

Future Farming Group meeting notes May 28th 2020

Representatives from the New Forest National Park Authority, New Forest Verderers, and Forestry England

Apologies: Commoners Defence Association, Natural England, National Trust

- 1 Extension of HLS – programme of works that can be done with social distancing being worked up at the moment. VGS carrying on. The expectation is there will be ongoing extensions. However, there is continued uncertainty around staffing due to the short-term nature of HLS extension.
- 2 There is uncertainty on the process for extending next year. An extension should not be regarded as a foregone conclusion and any opportunity to press NE / Defra for certainty would be welcome
- 3 Environmental Land Management Scheme – options for the New Forest
 - i) Foundation for Common Land Test and Trial - group agreed to offer to support the FCL in their Test and Trial
 - ii) Proposing the New Forest as a pilot area

Agreement that the possibility of a pilot should be explored further but a lot more information needed to understand what might be required and any implications, particularly for the current HLS agreement.

ACTION The following actions agreed:

- National Park Authority to contact Defra for informal conversation about the pilot arrangements
 - Land Advice Service to draft and circulate a questionnaire to group members seeking views on the pros and cons of the current HLS
 - Group members to start to list what they might wish to see within a pilot approach - (reference the current ELM policy document)
 - What questions do people have for DEFRA?
 - Do we have the ability to interpret how the tiers can interface at a landscape scale? Ask about this to NPAs on the scheme design stakeholder groups.
 - Continue to gather information on the proposed scope of the ELM pilot and circulate to the group
- 4 Date of next meeting: Doodle Poll to be circulated for a meeting in late June, early July

Annexe

Pre-Meeting note from Robert Stride (Vice-Chair, CDA)

Please accept my apologies for not attending today. Farming calls. With regards to ELMS I would reiterate the importance of supporting registered New Forest ponies and ensuring that perverse incentives for keeping large herds are removed. It is also important to work with commoners in the development stages to ensure that the scheme is deliverable and workable.

It will also be important to work closely with the Foundation for Common Land test and trial which is recruiting for a project lead at the moment.

I would also support an application to become a pilot area.