

DARTMOOR COMMONERS' COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Dartmoor Commoners' Council held at Two Bridges Hotel, Princetown on Wednesday 2 October 2019.

Present:

Mr J Waldon - Chairman	Mr P Cleave	Mr Gordon Mortimore
Mr P French – Vice Chairman	Mr A Coaker	Mr M Retallick
Mr C Alford	Mr J Cooper	Mr R Steemson
Mrs M Alford	Mr B Lavis	Mr D Webber
Mr J Aylett	Mrs K Little	Mrs A Willcocks

In attendance:

Mrs S Sloman

1. Chairman's Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reported that Council had submitted its response to the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service consultation on the proposed closure of local fire stations. He also reminded Council Members that the Ten Tors Team Managers Training Day is on Saturday 12 October 2019.

2. Apologies for Absence

These were received from Mr P Abel, Mr R Ashford, Mr L Branfield, Mr N Cole, Mr P Cottington, Mr G Hill, Mr J Jordan, Mr S Lake, Mrs K McKechnie & Mr T Stratton.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Meeting held on 4 September 2019 were confirmed & signed.

4. Accounts & Auditor's Report

A copy of the draft financial statements had been sent to all Council Members prior to the meeting. All questions raised by Council Members were answered. Council Members agreed to adopt the accounts for the year ending 30 June 2019.

5. Matters Arising:

5.1 Chairman & Vice-Chairman Job Description

Following circulation of the first draft, the Chairman has received several comments which will be considered. A further draft will be circulated to Council members.

5.2 Dog Worming Research - Update from Stuart Lake

As Stuart had sent his apologies, this item will be carried forward to Council's next meeting.

5.3 National Food Strategy Consultation - Update from Philip French

Philip is coordinating a response on behalf of Council. Any Council Member wishing to contribute to the consultation, which closes on 25 October 2019, should contact Philip. A draft response will be circulated to Council Members.

6. Members representing Council at Meetings

6.1 RPA Common Stakeholder Group Report

The RPA reported that the Minchinhampton Retrospective Payments have been completed & explanatory communications had been issued to customers to help them understand the calculation of their rights & payments. Council advised that it had been alerted to several cases where the payment has yet to be received. The RPA offered to look into these cases & asked Council to forward the details, which has been done.

Following on from Ann Willcocks suggestion at the last Council Meeting, the question of including HL10 Restoration of Moorland in the RD01 list on common land was raised. The RPA agreed that the idea is worthy of further exploration & will escalate it within the RPA. They have also offered to meet with Ann to discuss the matter further.

The RPA has confirmed that maps have been received from all of the Local Commoners' Associations (LCAs) that attended the mapping sessions. The RPA have advised that revised maps will be sent out by the end of this month & have confirmed that changes will be effective for the BPS 2019 payment.

7. Matters Brought Forward at the Direction of the Chairman

7.1 Cattle Incidents on Common Land

The Chairman alerted Council Members that the Office had received a number of reports of cattle on common land allegedly being aggressive & charging at people. The Chairman is concerned that this is a growing issue. There seems to be a misconception by members of the public that Council has a role to play in removing these animals, maybe due to Council's Regulations on the control of dangerous animals on the commons. In every case, Council has advised the farmer (if known) of the incidents & made them aware of the Health & Safety Executive guidelines.

7.2 Natural England (NE) - Fencing Consents

The Chairman reported that NE are creating a database of all temporary consents for fencing on common land. Therefore, if anyone is aware of any Secretary of State's consent for temporary fencing on common land, please let the Office know.

8. Update from Dartmoor National Park Authority

Rob Steemson reported that he recently attended a meeting, held at Tavistock Police Station, to discuss the theft of livestock from common land. He also advised that Dr Kevin Bishop has offered to attend the next Council meeting in December to update Members on Defra's Test & Trials & the progress of the Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) & also the findings of the Glover Review of National Parks & AONB.

9. Condition of the Commons

Ann Willcocks reported that Council had recently held an informal meeting to start gathering Members issues & concerns regarding the condition of the commons. The note from this initial meeting has been circulated to Council Members. As a lot of Members were unable to attend the first meeting a further meeting will be arranged. In the meantime, Ann has agreed to obtain a copy of the recent report produced by Dr Nigel Stone, Chairman of South West Uplands Network which may be useful.

Defra has approved the rollover of HLS agreements that have ended/are due to end in 2019 & 2020. There was considerable discussion on Natural England insisting on

changes to some HLS agreements before consenting to a rollover. These changes have included further stock removal &/or revised burning plans (swaling). Council Members felt very strongly that Council should be consulted by NE before it makes changes to an agreement. The Chairman offered to write to NE to advise them of Council's statutory role & wish to be a formal consultee.

10. Pony Working Group Report & Recommendations – John Jordan

John had sent his apologies & requested that this item be carried forward to Council's next meeting.

Mary Alford informed Council Members that Defra have agreed to Charlotte Faulkner's pragmatic solution to the Equine ID Regulations which will enable this year's pony sale to go ahead.

John Cooper raised his concerns that a number of ponies, which appeared to have been dumped, recently turned up outside of his moor gate. This will be reported to Council's Pony Working Group.

11. Meeting Dates for 2020

Council discussed the proposed meeting dates for 2020. Following one amendment, the revised dates were agreed & a copy is attached (Appendix A).

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday 4 December 2019 at 7:30pm at Two Bridges Hotel, Princetown.

The Chairman reminded Council Members that the Local Commoners' Association meeting will take place on Wednesday 30 October 2019 at the Two Bridges Hotel, Princetown starting at 7:30pm.

Signed: *John Waldon*

Date: *4 December 2019*



MEETING DATES OF THE DARTMOOR COMMONERS' COUNCIL 2020

Wednesday 22 January 2020

(10 minute slot for members of public to address the Council)

Wednesday 04 March 2020

Wednesday 06 May 2020

Wednesday 08 July 2020 (Annual Meeting)

(10 minute slot for members of public to address the Council)

Wednesday 16 September 2020

Wednesday 21 October 2020

(Accounts & Auditor's Report)

Wednesday 02 December 2020