

Stockland Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Turbaries Management Committee held in Stockland Victory Hall on Wednesday 15th March 2017 from 4pm until 6 pm.

- 1) **Public Participation Time** (SO 1e & f); There were no members of the public.
- 2) **Exclusion of the press and public.** There were no items to be dealt with.
- 3) **Present;** Cllrs D Allen (chair), D Clay and P Maitland, Derek Boyland (resident), Toby Taylor (RSPB), Geoff Pearce (DBW&P), and Sarah Machin (NE);. in attendance Cllr Griffiths and Ken Pearson (PC Clerk).
- 4) **Apologies** for absence; Linda Bennett (AONB).
- 5) **Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of any interests.
- 6) **Turbaries Management Committee Minutes**-to note that the council meeting on 24th January 2017 confirmed and signed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 16th November 2016, subject to amending G Pearce's role from Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) to Devon Bird Watching & Preservation (DBW&P)
- 7) **Action Review Summary:** the following items were received and reviewed as below:
 - i) Interpretation Panels; resolved that as no work had been done on the content of the boards it would not now be completed this financial year; agreed the Clerk find out if SDF grants are available for next year.
 - ii) Vacancy for a Community Representative on the Management Committee; resolved to invite Alistair Bruce to the July meeting as he had been approached by the chair.
 - iii) Turbary shrubs and trees affecting BT phone lines; resolved the Clerk to seek further clarification with BT/Openreach on responsibility for affected service; Cllr Griffiths to communicate with the parishioner; Cllr Allen to write back to the two companies who quoted for the work, keeping on hold and if work goes ahead to accept the DC Tree Services quote for £450.
 - iv) Higher Level and Basic Payment Schemes (HLS and BPS); resolved to; note the late claims money from June 2016, some of which was paid in Feb this year, the rest still to come in; agreed part payment for Sheamus Machin invoice and extra 5.5hrs work carried out for £339; agree whether an Ecological contractor could appraise HLS progress as the schemes come to an end by 2019/20 and need to be reviewed by both the RPA and the council, so some benefit in doing this as it helps to have something to work with going into new schemes that may be available, agreed to leave for a year until nearer the end of the schemes; agreed future work of the Land Agent Consultant in line with the Agreement agreed as per invoice and quote of £675+VAT.
 - v) Turbary Land Registry Titles; resolved to; accept the mapping from the 1986 Deposits; determine if any changes have occurred since; formally endorse the documents at the next council meeting with agreed boundaries.
 - vi) Finance; resolved to; agree work on the Quantock Pond; on the understanding that the cost would not exceed £100 (3 hrs work at £30); confirm due process for invoices to be paid when quotes were raised only via the Clerk in between meetings and within the financial limits of the Regulations.
- 7) **Turbaries;** resolved to; receive an update on current work completed or scheduled; agree future work plans and finance for fencing work and grazing plans for the summer at each site (App1)
- 8) **Communications;** resolved to; note nothing done on the website and volunteering opportunities for balsam clearing over 3 days later on the web, StocklandTree.
- 9) **Woodland Grants;** resolved to; agree to complete a woodland management plan grant application from NE, under forestry commission guide to identify what woodland areas are there ecologically, mapped for the whole 60h and is needed for any future plan, on a one- off capital grant of flat rate of £1k/h; agreed to be completed by S Machin.

Items of Future Business for the next Agenda; Shorebottom, Alistair Bruce and to note the date of the next meeting. 12th July; 8th Nov

Signed 25th April 2017; Chairman; Meeting closed at 6pm

APPENDIX 1

a. BUCEHAYES.

Resolved that; D Boyland produced a summary of stocking of the northern enclosure in 2016. Numbers of stock varied from 22 to 60 for periods ranging from 2 to 7 days, giving a total grazing pressure of 799 days.

No swaling has been done. It was agreed that a burn be scheduled next winter, bearing in mind the need to retain some taller gorse, to give a balanced range in age.

Fencing needs are in-hand and repairs are scheduled for April.

Brambles were becoming too well-established in the southern enclosure and needs grazing; agree ponies, herbicide for brambles.

b. QUANTOCK

Resolved that; Large clearance of scrub had been achieved by the RSPB in opening “new areas”, along the edge of North Hill, in the triangle of land toward Hill Grounds, in the NW corner of the main enclosure, and in the woodland corridor. One day’s work remains, on the western fenceline near Featherlake.

Fencing plans are in-hand. Priority to be given to: fencing off the new pond; moving the fence-line to embrace newly opened areas (North Hill, NW corner near larches); and repairs to ensure both enclosures are stock-proof.

The new pond, where Floating Sweetgrass control seems to have been effective, has developed a leak. Andy Podbery will attempt repair.

Cllr Allen to seek quote from Peter Lane for cattle grazing, noting the area increase and the need to increase grazing pressure. RSPB agrees to supply ponies for grazing the Kennels enclosure, which is also now larger and a quote to come in to the Clerk.

c. SHORTMOOR

Resolved that; No winter work carried out. The fencing is relatively new so still secure.

Bracken near Hillside has been effectively controlled. G Pearce reports that there are two fallen trees in the woodland, Cllr Allen to investigate and report back.

Ponies will graze the open heathland this summer.

d. HORNER HILL

Resolved that; Work is in progress today (15th March) in clearing scrub from the northern extremity of the open heathland. Once concluded, contract work will tackle the tangle of scrub in the southern most triangle, between the Bridlepath and the Ridge Route. If time and resources permit, RSPB will clear around the cottages and the ridge route track to free up access (15 skilled days = £1500); work on a cherry tree over bridleway to also be done. A volunteer day is scheduled for Thursday 23rd March.

e. HUNTSHAYES

Resolved that; No work, no plans.

f. SHORE BOTTOM

Resolved that; Fallen branches and BT lines, as described above.

Cllr Allen had received a call from David Thorne (Clayhidon) who had expressed interest in removing the huge fallen oak near Brindley Fold. He would either plant young oak saplings or pay the Council £200 for the timber, but the damage incurred in extraction would far exceed £200, so it was declined.

The question was raised whether more clearance along roadsides was warranted and was deferred to the next meeting to discuss a Shore Plan of work.

There will be opportunities for volunteer work on three dates during the summer for continued Balsam pulling which will be announced.