

Minutes of Meeting – Pow Drainage Commission Heritors Meeting

PRESENT:

Heritors:

Wing Commander Roberts, Dr and Mrs W Dove, Mrs A Buckingham, Mr M Lewis, Mr Anthony Dickson

Commissioners:

Mr Hugh Grierson (HG), Mr Jonathan Guest (JBG), Mr James England (JE), Mrs E Roberts (ER), Mr Gary Buckingham (GB), Mr Alex Mackenzie Smith (AMS), Mrs A Moray Parker (AMP)

Also present as Clerks to the Commission:

Jonathan Willett (JW), Charles Arden (CA), Alexa Mewse (AM)

DATE OF MEETING: 15th April 2021, 19:00

VENUE: Remote Zoom meeting

Item	Notes	Action by
1	Apologies for Absence received Mr and Mrs Mair	
2	Minutes of Last Meeting	
2.1	The minutes from the meeting held in October 2020 were published on the website prior to the meeting commencing.	
3	Matters arising from Minutes	
3.1	The Heritors present did not raise any points regarding the minutes from the previous meeting the minutes were approved.	
4	Election to replace retiring Commissioners	
4.1	CA noted there are 3 Commissioners due to retire on 17 th April 2021 (J Guest, H Grierson and J England). CA confirmed that any Heritor from the Upper and Middle sections could offer to stand and invited those attending to express an interest. No one came forward. CA advised that the retiring Commissioners were happy to be reinstated and would take their positions for the next term.	

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5	Pow Inspection	
5.1	CA confirmed that JBG and AMP attended and carried out the most recent Pow inspection on 16 th February 2021. The reports and photographs from that inspection have already been published to the website.	
5.2	Ian Ralston has seen the report and has compiled a quote for proposed works for this year to be reviewed by the Commissioners.	
5.3	CA noted that the clean-up at Bachilton is continuing from last year. Woodend footbridge tree removal work is also ongoing. The Pow is being cleaned from Sweepstank – Gorthy Bridge.	
5.4	Beaver control along the Pow will also continue per the published budget.	
5.5	AMS asked that given the fee proposal from Ian Ralston was quite large would there be capacity to pay for this in this year's budget. CA advised that this works was expected to be spilt over the next year or so and the budget for 2022 would reflect such works.	
5.6	Iain McIntosh who has recently moved to the Balgowan area asked what constitutes beaver control and how is this implemented. CA answered that the IR holds a licence to control the population in accordance with NatureScot guidelines. He is licenced to manage individual beavers and beaver dams. AMS also confirmed he holds a licence and can use live traps and release to other areas. JAW pointed Heritors who are interested could look at NatureScot website as a useful reference.	
5.7	AD asked where the most recent inspection report can be found, he did not see it on the website. JAW and ER confirmed this can be found in the Inspections section on the website. There was some discussion regarding the clarity of the website and it was agreed that the Clerks would look at this.	Savills
6	Financial Position	
6.1	CA notified the meeting that due to the ill health of the Clerks Bookkeeper there was not an up to date cash position and this will be circulated as soon as is practical.	
6.2	As per the 2019 Act debtors who have not paid their 2021 assessment after the given 28 day period will be referred to our legal representatives McCash & Hunter.	
6.3	AD asked the Clerks following his recent email will it be possible for the next assessment to have the wording altered to take into account that 'agricultural rent' may not be a suitable classification for all Heritors. CA confirmed that this is being looked at although currently the software package used does not do this it should be possible to rewrite this for 2022.	Savills
6.4	It was queried when the assessments were due to be reduced. CA confirmed that the costs were increased currently due to the large legal bills still being paid as part of the work instructing the 2019 Act. The Clerks expect the assessments to reduce in the next year or so when the budget reduces. JAW advised that the Commissioners can set a budget up to £60,000 however had chosen to set the budget to £40,000 for the first couple of years after the Act came into force which was considered to be fair.	

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6.5	It was asked when Balgowan was last dredged. CA confirmed that work is generally done on rotation and in terms of priority from the inspections. JBG noted that the Commissioners decide on what works will be undertake in line with proposals, quotes and inspections. In 2019 Gorthy Mile to Balgowan Bridge had been done and in 2020 Auchlown Bridge to Sweepstank had been completed. The areas are essentially scooped out and cleared.	
7	Any Other Competent Business	
7.1	There were no matters arising.	
8	<u>Date for next meeting</u>	
8.1	It was hoped that the next meeting would be able to take place in person rather than online however a date would be offered in due course	Savills