

Forest Farming Group

Notes of meeting 22 November 2023

Present

Andrew Parry-Norton (Chair of meeting), Nicola Brown (via Teams), Graham Ferris, Jim Greenwood (via Teams, part), Mike Pittock (via Teams), Isobel Budden (via Teams, substitute for Ben Gibbons), Ben Dolbear, Oliver Cooper (via Teams from Item 4)

Apologies

David Bence, Cllr Edward Heron, Robert Stride

Agenda Item

1 Welcome and apologies – see above

2 PA2 funding application and lessons learned

PW and NB updated the group on progress. 2 consultants responded to the tender for the PA2 work. A sub-group – APN, GF, DB & PW – met to consider the tender responses. The group agreed that both consultancies would do the work but there was a distinct preference for one, with an emphasis on local knowledge. This was also the more expensive quote. The decision of the sub-group was reported to Natural England for consideration with the RPA. We are now awaiting confirmation of the level of grant the RPA might award.

3 Plan / timetable to complete the choice of Consultant

The confirmation of the grant is needed before the consultant can be engaged. Once the grant figure is known the FFG can formally appoint a consultant and the work begin. There is no fixed time for the RPA to respond to the submission.

4 Management of the consultant project

This will be determined by an inception meeting with the appointed consultant. AGREED that Forestry England should join the sub-group managing the project.

5 Future role for FFG

Agreed that additional resources are needed to develop this work fully. A case needs to be made and requests agreed. ACTION – PW to discuss with APN and DB

6 Canvassing support

There has been a lot of work done by members of FFG (and from other Forest stakeholders) to determine which future scheme is best suited to the Forest. However, this is for the medium – long term (see table below) while the immediate pressures particularly amongst the commoning cattle graziers are acute and don't appear to have a straightforward solution. More work needed on how to address the immediate pressures commoners are facing (a general assumption that BPS will not

be frozen at current rates) and reassuring commoners that the FFG is making progress on their behalf.

Landscape Recovery was discussed and MP reminded the group of FE's experience with the current Wareham project.

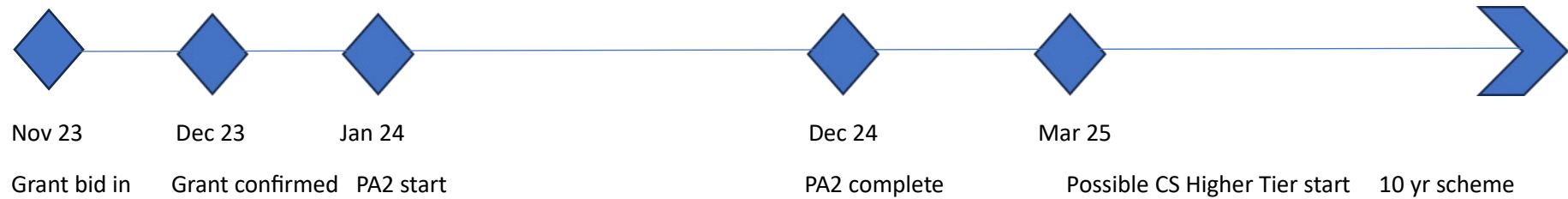
ACTION – MP to keep the group informed of FE's involvement in LR pilot scheme

ACTION - PW to use forthcoming NPA meeting with Defra to raise current issues

ACTION – Group to work on key communication points – DB / APN / PW to consider how to develop

Agri-environment scheme timetable

PA 2 for Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier



Landscape Recovery



HLS

