

# **GREENHAM & CROOKHAM COMMONS COMMISSION**

The logo features the text 'GREENHAM & CROOKHAM COMMONS COMMISSION' in a bold, green, serif font. To the right of the text is a green oval shape with a thin green line extending from its top edge, curving upwards and then downwards to the left, resembling a stylized leaf or a swoosh.

## **Minutes of the Greenham & Crookham Commons Commission.**

**Held on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2017 in the McCartney Room, Foxhold House, Crookham Common, Thatcham, Berkshire RG19 8EL**

Present: Chris Tufnell (Chairman and Commoner), Chris Austin (Vice Chairman and Commoner), Derek Cutt (Commoner), Frank Huxtable (Commoner), Nicole Rorie (Commoner), Sheila Ellison (WBC) Derek Emes (Volunteers/WBC), Rebecca Hart (NE), Janice Bridger (Sport & Recreation Alliance), Mel Gatward (Commoner), Anne Johnson (Thatcham Town Council) Michael Williams (Commoner), Derek Nutley (Commoner), Ken Neal (Commoner).

Also present: Paul Hendry (WBC), Roger Stace (BBOWT), Sue Bennett (Parkrun), Ian Colcomb (Parkrun).

### **1. Apologies**

Billy Drummond, Julian Swift-Hook, John Thorogood, Tony Ferguson, Dominic Boeck, Alex Cruikshank , Sarah Adams.

### **2. Welcome.**

Welcome given to Sue Bennett and Ian Colcomb from Newbury Parkrun who attended for the Parkrun item no.7.

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

Mel Gatward explained that she leases her rights to Bob Colbourne. This will be recorded in the D of I.

### **4. Public questions**

There were none.

### **5. Minutes of the last meeting**

It was noted that Ken Neal had passed on his apologies for the last meeting. These will be recorded in the minutes. The Minutes were then agreed as accurate.

### **6. Matters Arising not elsewhere in Agenda.**

War and Peace Event. Discussions are ongoing between BBOWT and the organisers, overall everything is in hand. Natural England has also been involved with the Production Company regarding safeguarding the notified features of the SSSI.

Cattle numbers. Although it appears commoners haven't recently been asked for cattle numbers Alex Cruikshank had emailed that day and these figures will be reported in due course.

Basic payment – this was actually an action on Ken from the conservation committee and he is due to produce a paper to that group in due course.

Michael Williams Paper. This paper was supplied with insufficient notice and information for a decision to be taken on the evening. Michael was thanked for his draft proposal but he was asked to resubmit it with background detail for the consideration of the GAC.

**Action: Michael W to resubmit his proposal to the GAC.**

## **MATTERS FOR DECISION**

### **7. Newbury Parkrun, request to change route**

Paper previously supplied by BBOWT. Sue and Ian were available to answer questions. Commissioners said how great the run was and how clean they left the Common afterwards. Some of the tracks on the new route might need attention and repairs made in a similar manner as other tracks. There was some confusion on the wording of the recommendation in the paper but it was carried unanimously that Newbury Parkrun organisers are allowed to change the route to the one detailed in the report.

**Vote: The proposal to change the route was carried unanimously.**

### **8. Shared Vision**

Papers previously supplied. These papers, authored by Rob Deane, were circulated because it is possible not everyone would have seen them so they were brought to the Commission for consideration. Although a shared vision had not been achieved it is now suggested that these papers go forward for discussion, the Chairman suggested a small group of interested parties with BBOWT and WBC should take this forward. It is possible that funding may be available from Natural England to pay for Rob to continue the work in a similar workshop format. Everyone agreed that the momentum should continue. It is important to note that the Act 2002 provides the framework for agreement on the vision and that the vision should not be contrary to the Act and its principles. There is some support for this work to be led by an independent consultant.

### **9. Conservation Management Committee**

Minutes previously supplied. Chairman gave time for questions. The current chairman suggested that this cannot be successfully addressed until we have regulations. Until then, any attempt to fulfil our remit of considering grazing numbers and timing is probably pointless. In terms of the management plan, and other conservation matters on the Common, and that in fact the remit and composition of the Committee might need to be reviewed at the AGM. This was noted but it was generally considered that there would still be a role for the Committee in this important work, perhaps in the monitoring of the Management Plan. The Chairman asked that if any member had any conservation matters that they wanted the CMC to consider then they should let the Chair of the CMC know. A member pointed out that part of the CMC's remit is to provide the Commission's oversight of the management plan

### **10. Governance Committee**

John Thorogood was not in attendance so Paul gave a short summary of the recent work on the Draft Regulations carried out by the GAC. Further advice had been received from DEFRA who are still considering the draft but are generally happy. Overall DEFRA's view is that as long as our Regulations are

in accordance with s23 they are unlikely to have any objections and that in due course we can undertake a consultation process prior to seeking formal adoption. Their main advice is that we should seek to have any outstanding objections resolved before submitting the final version for determination.

## **11. Gorse Mapping**

Paper previously supplied. Roger Stace from BBOWT was available to take questions. Roger was asked to clarify two matters;

1. What does the total of 138ha in the report cover, is this including former runway areas, paths etc.
2. What are the annual costs of gorse control and what do the costs cover.

**Action: BBOWT to provide a response to these questions.**

## **12. Volunteers report**

The Chairman thanked the volunteers for their report. General thanks were given to the volunteers for all their efforts on the Common. It was noted that numbers appear to be increasing which is great to see.

## **13. Reports from other appointing bodies**

None.

## **14. BBOWT Invitation to walk the Common and view issues.**

Prior to the meeting BBOWT (Alex) sent the following for the Commissions attention:

*I am keen to give the Commissioners an opportunity to visit some of the less-known parts of the Common where there are 'issues'. I would like to get an idea of the appetite for such a programme and discuss some topics. These could even be to other sites which are relevant.*

The Commission agreed this would be useful.

**Action: BBOWT to send a more detailed email regarding the visit and a Doodle Poll with suggested dates.**

## **15. AOB**

Derek Emes asked if it could be made clearer which version of the minutes he should put onto the Website. It was agreed that Sarah would send him a PDF of the final agreed copy as soon as possible after the meeting, clearly marked for posting on the Website.

Janice Bridger said that this was to be her last meeting as her period of appointment had come to an end. She had enjoyed her time on the Commission. The Chairman expressed his thanks to Janice on behalf of the Commission; she has been a valued member for several years. The SRA are due to appoint two new Commissioners in due course.

**The meeting closed at 19.40**

**Next Meeting: 6<sup>th</sup> September 17 18:30**