEGALLY	RESUME
	Miss Macnair asked the Deputy Surveyor if any progress has been made on the suggestion that information cards should be supplied to Parish Councillors to hand out to people seen flying drones illegally. The Deputy Surveyor replied that nothing has been done yet.	Action DS
2017/9205	CONTROLLED BURNING VERSUS MULCHING	RESUME
	A discussion took place on the merits of burning versus mulching. At Hilltop an area of old gorse has been mulched and the resulting thick layer of dead vegetation appears to be preventing any regeneration. This is in contrast to areas which have been burned, where regeneration is obvious.	
	It was agreed that where there is not a lot of vegetation mulching does work, however, where vegetation is thicker and a deep layer of mulch is left, regeneration is stifled as nothing grows underneath it.	
	When gorse is burned, the thick stems remain upright and the gorse quickly regenerates as does the grass. It is thought that burning old gorse is the best option, whereas young gorse can be mulched reasonably satisfactorily.	
	Some years ago, the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust undertook an HLS study to identify whether cutting or burning is more beneficial. Burning came out as the better option. It was suggested the answer to the current question may therefore be in the report of the study. The Deputy Surveyor was asked to find the study and circulate it to the Court.	Action DS
	The question was also asked why burning cannot take place in February if the weather is dry enough? This year, February was dry but very little burning was carried out. Attempts to burn now, in March, have been thwarted by wet weather and as a result very little burning has been possible.	Action DS
2017/9206	CONCRETE BLOCKS AT CULVERLEY	DISCHARGE
	Concrete blocks remain on the Forest at these two locations. Mr Grugeon confirmed a formal letter has been sent to the occupier at Culverley Farm asking for the blocks to be removed. Dragon's teeth will only be put in if proven necessary.	
2017/9207	CONCRETE ON A DRIVEWAY AT HILL TOP	DISCHARGE
	Mr Marsh will visit Hill Top and arrange for the concrete blocks which have been put out along the edge of the track to be removed.	Action DS
2017/9208	IPLEY CROSSROADS	DISCHARGE
	Following a number of serious injury accidents and two fatalities, Hampshire County Council wishes to undertake a feasibility study to identify how to make Ipley Crossroads safer. The study will involve taking measurements but also digging some trial holes. The Court approved the survey, which will also be subject to Natural England's consent.	
	The Forestry Commission confirmed it is also happy with the proposed study.	

The Deputy Surveyor and Land Agent left the meeting

ENCROACHMENTS NOT INVOLVING THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2017/9209 EXTRACTION OF GRAVEL FROM ROCKFORD PIT DISCHARGE

A report has been received from the National Trust that a large quantity of gravel has been taken from Rockford Pit. Whilst some former Somerley Estate properties do have the right to take gravel for their own use within the Parish, Natural England's consent is required in respect of from where and how it is removed. The National Trust will be interested to receive any information which might lead to the identity of the person or persons who took the gravel.

2017/9210 HATCHET GREEN VERGE DAMAGE RESUME

The Clerk said she has discussed the damaged verges with the Parish Clerk who has indicated that the Parish Council would welcome some assistance in trying to resolve the problem. The HLS cannot contribute because Hatchet Green is out of area. However, it may be possible for the Verderers to help with some funding out of either the gridding fund or the railway fund. Mr Pasmore and the Clerk will contact the Parish Clerk to offer assistance with identifying a possible way forward.

Action
AHP/SW

OTHER MATTERS ARISING

2017/9211 NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY RECREATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STEERING GROUP RESUME

The new Official Verderer may take over on the steering group in due course. Mr Dowsett sits on the Advisory Group.

The NPA's Recreation Strategy 2010 - 2030 document is being reviewed and a copy had been circulated to all Verderers prior to the meeting. The Court is keen to ensure that the Verderers' views are included in the strategy. Mr Pasmore and Mrs Westerhoff volunteered to draw up a response for approval of the Court before submission.

Action
AHP/DW

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME & VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME

2017/9212 HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP AGM DISCHARGE

The AGM is on 5th April, commencing at 5.30 p.m. Everyone is invited.

2017/9213 VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME DISCHARGE

Application forms are coming in.

MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2017/9214 NEW FOREST WATER CATCHMENT GROUP DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff reported on the meeting she attended recently. There are a number of water quality issues in the Forest. Highways England is looking at the A31 and a fish pass is being considered at Ocknell Arch.

The Water Environment / Improvement Fund programme funds several projects with the largest share of the budget going towards flood risk management. This fits well with the wetland restoration projects being carried out in the Forest. Mrs Westerhoff said the fund is looking for projects related to water quality.

Mr Pasmore said it appears that sewage from Fritham is leaching into Dockens Water at Suburbs Wood.

Hatchet Pond was also on the Agenda as the water quality is changing as a result of fishing activities. This will be discussed in more detail when the group next meets.

Dean Mason from Natural England is the new Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer for the Forest, dealing with new agreements.

The Ramboll Group, which is based locally, is offering to contribute staff time to projects requiring their expertise, such as flood risk engineering.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

2017/9215 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR FEBRUARY 2017 RESUME

The Financial Statement was noted.

HEALTH & SAFETY

2017/9216 HEALTH & SAFETY REVIEW DISCHARGE

Julie Brown of Jaybee Safety has been asked to undertake a review of the Verderers' Health and Safety systems. Action RD

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2017/9217 AFTER BPS RESUME

Mrs Westerhoff circulated a paper prior to the Court and asked for feedback. Action All

Mr Greenwood and Mr Pasmore recently attended the committee set up by the Chairman of the National Park Authority to discuss subsidies after Brexit. It is clear that it will be essential for the New Forest to come up with and propose a workable system for the Forest to DEFRA. It will be necessary to justify why a replacement for the BPS/HLS is essential to the Forest. The two schemes are inter-related but in future dual funding will not be allowed and therefore one scheme needs to be designed which will provide sustainable subsidies for the Forest. It is essential to offer a solution rather than just explain the problems.

The Clerk was asked to copy the papers written by Mrs Westerhoff and Mr Pasmore to Lord Manners. Action Clerk

2017/9218 BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS DISCHARGE

The Court was very pleased to hear that Mr Mills' herd has passed free of TB.

2017/9219 PLAQUES IN THE VERDERERS' HALL DISCHARGE

Members of the Court felt the modern, plastic style plaques on the Verderers' Hall wall are rather out of keeping and they felt a more traditional style would be more fitting. The Clerk will advise the Forestry Commission. Action Clerk

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 1.03 p.m.

Dominic May
Official Verderer
19th April 2017