Minutes of Commissioner’s Meeting

7pm November 28, 2024

Abercairny Stables, Abercairny Estate

**Present:** Mr J Guest (JG), Mr H Grierson (HG), Mrs A Moray Parker (AMP), Mr G Buckingham (GB), Mr K Emptage (KE), Mrs E Roberts, (ER)

**In Attendance:** Mr I Roy (IR), Mrs H Roy (HR).

**Apologies:** Mr J England

**Minutes from last meeting:** Circulated earlier and approved by HG and GB.

**Condition of the Pow:** The Beavers were discussed and it was agreed that it would be monitored. It is hoped that Mr Ralston will catch up with the cleaning work next year dependent on weather and SEPA.

**Financial Position:** The 2025 budget was discussed with a small increase to £26,010 plus VAT making a total of £30,212. HG commented it is better to have a small increase to keep up with inflation rather than a much larger increase in the future. JG reported that the Commissioners considered that the income was sufficient to allow for completion of emergency repairs and to begin catching up on the backlog of routine maintenance.

The question of reserves was broached and IR reported that under Charity Regulations it is recommended that 9 months of expenditure is a reasonable figure to hold in reserve – while the Pow is not a Charity this is still good practice.

Although there is a healthy bank balance, there is £15,250 of unfinished works carried forward. Also, Commissioners considered it prudent to build up a reserve of cash in case of unexpected costs. It was agreed that 9 months expenditure would be sufficient.

In light of expected expenses, reserve requirements and the need to contain the cost to Heritors the commissioners agreed to put the proposed budget to consultation in the New Year.

The Commissioners agreed that the Clerks could source a lawyer in the Chester area to proceed with claiming the debt owed by Mrs Tomlinson.

AMP, along with her husband, agreed to visit Mr Keeble to try to move things forward.

It was agreed that the Clerks could approach Lindsays Solicitors to process the claims which MacNabs cannot due to conflict of interest.

The Commissioner’s agreed that IR should complete the missing years accounts.

**AOB:** The commissioners considered the control of Himalayan Balsam. They discussed different methods of control but concluded that there was little evidence of them working in the long run and thought that funds would be better spent on ditch maintenance. They decided to take no action.

The Commissioners considered the felling of trees on Gask estate. They agreed that the felling could increase water flow and deposition of gravel in the Pow. They considered whether they had any powers to influence the felling or replanting but decided that they did not. While there would be some increase in run off the commissioners did not think that it would lead to a noticeable increase in flooding so long as the pow was kept clean. The water from the forest at Gask runs into the Pow at Bachilton bridge and always deposits gravel and silt where it meets the Pow and commissioners anticipate that it may get worse. Commissioners agreed to ensure that the silt at the junction is cleaned this year in order to let water away. HG agreed to try with his digger but if it could not reach Ian Ralston would be instructed to clean it.

The next meeting was arranged for 7pm on 1 May 2025 at Abercairny Stables, Abercairny Estate.

There being no further business HG closed the meeting.