

Minutes of a Meeting of: Notes of the Greenham and Crookham Commons Commission

held remotely on: Thursday, 17 September 2020

Present: Rebecca Hart (Natural England & Chairman), Ken Neal (Commoner and Vice Chairman), Derek Cutt (Commoner), Michael Williams (Commoner), Nicole Rorie (Commoner), Derek Emes (Volunteers/Planning/WBC), Julian Swift-Hook (GPC), Tony Vickers (LAF), Sue Ellis (Heritage Forum), Tony Ferguson (Greenham Trust), John Thorogood (Commoner), Billy Drummond (WBC), Roger Hunneman (NTC), Frank Huxtable (Commoner) Richard Foster (TTC).

Also present: Tom Hayward (BBOWT), Paul Hendry (WBC), Simon Pike (Member of public).

| | | <u>Action</u> |
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| 1 | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | |
| 2 | MINUTES OF LAST MEETING The minutes of the last meeting were accepted. These would be amended to reflect they are finalised and then signed by Rebecca in due course. | |
| 3 | MATTERS ARISING <u>Copart lights:</u> BD said that he would raise a complaint with the Business Park about the lights as this appears to be the process to follow (as advised by Copart). <u>Running Events:</u> TH reported that all running events had been cancelled due to C-19. However he would make a dirty note to raise this with the organiser later in the year. <u>Filming on the Commons:</u> TH had previously provided a paper on this. There was a general discussion about the where the fees go and the general principle of charging however the revised paper was agreed. <u>Parkrun:</u> RH gave an update on her meeting with the director of Parkrun. Although this was apposite meeting it was clear that | Billy to raise a complaint Director |

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| <p>Newbury parkrun would have difficulty restricting numbers of participant. Nevertheless the issue of numbers is a concern to the Commission and also BBOWT. BBOWT were tasked with applying for consent for the event. They would not apply for consent however unless Parkrun could guarantee that numbers could be controlled. They intend to take a firm line on this. Further discussions on this were to take place in due course. For now the event was cancelled due to C-19. Matters of conduct (parking in the Golf Club), impact on wildlife were discussed as well as possible means to reduce numbers, including a Family Parkrun held elsewhere on a Sunday.</p> | <p>Action of Parkrun to come to the next Commission Meeting</p> |
| <p>4 MRS HELEN WILLIAMS LETTER</p> <p>Mrs Williams presented the letter and underlying concerns about dogs being off the lead on the common and being periodically out of control. Her concern is for the welfare of both dog owners and cattle. Trampling being the main concern. KN explained that all animals on the common are vetted for temperament. PH stated that the kind of animals turned out on the common are not likely to be aggressive. PH also explained that complaints from dog walkers or other members of the public relating to aggressive stock are extremely rare, if any.</p> <p>TH said that BBOWT volunteer rangers have been out on the Commons in recent years to talk to the public and if the project continues then this will be part of the role. Meantime he would ask his staff to talk to the public about keeping dogs under control around stock and in restricted areas. Dog owners should always let go of the lead under any circumstance where cattle crowd round them because they are curious and see the dog as a threat.</p> <p>PH was asked to clarify the rules on entire male animals. Post meeting note: Entire male animals can only be turned out on the Commons with the consent of the Commission. This is set out in clause 6 of the draft regulations.</p> | <p>Tom to ask his staff to speak to dog owners.</p> |
| <p>5 SECRETARY AND ADMINISTRATION.</p> <p>RH presented this item. Sarah Adams post was made redundant in March. Her responsibilities to the Commission would have to be fulfilled by the Commission; accounts/finances, minutes, correspondence, records keeping, the register etc.</p> <p>The Parish representatives were asked if their respective council's would make a contribution and KN said he would ask if the Greenham Clerk would be prepared to provide some support on a paid basis. Meantime PH and RH would deal with the accounts.</p> | <p>PH to discuss the accounts with RH and provide a balance sheet.</p> |
| <p>6 GOOD EXCHANGE FUNDING APPLICATION:</p> <p>Unfortunately Susan Ellis had encountered technical problems using Zoom and could not join the discussion. Sue to provide a written update.</p> | |

- 7 WEBSITE:**
As above.
- 8 REGULATIONS UPDATE;**
PH gave a verbal update. The regulations are in draft form, have been through a number of consultation processes and have been discussed with DEFRA who are happy. WBC now needs to provide formal consent to the Commission to make a formal application to DEFRA. **Post meeting note: This matter was determined by the Council via a delegated officer decision on the xx. The council now formally consents to the Commission to make a formal application. This is now a matter for the Commission to progress.**
- 9 GOLF COURSE;**
This is a matter which has been before the Commission previously. It was referred to the governance committee, who agreed the matter in principle. It is for the Council to progress the swap of common land status from one parcel of land to another but this would ultimately need the consent of the Commission. S18 of the act applies. The due consultation process took place. There were two objections, both were withdrawn later. A decision like this should be able to be taken by officer delegated power as ultimately the Commission is the final arbiter. PH hopes this decision can be taken very shortly once the Regulations report has been authorised. There was a discussion about utilising land close to the golf course to take walkers off the Burys Bank Road. Initially this proposal was seen as a way of progressing that. However the land required is not in the ownership of the Golf course and therefore is separate from this matter.
- 10 COVID UPDATE:**
PH gave an update on C-19 within the Council. Currently all staff there are working from how apart from key workers. PH is fully operational WFH. Some Countryside and open space locations are however closed until further notice. TH confirmed that BBOWT have staff furloughed and there is reduced operational capacity in some areas.
- 11 COMMONERS RIGHTS – PROPERTY ON THE COMMON.**
PH gave a brief update that although having written a letter no response had been received. PH would try telephoning.
- 12 REVIEW OF THE CONDITION OF RARE AND SCARE PLANTS REPORT.**

Action

This was produced by BBOWT and submitted prior to the meeting. The report was welcomed and noted.

13 LAND MANAGEMENT REPORT (BBOWT).

This report was also noted and thanks given to BBOWT

14 VOLUNTEERS REPORT:

Written report noted. Thanks given for work carried out to date.

15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Beech Trees: There was discussion about this but my note are vague can Tom help.

Heritage Features on the Commons: The heritage value of the features was discussed. There is very little in the way of interpretation of this. It was agreed that this might form a future project with some interpretation on site and in the control Tower.

**TH to
make
contact
with the
WBC
Heritage
Team**