

## Minutes of Meeting – Commissioners Meeting

**PRESENT:** Mr J Guest (JBG), Mrs A Moray-Parker (AMP), Mr H Grierson (HG), Mrs E Roberts (ER), Mr G Buckingham (GB), Mr A Mackenzie-Smith (AMS)

**Clerks to the Commission:**  
Charles Arden (CA), Amy Campbell (AC)

**DATE OF MEETING:** 02/11/2023

**VENUE:** Abercairny Stables, Abercairny Estate

Item	Notes	Action by
1	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noted and received from Mr K Emptage and Mr J England in advance.</li> </ul>	
2	<p><b>Minutes from last meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Circulated prior to the meeting and shared on the website.</li> </ul>	
3	<p><b>Matters Arising from Minutes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The meeting agreed to accept the minutes.</li> </ul>	
4	<p><b>Savills Clerking Role</b></p> <p>4.1 Terms of Business Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Savills fee proposal was circulated in advance of the meeting.</li> </ul> <p>4.2 Savills Future Involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Savills proposed a fee increase to take the annual charge up to £12,000. This has been brought about as undertaking the Pow Clerking role leads to a loss for the business every year and has done since 2019 (introduction of the new act).</li> <li>- The following concerns were raised by the Commissioners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o The job has not been completed to the expected standard making the increase unjustifiable.</li> <li>o This is the fourth year, yet the correct system has not been put in place to adequately handle the work.</li> <li>o Does managing the POW no longer fit within the Savills brand and remit for land management? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CA clarified that the work type could be undertaken by Savills, however the fee structure does not match the staffing structure within Savills.</li> </ul> </li> <li>o The workload is more suited to an administrator/clerical role, rather than a land agent – it was expected that Savills would have the resource to put this in place. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CA clarified the way Savills Management is set up, there are limited numbers of administrative staff to cover the work undertaken by Land Agents. Leading to Fee Earners having to prioritise administrative burden across the team.</li> </ul> </li> <li>o The process should be mechanical therefore should not be time consuming, is it a system failure that is leading to increased man hours? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It was agreed that the process should be mechanical, however undertaking the serving of assessments, debtor letters, sharing draft and confirmed budgets is time consuming, although simple.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Savills

Item	Notes	Action by
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was acknowledged by the Clerk's that Savills have not delivered the service to the expected standard. Savills are unable to offer administrative resources to structure restraints.</li> <li>- Discussed if a third party or self-employed secretary could undertake the work relating to raising and sending invoices and Savills could still act as Clerk. Savills are to produce a budget for retaining CA as Clerk only covering the hours for 2 meeting per year, including preparation and follow up. And a level of discussion with the company/individual who deals with the assessments.</li> <li>- The discussion on how to proceed was left for the Commissioners to speak in private.</li> </ul>	Savills
<b>5</b> 5.1	<b>Finances</b> <b>Cash Position</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The current balance is approx. £42,000. The increase since the last meeting has been influenced by the recovery of debts and the reduction of work completed by Ian Ralston.</li> <li>- The current balance will be impacted by the reimbursement of Agricultural Heritors for their contributions towards putting the 2019 Act through Parliament. This will be completed by the end of November.</li> </ul> <b>Draft Budget for 2024</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft budget will be circulated post meeting, it was not prepared in advance of the meeting due to the uncertainty of Savills future involvement. Commissioners will need to confirm approval before it can be uploaded to the website.</li> <li>- Rate poundage is to remain the same as it has been for 2023.</li> <li>- The work that will be undertaken by Ian Ralston, once confirmed will allow for accurate budgeting however a draft based on reasonable assumptions will be prepared in the first instance.</li> </ul>	 Savills   Savills
<b>6</b>	<b>POW Repairs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- POW inspections are due to be undertaken in February/March 2024, where the full length will be walked. JBG is to confirm when this will happen with the Clerk's so that a date can be circulated with all Heritors and Commissioners as part of an invite to join.</li> <li>- JBG requested the attendance or one or more Commissioner on the POW inspection as at some point the responsibility will need to be passed on.</li> <li>- The clerks are not to attend the Pow Inspection.</li> </ul>	JBG/Savills
<b>7</b>	<b>AOB</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The trees planted on the excavator track at Balgowan remains an ongoing issue and has become a growing concern following recent rainfall. As the trees are owned by Greenbelt, a proposal for removal will need to be submitted for prior approval. Further to this, it was discussed whether some replacement trees could be informally planted on land adjacent to the POW.</li> <li>- Minutes from the meeting will be published on the website within a fortnight.</li> <li>- No further business, date of the next meeting is <b>Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April at Abercairny Estate Stables, PH7 3NQ following the Heritors Meeting.</b></li> </ul> <p>The Clerks closed the meeting.</p>	Savills