Stockland Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Turbaries Management Committee held in Stockland Victory Hall on Wednesday 13th March, 2019 from 4pm until 6 pm.

1) **Public Participation Time** (SO 1e & f); There were no members of the public present
2) **Resolve to exclude members of the press and public**. There were no confidential items
3) **To record those Present;** Cllrs D Allen (chair) and P Maitland; Alasdair Bruce (resident);; Geoff Pearce (DBW&P), Toby Taylor (RSPB), in attendance Cllr R Griffiths and Ken Pearson (PC Clerk). **Apologies**: Cllr Clay, Derek Boyland (resident), Justin Gillett (NE)and Tim Youngs **(**AONB Manager). Cllrs Allen and Clay gave notice of not standing again in the forthcoming elections in May.
4) **Declarations of Interest**: There were no declarations of any interests
5) **Turbaries Management Committee Minutes**-resolved to note that the draft Minutes of the meeting held on the 7th November were confirmed and signed by the Council on the 27th November.
6) **Action Review Summary**: to receive and review the following items:
   i) **AONB Facilitation Fund**; resolved to receive an update from Cllr Allen on events coming up for the scheme.
   ii) **Higher Level and Basic Payment Schemes (HLS and BPS);** resolved to receive an;
   - update on BPS and HLS payments and outstanding issues; agreed that by May claims for schemes need to be submitted and would require a quote from S Machin, the current Managing Agent, to be agreed by the next full Council.
   - update on the Woodland Management Plan, which has been submitted, but no further information.

   iii) **Finance**; resolved to; receive the Clerk's report on the finances showing an amount of £10126 available with outstanding invoices of £110.40 for Permissive Footpath and directional signs; 2 days RSPB bracken brush cutting on Horner (£800); Cllr Allen's invoice for £9.99 winter burning on Horner; new bench and stile for Quantock provided by RSPB.
   iv) **Hunting on Turbaries**; Resolved for the full Parish Council to agree and implement a policy across all the Turbaries as agreed at the last council meeting; issues raised at this Turbary Committee included;
   - Shooting is not permitted on the Stockland Turbaries;
   - There should be open access for parishioners on the Turbaries at all times, but others must seek permission from the Council as owners and this must be sought in advance with agreed dates to be published;
   - The council has concerns about the use of quad bikes and other 4x4 vehicles on the Turbaries especially on existing footpaths and bridle paths. This should not be permitted;
   - The Turbaries are funded from Natural England via HLS grants (especially Horner, Bucehayes and Quantock); these grants specify that games and sports should not take place which could affect the ecology of those areas.

7) **River Yarty/Axe Valley Ecology and Water Quality Monitoring Forum** (Thur 14th Mar 10-1pm, Deer Park Hotel); resolved to note the Council agreed to a joint parishes meeting with Hugh Davey of the Environment Agency to improve water quality and working together on projects across the river catchments of East Devon and that Cllrs Allen, Maitland and Parris attend. Cllr Allen is now unable to attend and agreed Mr A Bruce may deputise.
8) **Devon Ash Dieback Landmark Trees, DCC;** resolved to agree that it may now need a more comprehensive plan to cope with Ash Dieback across the Turbaries as the RSPB have to risk assess on their land before taking them down.
9) **Turbaries**; resolved to; receive an update on current work completed or scheduled; agree future work plans and finance for each site, as in App 1;-

10) **Communications**; resolved to; receive updates on the website and volunteering opportunities not already covered; agreed to add Freeline Graphics, Exeter to quote for display boards.

11) Items of Future Business for the next Agenda and to note the date of the next meeting.
Display boards; DONM is 10th July, 19

Signed ……26th March, 2019

Chairman; Meeting closed at 5.30pm

Appendix 1

i. Bucehayes

Two days (5 & 6 Feb) contract work carried out by RSPB to remove birch scrub regrowth encroaching into the open mire, at the N end of the N enclosure, further S near the Cottage, and especially at the S end of the S enclosure. The latter is improving and much is now *Myrico-juncetum* (Bog Myrtle with rushes), after control of brambles.

Increased grazing of the N enclosure is now urgent. David to investigate whether Derek intends to put his cattle in again. If not, it was agreed that ponies will be used, noting that doing so risks losing the grazing supplement that is payable only for cattle.

ii. Quantock

A day's scrub clearance was done by RSPB on 14 Feb, near the western fence-line at the Featherlake end of the main enclosure. There remain some clumps of scattered willow regrowth to the N of the woodland corridor, targets for Winter 2019/20 perhaps.

The pond remains brim-full, hopefully now suppressing some weed growth. Geoff suggests investigating Grass Carp, and this was agreed. A bench and a stile are planned, awaiting a quote from Toby. The efficacy of last July's bracken spraying in the northern blocks of Quantock should be appraised in May. Toby mentioned that the licence for use of Asulan has been reissued for 2019.

It was agreed that c. £1,800 be allocated to cattle grazing again, from Peter Lane at Pitfield Farm. David to get a quote. Toby agreed to supply ponies to graze the 'Kennels' enclosure.

The Permissive Path across Quantock, linking the public footpaths near Brimpit Farm and that near Featherlake, will be formally opened on Bryan Drew's Easter Walk by which time extra way markers and notices will have been installed. Advertise this on the Stockland Tree.

iii. Shortmoor

No winter work done. Grazing with ponies in summer was agreed.

iv. Horner Hill

No winter contract work was done. A highly successful winter burn with 5 volunteers was done on 27 Feb. There is an urgent need for contract work to clear the huge Spruce that cracked and fell sometime in December. This, and a smaller fallen tree, need clearing in time for Robin Gundry to mow the area in May, as agreed previously. Agreed to allocate two days to RSPB in April. Whether there is need for more work on the open heath following the fire can be determined when the tree work is being carried out (Toby and David). There remains an opportunity for volunteer work to clear around a one-time pond at the N extremity near the ruined cottages.

v. Huntshayes

No work done and no plans.

vi. Shore Bottom

No Winter work done. There remains need to continue with Summer Balsam pulling, preferably on four dates at fortnightly intervals from about mid June (dates in 2018 were 23 June, 21 July, 11 Aug). David to set dates with Damian, and advertise on Stockland Tree.