Stockland Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Turbaries Management Committee held in Stockland Victory Hall on Wednesday 11th July from 4pm until 6 pm.

1) **Public Participation Time** (SO 1e & f); There were no members of the public
2) **Resolve to exclude members of the press and public**. There were no confidential items [Public Bodies(Admission to Meetings Act) 1960].

2) **To record those Present/Apologies for absence** and consider whether to approve the reasons given (Cllrs only). Cllrs D Allen (chair) and P Maitland; Derek Boyland and Alasdair Bruce (residents); Geoff Pearce (DBW&P), Toby Taylor (RSPB), in attendance Ken Pearson (PC Clerk). **Apologies**: D Clay, Justin Gillett (NE); Tim Youngs **(**AONB Manager).

3) **Declarations of Interest**: There were no declarations of any interests (s31 & 33 of the Localism Act 2011) or (Code of Conduct, 2012).

4) **Turbaries Management Committee Minutes**-resolved to note that the draft Minutes of the meeting held on the 14th March were confirmed and signed by the Council on the 27th March.

5) **Action Review Summary**: to receive and review the following items:
   i) **Interpretation Panels**; resolved to note that there was no advance in the provision of boards outside the Victory Hall and that this item has been on the Agenda for three years without movement.
   ii) **AONB Facilitation Fund**; resolved to receive an update from the scheme with a proposed launch at village hall Smeatharpe on the 20th July with the suggestion that Cllr Griffiths also attend; Cllr Allen attended an Ash dieback event at the AONB where over 30% of Ash trees were affected.
   iii) **Higher Level and Basic Payment Schemes (HLS and BPS);** resolved to note the claim reviews for 2016/7; 2017/8 and 2018/19.
   iv) **Finance**; resolved to; receive the Clerk's report on the finances available showing an amount of £7605 available with an invoice, yet to be received, for 1 day RSPB work on Bucehayes still to pay for; together with Grazing of £1200.

7) **Turbaries**; resolve to; receive an update on current work completed or scheduled; agree future work plans and finance for each site;- see App1 attached.

8) **Communications**; resolved to; receive updates on the website and volunteering opportunities not already covered under item 7; noted that the more often changes in listings happen on the web, the better the ratings are for Turbaries events.

9) **Woodland Grants**; resolved that; an Approved Forestry Commission Management Plan be processed via the Managing Agent.

10) Items of Future Business for the next Agenda and to note the date of the next meeting as Wed 4pm 7th Nov.

Signed ……31st July 2018
Chairman; Meeting closed at 6pm

Appendix 1

a. Bucehayes

A Day's work was done on contract by RSPB at the northern extremity of heathland, cutting out birch encroachment. More work is needed to remove new scrub nearer the cottage, dependent on the success of a bid submitted on our behalf by Justin Gillett. Participants asked for confirmation that the paperwork has been completed. If successful, Toby would prefer that the work is scheduled early, e.g. September.

Brambles, especially along the track in the southern enclosure, need management, as the Exmoor ponies have not significantly decreased them. Discussion concluded that two man-days be funded up to £500, to brush-cut and rake up, returning to burn and to spray (trichlopor?) re-growth. We need to check that HLS permits use of this herbicide.

Summer grazing. Derek reported that 44 cattle had crossed the Common (northern enclosure) and David said that six Exmoor ponies had grazed the southern enclosure in the period 18th May to 10th June.

b. Quantock

The three day's of winter work has been postponed, depending on the success of the bid for supplementary funding for winter 18/19.

A day of voluntary work on 01 May concentrated on the new pond, diverting the stream, raking of Floating Sweet-grass and blocking the leak. But the pond continues to leak and the water level is inadequate. Discussion concluded that David and Alasdair, a professional geologist, looked at the bed of the pond to confirm it is underlain by clay, then to ask Andy Podbery for a quote to dig out deeper, if so.

The opening of a permissive path across the turbary from near Brimpit Farm to Featherlake awaits Ken's confirmation that funds can be obtained via code ACI, to cover signage, a bench and a stile.

Summer grazing with 11 cattle from Pitfield Farm began on 02 June in the main enclosure and the six Exmoor ponies arrived in the Kennels enclosure on 10th July. Bracken control with Asulox is scheduled here on 20th July, using temporary electrified fencing to exclude the ponies from the sprayed area.

Quantock turbary is to host the Blackdowns AONB Biodiversity Forum on 06 September.

c) **Shortmoor**

The ponies grazed the open mire from 10th June to 10th July.

d) **Horner Hill**

Scheduled winter work was concluded satisfactorily, especially the wood-pasture near the ruined cottages. A summer mow could be useful. It was agreed that David asks Roger Patch at Heathstock Farm to see if he would do so, allowing £200 for this.

Summer control of bracken on the open hillside is now needed, and Asulox spot-spraying was agreed, to a ceiling of £1,000 to cover Quantock too, estimated by Toby at £120/person/day, two workers, two days at two sites (£960). Other work on the heathland depends on the success of our bid.

e) **Huntshayes**

No work envisaged.

f) **Shore botton.**

Control of the invasive Himalayan Balsam by hand-pulling by volunteers continues, with three days (23rd June, 21st July, and 11th August), now over five years. Volunteers welcome!

Some Japanese Knotweed persists at a few sites within the parish but not on turbary ground. David to notify locations to Natural England (Mervyn Newman).