

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Impact of Recreation on Farming Update

Mary Alford reported that the meeting to draft a policy statement, that will address some of the recreation issues, had taken place, with representation from Council, DNPA & DCOA. It is hoped that the final draft of the policy statement will be available at our next Council Meeting. All event organisers will be asked to attend an Event Manager's Training Day & meet farming representatives who will explain the impact that recreational events have on farming. The representatives from Council requested that the training day takes place before 10 March 2018 & that a video/short film is also shown to demonstrate why farming matters on Dartmoor. The Chairman thanked Mary Alford, Layland Branfield, Phil Cleave, Neil Cole & Kate Little for representing Council.

4.2 Basic Payment Scheme Payments for 2017

The Chairman reported that although the majority of commoners on Dartmoor appear to have received their payment, some have not. The RPA did advise that payments on Dartmoor claims would not be completed until end of January. Council Members discussed a number of issues: Commoners who have not been paid need a clear explanation as to why & be offered a bridging payment; some commoners have received less money than expected, considering the exchange rate & recent changes to their entitlements; there is confusion regarding the 'Minchinhampton' adjustment payment for 2016 & 2017. It was agreed that a letter be sent to the RPA requesting updates & reassurance on these matters before the next RPA Commons Stakeholder Group meeting which is being held in Carlisle on 28 February 2018.

4.3 Ponies

The proposal to deal with dangerous animals on the commons has yet to be revisited by Council's Pony Working Party. An interim proposal that the Quarterman be responsible for removing a dangerous stallion from the common & that one Quarterman from each quarter will take responsibility for holding the stallion while Council proceeds with its legal regulative process was agreed at the last meeting. The nominated Quartermen are Crispin Alford (North), Ann Willcocks (South), John Jordan (East) & Neil Cole (West).

John Jordan (Chairman, Council's Pony Working Group) thanked pony keepers in the South Quarter & the West Quarter for carrying out good pony drifts recently. Particular thanks to Neil Cole, Philip French & Ann Willcocks.

5. Matters brought forward

The Chairman reported that Council had received a letter from Dartmoor Conservation Meat requesting a formal update on discussions being held with Defra regarding equine ID, the derogation & the regulations that support the derogation. The Chairman advised that, as reported at the last Council Meeting, there has been no communications with Defra since September last year, when Council wrote requesting an update on legislation for equine ID & a note of the meeting held last April. However, when the Chairman was at Defra recently, he had an opportunity to meet & have an informal chat about the derogation on Dartmoor with Tristan Crago (head of Equine ID Dept., Defra). Our Chairman was informed that the decision on whether the derogation will continue is still to be made by the Minister. Tristan Crago did agree that the note of the meeting held with Defra in April of last year could be released & will be circulated by Rob Steemson (Chairman of Pony Action Group) shortly.

6. Financial Estimate for 2018/2019.

Copies of the estimates were sent to all Council Members with the agenda. Being self-explanatory with no major queries or comments, Council agreed to the estimates provided.

7. Dartmoor Commoners' Council Elections 2018

Initial details of which councillors are due for election & the dates the elections will take place were sent out with the agenda (see Appendix A). These details will also be sent to all Local Commoners Association Secretaries for onward circulation to registered commoners. Nominations can be received up to 7 days before the election dates & further details will be circulated in due course.

8. Update from Dartmoor National Park Authority

Jennifer Manning is DNPA's Assistant Access & Recreation Officer who collates all the responses to event consultations. Any objection to an event taking place needs to include a reason for the dissent. To respond to a consultation or make any comments following an event which has taken place, email recreation@dartmoor.gov.uk.

9. Policy Work Group:-

9.1 Dartmoor Commoners' Council's Standing Orders

The latest draft of Council's Standing Orders was sent to all Council Members with the agenda, along with a covering report. Kate Little explained the proposed amendments & Council Members were given the opportunity to make comments. Philip French questioned whether Council's Election Voting Protocol should form part of the Standing Orders. Kate Little proposed that Council Members approve the Standing Orders for submission to a constitutional lawyer for checking & at the same time ask for advice on whether the voting protocol should be merged into the Standing Orders or linked to them. Philip French seconded the proposal & Council Members unanimously agreed to this. The Chairman thanked Kate Little & the other working group members being Mary Alford, Jonathan Aylett, John Cooper, Paul Cottington, Philip French & Ann Willcocks for the excellent work they had done in bringing the Standing Orders up to date in terms of current & accepted procedures.

9.2 Representing Council at Other Meetings

The Chairman made a formal proposal that when a Council Member represents Council at other meetings, they are to provide a short note to be used as a record of their attendance at the meeting & to advise other Council Members of the outcome of that meeting. This will only apply if a formal note or minute is not being produced imminently. Council Members voted unanimously to adopt this proposal. It was also agreed that this proposal form part of the Council Members' 'Job Description' document.

9.3 Distributing information around Quarters

Some concerns had been raised that Council does not receive much feedback back from Local Commoners Associations, many of which work independently & in isolation. It had been suggested that the Associations within each Quarter met occasionally with the relevant Quarterman to discuss issues & ideas which the Quartermen would feed back to Council if necessary. It was noted that it tends to be the same Associations that do not attend the annual Local Commoners Association Meeting & that the link between Council & its commoners should be stronger. The Chairman agreed that Council does need to build on its relationship with the Associations. He suggested that maybe an event could be trialled in one quarter & he favoured a suggestion by Ann Willcocks that the Moorland Management Forums, which were always well attended, be reintroduced. Rob Steemson confirmed that DNPA is in the process of organising something along

these lines, with the Forest of Dartmoor Association & the MOD, which is due to take place this spring. Mary Alford suggested that once the recreational events policy statement has been finalised, the Associations are visited & advised how the policy can be used to address some of the issues that the Associations have with recreational events. The Chairman agreed that this was a good idea that will be explored further once the policy statement has been produced.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday 21 March 2018 at 7:30pm at Two Bridges Hotel, Princetown.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

The office will be closed from Monday 26 February to Sunday 11 March 2018 inclusive as Sara is away on holiday. There will be an appropriate answerphone message directing callers to Quartermen if the enquiry is urgent or to Karla, DLPO. Sara will check emails remotely on a regular basis & she will forward any urgent emails to the following Quartermen, who have kindly volunteered to deal with these accordingly –

**North Quarter – Kate Little
South Quarter – Ann Willcocks
East Quarter – Layland Branfield
West Quarter – Mary Alford**

Please also note that the Chairman will be on holiday from Thursday 22 February to Saturday 3 March 2018 inclusive.



DARTMOOR COMMONERS' COUNCIL

DETAILS OF FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS 2018

The following members of the Commoners' Council have served their term & shall be eligible for re-appointment, unless they choose not to stand again or other nominations are put forward, in which case there shall be an election.

COUNCILLORS DUE FOR ELECTION

AND

DATES ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE (VENUES TO BE DECIDED)

<u>QUARTER & DATE</u>	<u>MORE THAN 10 LUs</u>	<u>LESS THAN 10 LUs</u>
NORTH Wednesday 13 June	Mr Crispin Alford Mr Michael Reddaway	Filled until 2020
SOUTH Thursday 14 June	Mr Philip Cleave Mrs Ann Willcocks	Mr Michael Mudge
EAST Wednesday 20 June	Mr Layland Branfield Mr Gordon Mortimore	Vacant
WEST Thursday 21 June	Mr Philip Abel Mrs Mary Alford	Vacant

All commoners nominated, nominating or voting, must have paid their contributions for the current financial year. No contributions will be accepted at the election meetings.

Further details will be available & circulated nearer the time.