

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 21st February 2018 at 9.30 a.m. in the Verderers' Hall and the Library, the Queen's House, Lyndhurst.

PRESENT:	Lord Manners	Official Verderer
	Mr R Deakin	Elected Verderer & Staff Committee Chairman
	Mr A B Dowsett	Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
	Mr J Greenwood	Elected Verderer
	Cllr E Heron	National Park Appointed 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:	Miss Sue Westwood	Clerk to the Verderers
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mr Jonathan Gerrelli	Head Agister
	Miss Justine Bayley	Assistant Clerk

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2018/9717 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The Minutes of Court held on 17th January 2018 were approved and signed.

2018/9718 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

The Official Verderer declared an interest in the Verderers' Higher Level Stewardship Agreement as tenants on his Estate benefit from the Verderers Grazing Scheme and his Estate is in Higher Level Stewardship.

Elected Verderers Mr Deakin, Mr Greenwood, Miss Macnair and Mr Readhead declared an interest in the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme, Verderers Grazing Scheme and Basic Payment Scheme. Mr Pasmore declared an interest in the Basic Payment Scheme.

Mr Deakin 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.

Cllr Heron declared his membership of Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council and the New Forest National Park Authority. He will declare any additional interests that may arise during the course of the meeting at the item.

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. Mrs Westerhoff sits on the Board of Trustees of the New Forest Trust.

2018/9719 **CONDITION OF STOCK**

RESUME

The Head Agister told the Court the cold wet weather is still impacting on the condition of stock and animals are being removed as and when necessary. As usual, it is mares with foals, older ponies and 2 and 3 year olds which are losing condition, April and May can be difficult months for the ponies and the Head Agister expects a few more will need to be removed in the coming months. The overall condition of animals is still very good and they are feeding on gorse and holly.

The Head Agister added that he has not seen much holly cutting taking place. Mr Greenwood said that pollarding had taken place at Stubby Hat and commented on the good job the cutters have done.

All 2 year old colts are believed to have been removed from the Forest.

Mr Dowsett asked the Head Agister how the donkeys were dealing with the cold wet weather; the Head Agister said that they were coping really well and have lots of natural shelter in the Forest. Mr Deakin added that the Donkey Sanctuary representative at the Welfare Tour always remarks that the Forest is ideal for the donkeys.

One Commoner has reported having Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR) in his herd of cattle, a contagious but not notifiable disease. He has removed the cattle from the Forest and has informed his neighbours of the situation. The Head Agister has spoken to the Verderers' vet Phillip Hughes whose advice is that if owners are concerned they should have their cattle vaccinated against the disease and keep them in for 14 - 21 days following vaccination.

An IBR information sheet was circulated to all Commoners with the Verderers' Spring Newsletter. The Agisters are asked to pass on the Veterinary advice to Commoners by word of mouth.

2018/9720 **REPORT ON MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR**

RESUME

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
Forest Ponies	277	417
Forest Cattle	224	156
Forest Donkeys	2	8
Forest Pigs	0	0
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	503	581
Common Ponies	94	109
Common Cattle	55	130
Common Donkeys	4	18
Common Pigs	0	0
Common Sheep	0	52
Total Common Stock	153	309

Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	503	581
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	153	257
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	656	838
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	656	890

BYELAW ENFORCEMENT

2018/9721 TRANSFER OF BRAND & PROOF OF COMMON RIGHTS DISCHARGE

A person who has taken ownership of currently depastured ponies but has not been able to provide proof of their right to turnout was discussed. The Clerk has written to the person in question but has not received a response.

Action
Clerk

The Head Agister left the meeting.

2018/9722 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS RESUME

The Announcements were approved.

OPEN COURT – 10.00 a.m.

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

The Head Agister opened the Court with the usual proclamation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER

2018/9723 DOGS

At our January Court Mrs Gray expressed concern that some commercial dog walkers may be taking up to 10 dogs onto the Forest at a time, often off lead. The Court made reference to dog walking in its response to the New Forest National Park's Recreation Management Strategy Consultation. We share Mrs Gray's concerns about out of control dogs, whether they are being walked by private dog owners or commercial dog walkers or they are dogs that are allowed to stray on their own.

2018/9724 NEW FOREST SPRING CLEAN

The New Forest Spring Clean is being held on three days, Friday 2nd March to Sunday 4th March, at 6 locations around the Forest.

Flyers have been left on the benches and there are a few more on the table at the front of the Court for anyone who would like to know when and where the clean-up is happening.

We hope the event will be well attended.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2018/9725 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR JANUARY 2018

The Agisters attended 9 accidents in January. The same number as in January last year.

3 ponies were killed. 2 ponies, 1 cow & 1 donkey were injured, a cow escaped injury and in one instance nothing was found.

1 accident occurred in daylight, 2 at twilight and 6 in the dark.

All of the accidents in January were reported by the driver involved.

2 motorists are known to have been local.

The total killed and injured so far in 2018 is 7.

PRESENTMENTS

2018/9726 ENCROACHMENTS

Presentment by Mr James Young, on behalf of the New Forest Commoners Defence Association

'The Commoners Defence Association believes that a co-ordinated and systematic approach is needed to stop private encroachments onto the grazing land of the Forest. The CDA continues to pursue encroachments when they are brought to our attention. For a small, voluntary organisation like ours this is time consuming and expensive – especially so for volunteers in their spare time. Out of necessity we have to concentrate on the larger and most blatant cases.

We warmly welcome the recent appointment of a Verge Officer within the Forestry Commission and we look forward to working with them, but this is one person and we need all agencies to pull together, far more than has been the case up to date. The CDA is very grateful to the Court for their financial support and assistance in dealing with various encroachments to date and looks forward to them continuing this as well as leading a multi-agency approach. The National Park Authority, Natural England, the Forestry Commission and the National Trust must all become more proactive if the progressive loss of grazing is to be stopped. We also need to involve other interested organisations and landowners: The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, the New Forest Association, and local estates – for a united and consistent approach to this growing problem.

Most encroachments onto grazing land might be small, but the cumulative impact is considerable. When the verge in front of a cottage is used to park two cars it removes around 25 square metres of grazing. When just four cottages in one lane do this it takes 100 square metres. This type of thing in a lane only has to happen 40 times across the whole Forest to lose an acre of grazing land. Our main concern however, is the continuous loss of grazing as property owners shift their fences outside of hedges and banks, or across ditches and it is obvious that the loss is significant. Hedgerows are an important source of nutrition for livestock, particularly in the winter.

The CDA simply cannot fight every case if a landowner is immune to reason or concern for the Forest. We must find a better means to act on encroachments. We need a systematic approach that shares the burden across all agencies and interested parties. In planning the NPA has a role to play, in terms of protection of the grazed SSSI, Natural England should be actively involved, and as Land Managers, the Forestry Commission, the National Trust, and local estates ought to take more of a lead. We call on the Court to co-ordinate the efforts of all of these, together with the CDA, before this war of attrition is lost.'

Mr Young's presentment was followed by applause.

2018/9727 POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF WHARTONS LANE FIELD, ASHURST

Presentment by Mr Mike Thomas, Vice Chair of Ashurst and Colbury Parish Council

'Good Morning, I wish to speak about the plans for the large field at the top of Whartons Lane, Ashurst. As you know, the final consultation on the New Forest National Park Authority Local Plan finishes next week on February 28th. It includes Policy SP22 which proposes to authorise 60 houses on the Whartons Lane field.

If this proposal becomes policy then it will not be possible to object to the principle of building on this site. In Ashurst we love this field, which has been used recently by a Commoner and an Agister for their animals. It is currently home to 4 horses.

Last night, at our monthly meeting we reaffirmed our opposition to this building proposal on a pristine green field. I have come here today to ask you to use your influence to stop this proposal. In Ashurst we have become aware that there is a real possibility that the brownfield site at Ashurst Hospital could become available. The old buildings are in an advanced state of decay; they contain asbestos and have no useful purpose anymore. We believe the hospital site is a viable alternative to the destruction of a green field.

Finally other large landowners in this area are keen to build; we need your help to protect this land.'

2018/9728 LOSS OF BACK UP LAND
Presentment from Mr Peter Frost

'Official Verderer and members of the Court. My name is Peter Frost and I make this a presentment on my own behalf.

My concern is regarding the loss of "back up land" sometimes referred to as "run back land". I know that the Court and the Commoner Verderers are well aware of the importance of back up land to the survival of the Commoning system. A system on which in turn, the Forest's unique ecology depends.

In recent years I have noticed that the planning emphasis is on finding places to build houses in the National Park and it seems to have forgotten the importance of back up land, even though it is part of the National Park Core Strategy, Policy CP 17.

This is demonstrated in the National Park Local Draft Plan that includes fields and meadows as potential building sites. The aim of the policy is to protect a pool of land, long into the future, for possible use by Commoners. This is regardless as to such land having Common Rights or being used by Commoners at this time.

Knowing that it is a finite resource, and that this land is in competition with other rural and recreational land uses, it takes little imagination to realise that in time all the land outside the New Forest National Park Boundary will be developed.

I believe that "Back Up Land" protection should be revisited and take precedent over other exception policies that are not in the National interest.

I believe that if the Verderers were to make a statement and object to these proposals in the Draft Local Plan it would reinstate the importance of holding firm to this policy and remind us all that the land outside the cattle grids was only given National Park status to protect the integrity of open Forest.'

Policy CP17: The Land-based Economy Land-based businesses that help maintain the overall character and cultural identity of the National Park will be supported by: a) working with key organisations to ensure the future viability of commoning through: (i) enabling affordable housing for commoners, that includes land suitable for holdings; and (ii) maintaining the supply of land available for back-up grazing on the enclosed lands resisting the loss of back-up grazing through development or change of use.

2018/9729 LOSS OF BACK UP GRAZING

Presentment by Mr Graham Baker, Chairman of the Planning Committee of the New Forest Association

'Official Verderer, Ladies and Gentleman. My name is Graham Baker and I am chairman of the planning committee of the New Forest Association.

I rise to support the comments of Peter Frost.

The National Park Authority, despite pious words elsewhere, is casual in its seizure of previous back up land for housing and community use in Colbury and Sway in the Local Plan currently out for consultation. No mention is made of its traditional use. It is treated as though it had no more worth than brownfield - previously developed - land. But this land is precious to us; there is a lot of it because a lot of it is needed and it is no less precious because of that.

In its response to the local plan, NFA will argue that back up land is as necessary to this working Forest as employment land and like employment land every square foot should be guarded and released only with sorrow.

1. From Draft Submission Plan

The Regulation 19 Submission Draft of the New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016 - 2036 is currently out for consultation. Within are policies protecting back up land from development. These are Policy SP48: The Land-based Economy, which states: -

Land-based businesses that help maintain the overall character and cultural identity of the National Park will be supported by:

a) working with key organisations to ensure the future viability of commoning through: (i) enabling affordable housing for commoners that includes land suitable for holdings (as set out in Policy SP29); and (ii) maintaining the supply of land available for back-up grazing on the enclosed lands; resisting the loss of back-up grazing through development or change of use. This is policy remains unchanged from the 2010 policy.

The amplifying commentary states:-

8.28 In the National Park the practice of commoning is particularly recognised as being integral to the maintenance of the essential landscape character and cultural heritage of the area. Commoners' animals remain part of the identity of the Forest and are a major attraction for visitors. Whilst commoners have rights to graze their animals in the historic area of common grazing, they also require back-up grazing areas in the enclosed agricultural lands. Consequently it is important that agricultural land, which is used for these purposes, is not developed or lost to other uses. The commentary remains unchanged from the 2010 local plan.

2. From NFA response to Draft submission plan

7.19 to 7.22 NFA submits that the land proposed at Whartons Land Ashurst has traditionally and until recently been used as back up land by commoners of the New Forest. The seizure of this land for housing development undermines strategic objective 1 and is contrary to strategic objective 2. In particular it is contrary to SP48 which seeks to ensure the future viability of commoning by *maintaining the supply of land available for back-up grazing on the enclosed lands; resisting the loss of back-up grazing through development or change of use*. Either SP22 should be removed from the submission draft or the strategic objectives amended and "when convenient" added to the relevant sentence of SP48. A possible alternative development site has been identified the previously developed part of Ashurst hospital which will soon become available.

3. From NFA response to Draft submission plan

7.25 to 7.27 NFA submit that the land proposed at south of Church Lane, Sway, which has the common right of pasture, has traditionally been used as back up land by commoners of the New Forest. The seizure of this land for housing development undermines strategic objective 1 and is contrary to strategic objective 2. In particular it is contrary to SP48 which seeks to ensure the future viability of commoning by *maintaining the supply of land available for back-up grazing on the enclosed lands; resisting the loss of back-up grazing through development or change of use.* There is no explanation of why a hectare of land is required for community use. Have the village asked for it? Why cannot it be reused for the grazing of New Forest stock which many would argue is the greater community use? There may be some landscape improvement from rearrangement of the memorial field in mitigation, but there is little for the commoning community, the New Forest community, to gain as satisfactory grazing arrangements are already in place

4. At 2.4 under Landscape It is recognised that *At the heart of the New Forest is an extensive area of unenclosed woodland, grassland and heath which is of international nature conservation importance and is maintained largely by the grazing of commoners' stock. This historic form of land management faces threats from the high land and property costs.*

Despite the Commoners Dwelling Scheme and comments at SP48 and 8.28, there is little evidence NFNPA treat the retention of commoners' holdings and back up as critical not just to cultural heritage but to the landscape and the first and indeed second purposes. The planning status of commoners' holdings and back up land needs to be equal that of employment land - to be guarded by the square foot and released with utmost care.

Within the submission plan, NFA seeks the following change to SP48 at a) (ii)
From (ii) *maintaining the supply of land available for back-up grazing on the enclosed lands; resisting the loss of traditional back-up grazing through development or change of use.*

To (ii) *maintaining the supply of land available for back-up grazing by refusing applications for development and change of use.'*

2018/9730 ANIMAL ACCIDENT FIGURES
Presentment by Mrs Mary Gray, Practising Commoner from Brook

'Official Verderer, the Verderers, I am grateful for support on the dog issue.

The Animal Accident figures we hear again this morning, will be soul destroying for Dr Jo Ivey and her team, trying so hard to stop this lethal way of driving on our Forest roads.

None of us are above being involved in an animal or any other accident but if driving at the respectful speed, damage is not so great!!

In my humble opinion, there is one solution left, 30mph on all unfenced roads throughout the Forest. As the late John Bailey said, at a Bramshaw Parish Meeting "Bring back gravel roads - that will slow them down"! Reducing accidents at a stroke to me if 30mph limit could be enforced?'

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2018/9731 ENCROACHMENTS RESUME

Mr Pasmore said that all encroachments within the Verderers' jurisdiction must be Forestry Commission led, and in the case of encroachments over ditches and private land that may be subject to Common Rights the CDA must take the lead.

Mr Deakin said the CDA is well aware of its responsibilities with the issues of encroachments over the Forest but just does not have the resources to tackle them all. The CDA cannot be a lone voice trying to stop encroachments onto the grazing; we need a concerted effort from key Forest organisations to pool resources and knowledge.

The Official Verderer suggested that a working party be convened consisting of representatives from the Verderers, the CDA, the NFA, the Forestry Commission, NFNPA and NFDC to work out how best to tackle these issues. A manual might be produced for the volunteers who gather information and evidence regarding encroachments.

Mr Heron added that if a joint meeting of organisations is to be arranged the NPA will be happy to attend.

The Land Agent said that he welcomes the chance to discuss encroachments with other organisations within the Forest and the Forestry Commission will provide any support it can. He added that there are fewer parking encroachments thanks to the work of the Estates Officer and Verge Restoration Officer within the FC. Mr Dowsett and Mr Readhead agreed that Sean Marsh and Jayne Albery are doing a great job, not only with current Forest parking issues but also in preventing future encroachments onto the Forest.

The Official Verderer will contact Mr Young and the CDA to offer support. Action OV

2018/9732 BACK UP LAND RESUME

Cllr Heron said he cannot speak for the NPA on this topic, only the District Council. Local Planning Inspectors may require evidence of land required as back up grazing per animal but this information is not readily available.

Cllr Heron will speak to the NPA Planners on the possibility of an evidential study into the amount of back up grazing required for the current stocking level. Action EH

The Official Verderer and Cllr Heron will write to the NPA and NFDC about the importance of understanding the impact of new housing on Commoning and the Forest environment. Action OV/EH

2018/9733 ANIMAL ACCIDENTS AND 30MPH DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer said that there is certainly a case for a 30mph speed limit on Forest roads at certain times of the day and night. Mr Pasmore agreed and said that if enforced it should have a positive effect on lowering the number of accidents.

Mr Heron said that traffic monitoring on the B3078 shows that 48% of vehicles using the road travel at over 40MPH. The problem is that if drivers cannot stick to a 40mph limit why would they stick to 30mph.

The Court then discussed the development of technology including average speed cameras and black boxes in cars. It is hoped that soon in-car technology will assist in enforcing lower speed limits.

NEW SUBMISSIONS AND OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2018/9734 SGN PROPOSED EXCAVATIONS TO LOCATE DIP POINTS DISCHARGE

The proposed excavations by SGN were discussed. Concern was raised at the lack of mention of animals in the risk assessments. The Land Agent was asked to arrange a site visit to the first excavation site and to ensure spot checks were carried out throughout the works.

Action
PG

The works were approved subject to the usual three conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions, compensation for loss of grazing and a successful site visit.

2018/9735 THE PIG HOTEL NEW SEWER CONNECTION DISCHARGE

The changes to the existing sewer connection proposal were approved subject to the usual three conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing.

2018/9736 ALDERMOOR LODGE WATER MAIN CONNECTION DISCHARGE

The proposal was approved subject to the usual three conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing.

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

2018/9737 RIDGE AND FURROW RESTORATION – REPORT FROM MEETING ON 15th FEBRUARY 2018 DISCHARGE
to Staff
Committee

Mrs Westerhoff said the meeting was successful and attended by Agisters as well as Verderers.

Mr Deakin said the Agisters will be asked to think about other areas that cause them issues, including areas which were put back to Open Forest a while ago, in order that they may be included in the restoration plan.

Mr Dowsett thanked Nina Menichino for organising a very good meeting which resulted in remedial measures being agreed for the different types of site.

2018/9738 REPORT FROM THE NEW FOREST FRESHWATER & RIVER RESTORATION STRATEGY & PLAN WORKSHOP RESUME

Mrs Westerhoff advised the Court that the report from Geo Data at Southampton University is still awaited.

2018/9739 BROOMY PLAIN ROAD, LINWOOD PASSING PLACES DISCHARGE
The final plans were agreed by the Court.

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2018/9740 REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE LIST RESUME
The SSSI Repair and Maintenance list was circulated to the Court.

ACTION LIST

2018/9741 ACTION LIST RESUME
An updated action list was provided.

2018/9742 ROMAN ROAD AT KINGS COPSE ROAD DISCHARGE
Mr Readhead told the Court that Bournemouth University has found the Roman Road. He said they carried out a good tidy job but that there were delays in the collection of the heras fencing.

2018/9743 DRAINAGE PROBLEMS AT MILL LAWN, BURLEY DISCHARGE
Mr Pasmore pointed out that the drainage problems on Mill Lawn as reported by Agister Rix are not on the Action List. The area of concern is at Burley New and not Bisterne Close which is a different issue entirely. The Deputy Surveyor will speak to Dave Morris. Action DS

2018/9744 RETURNING LAND TO OPEN FOREST AT LATCHMOOR DISCHARGE
Mr Deakin said the Staff Committee has discussed the amount of fencing to be removed at Latchmoor and has reaffirmed the decision made at the site visit.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2018/9745 REPORT ON VISIT FROM DEFRA DIRECTORS ON FRIDAY 26th JANUARY DISCHARGE
The Official Verderer said the meeting with the Defra Directors regarding Future Farming was a success and he felt we have achieved what we set out to do and have improved their knowledge of the Forest. At the meeting, they seemed receptive to the idea of a locally designed and led plan.

It was agreed it was a good start, although there is no clear idea on how future farming will work on a national level. There is an opportunity for us to influence and invite the Directors back for a further meeting.

2018/9746 TOMS LANE, LINWOOD RESUME
The Official Verderer advised the Court that we have been summoned by the Environment Agency to attend their site inspection following complaints of soil erosion and other matters arising from cattle management in the area.

Action DS

The meeting will take place on Monday 26th February at 13:00hrs. Mr Readhead and Mr Greenwood will attend. The Deputy Surveyor was asked to ensure the Forestry Commission is represented at the meeting as landowner and that attendees liaise with Mr Greenwood and Mr Readhead.

2018/9747 BURLEY PARISH GENERAL MEETING DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer said he had been invited to attend the Burley Parish meeting. The Deputy Surveyor has been invited and will also attend.

2018/9748 SWAN GREEN CRICKET PAVILION DISCHARGE

The Land Agent said he has finally received planning permission to demolish the Swan Green pavilion. Quotes are being obtained and will be brought to Court for approval.

2018/9749 MRS GRAY DISCHARGE

The Land Agent said that Mrs Gray is the only person who regularly says "thank you" for action taken by the Court and Forestry Commission and he finds it very refreshing. The Court thanks Mrs Gray for her words of appreciation.

2018/9750 JOYRIDER'S VEHICLE SEIZED DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor said the Forest Commission seized the vehicle of a known joyrider at Dur Hill after it had been abandoned on the Forest due to losing a wheel. The owner of the vehicle is believed to be part of a larger group who have been joyriding on the Forest causing considerable damage. With help from Hampshire Police, the Forestry Commission was able to request full costs from the owner who was given 28 days to pay or his V5 vehicle registration document would be seized. He paid up!

The Deputy Surveyor and the Land Agent left the meeting.

OTHER MATTERS ARISING

2018/9751 FAWLEY WATERSIDE DEVELOPMENT MEETING DISCHARGE

A number of Verderers confirmed they are interested in meeting with Aldred Drummond to discuss the proposed Fawley Waterside Development. A commoners holding may also be developed on adjacent land. The Official Verderer will set a date for the meeting.

Action OV

2018/9752 RECREATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY RESUME
April

The Official Verderer advised that the next Recreation Management Strategy meeting will be held on Monday 9th April 2018.

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

2018/9753 NEW FOREST SHOW BUDGET DISCHARGE

A budget was agreed for the Verderers' New Forest Show stand.

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME

2018/9754 HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME DISCHARGE

There are 5 different Higher Level Stewardship Schemes in the Forest; the Verderers' scheme is the last to finish in 2020. The Verderers continue to press hard for a bespoke scheme for the Forest after this.

VERDERERS GRAZING SCHEME

2018/9755 NEW FOREST CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT MEETING DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff said that at the New Forest Catchment Management Meeting a large barn at Ogdens has been discussed and concern was raised regarding run off via the guttering downpipes straight onto the Forest.

Mr Deakin said that a ditch dug on the property boundary three or four years ago greatly improved the track, but it has been trampled by cattle. Mrs Westerhoff said Natural England will not be keen on the installation of a ditch and pipe. Mr Mills agreed that concerns of slurry in the water course need to be addressed.

MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

2018/9756 HATCHET POND DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff reported on the declining nature conservation interest and water quality at Hatchet Pond. The situation is being monitored by Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission and regular water samples are being taken. The Court welcomes the information from Footprint Ecology and will comment on the plan in due course.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

2018/9757 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR JANUARY 2018 DISCHARGE

The Financial Statement for January was noted.

STAFF MATTERS

2018/9758 RAYMOND BENNETT FUNERAL DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin said the Agisters had all attended former Agister Raymond Bennett's funeral in uniform.

2018/9759 CHANGE OF CONTRACT LETTERS DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer asked the Assistant Clerk to chase the Agisters to ensure they all sign and return their change of contract letters. Action Asst Clerk

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2018/9760 VERDERERS ELECTION NOVEMBER 2018 DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer said that planning has started early for the Verderers election in November.

2018/9761 PROPOSED COMMONERS DWELLINGS AT ROCKFORD FARM DISCHARGE
BARNs

The Court has recently written to the National Park Authority confirming its support in principle for Commoners' dwellings in the Forest.

The proposed scheme at Rockford has received considerable opposition and the Official Verderer asked if the Court wishes to reconsider its position. The Court supports the principle of Commoners' dwellings and so its position remains unchanged.

2018/9762 POACHING CAUSED BY CATTLE AROUND PONDHEAD FARM RESUME
April

The Clerk has received a complaint from one of the residents of the houses close to Pondhead Farm regarding damage caused by cattle. Mr Deakin has been to look at the site which is very poached. He expressed surprise that residents are able to get in and out in their cars as the track is nothing but deep mud. Efforts will be made to identify a potential solution.'

The current planning application by the farm for another large barn was discussed. If the new barn is to be used to keep cattle in, off the Forest, during the winter it could be a good thing but not if it will encourage the Commoner to keep more cattle. Concerns were also raised about slurry run off into the nearby Beaulieu River.

Mr Mills left the meeting.

2018/9763 NATIONAL GRID PROPOSALS FOR UNDERGROUNDING THE HIGH DISCHARGE
VOLTAGE PYLONS AND LINES IN THE NORTH OF THE FOREST

Mrs Westerhoff, Mr Pasmore and Mr Dowsett reported from the National Grid Stakeholder Meeting they recently attended. An optimum route has been identified which will cause the least problems and disturbance to the ground although it still needs approval from the National Trust and Natural England. A Habitat Regulation Assessment must also be made. If permission cannot be obtained to work all year round the scheme could take 8 to 10 years to complete. With all year round working, the work will take approximately 2 years. The Planning consultation is due to be held in September this year.

2018/9764 SPRING WELFARE TOUR DISCHARGE

The date for the spring welfare tour was agreed as Friday 4th May.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 13:26 p.m.

John Marshall
21/3/18