

Phil Norrey
Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of
the Farms Estate Committee

County Hall
Topsham Road
Exeter
Devon
EX2 4QD

(See below)

Your ref :
Our ref :

Date : 7 September 2016
Please ask for : Wendy Simpson, 01392 384383

Email: wendy.simpson@devon.gov.uk

FARMS ESTATE COMMITTEE

Thursday, 15th September, 2016

A meeting of the Farms Estate Committee is to be held on the above date at 10.30 am in the Committee Suite, County Hall, Exeter EX2 4QD to consider the following matters.

P NORREY
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART I - OPEN COMMITTEE

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2016 (previously circulated).

3 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

Items which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

MATTERS FOR DECISION

4 Revenue Monitoring 2016/17 (Month 4) (Pages 1 - 4)

Report of the County Treasurer (CT/16/80) on the County Farms Estate Revenue Monitoring 2016/17 (Month 4), attached.

Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions

5 Capital Monitoring 2016/17 (Month 4) (Pages 5 - 8)

Report of the County Treasurer (CT/16/79) on the County Farms Estate Capital Monitoring 2016/17 (Month 4), attached.

Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions

6 Recognising Success at the Devon Farm Business Awards 2015 and 2016 (Pages 9 - 14)

Report of the Head of Business Strategy and Support (BSS/16/12) on the success of tenants at the Devon Farm Business Awards 2015 and 2016, attached.

Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

7 Delegated Action/Urgent Matters

Report of actions taken by the Cabinet Member for Resources and Asset Management or the Head of Business Strategy and Support, in accordance with Part 3 of the County Council's Constitution, in approving a Delegated Officer decision to purchase 85.45 acres of agricultural land at Lee, near Marwood, North Devon.

Electoral Divisions(s): Braunton Rural; Combe Martin Rural

PART II - ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

8 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Recommendation: that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely information relating to, and which is likely to reveal the identity of, tenants and information relating to the financial or business affairs of tenants and the County Council and, in accordance with Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, by virtue of the fact that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

MATTERS FOR DECISION

9 Holdings and Tenancies etc.

(Items to be considered by the Committee in accordance with the Cabinet Procedure Rules and Regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, no representations having been received to such consideration taking place under Regulation 5(5) thereof).

(a) Report of the Head of Business Strategy and Support (BSS/16/14) on monitoring of tenants on an initial Farm Business Tenancy, attached GOLD paper.

Electoral Division(s): South Molton Rural; Torrington Rural; Axminster; Budleigh; Dawlish; Teignbridge South; Bovey Tracey Rural

(b) Report of the Head of Business Strategy and Support (BSS/16/13) on County Farms Estate Management and Restructuring issues, attached GOLD paper.

Electoral Division(s): Ottery St Mary

10 Future Meetings

Please use link below for County Council Calendar of Meetings:


<http://democracy.devon.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

Notice of all items listed above has been included in the Council's/Cabinet Forward Plan for the required period, unless otherwise indicated. The Forward Plan is published on the County Council's website.

Members are reminded that Part II Reports contain exempt information and should therefore be treated accordingly. They should not be disclosed or passed on to any other person(s).

Members are also reminded of the need to dispose of such reports carefully and are therefore invited to return them to the Democratic Services Officer at the conclusion of the meeting for disposal.

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

<p>Membership</p> <p>Councillors C Chugg (Chairman), J Brook (Vice-Chair), J Berry, A Dewhirst, R Julian, R Rowe and J Yabsley</p> <p><u>Co-opted Members</u> C Bellew (Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs) and C Latham (Tenants Representative)</p>
<p>Declaration of Interests</p> <p>Members are reminded that they must declare any interest they may have in any item to be considered at this meeting, prior to any discussion taking place on that item. Members of the Council have been granted a dispensation to allow them to speak and vote in any debate as a consequence of being a representative of the County Council on any County Council wholly owned, controlled or joint local authority company or Joint Venture Partnership unless the matter under consideration relates to any personal remuneration or involvement therein.</p>
<p>Access to Information</p> <p>Any person wishing to inspect the Council's / Cabinets Forward Plan or any minutes, reports or lists of background papers relating to any item on this agenda should contact Wendy Simpson, 01392 384383</p> <p>Both the Forward Plan and agenda and minutes of the Committee are published on the Council's Website.</p>
<p>Webcasting, Recording or Reporting of Meetings and Proceedings</p> <p>The proceedings of this meeting may be recorded for broadcasting live on the internet via the 'Democracy Centre' on the County Council's website. The whole of the meeting may be broadcast apart from any confidential items which may need to be considered in the absence of the press and public. For more information go to: http://www.devoncc.public-i.tv/core/</p> <p>In addition, anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chairman. Any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard also to the wishes of any member of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chairman or the Democratic Services Officer in attendance so that all those present may be made aware that is happening.</p> <p>Members of the public may also use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings at this meeting. An open, publicly available Wi-Fi network (i.e. DCC) is normally available for meetings held in the Committee Suite at County Hall. For information on Wi-Fi availability at other locations, please contact the Officer identified above.</p>
<p>Emergencies</p> <p>In the event of the fire alarm sounding leave the building immediately by the nearest available exit, following the fire exit signs. If doors fail to unlock press the Green break glass next to the door. Do not stop to collect personal belongings, do not use the lifts, do not re-enter the building until told to do so.</p>
<p>Mobile Phones</p> <p>Please switch off all mobile phones before entering the Committee Room or Council Chamber</p>
<p>If you need a copy of this Agenda and/or a Report in another format (e.g. large print, audio tape, Braille or other languages), please contact the Information Centre on 01392 380101 or email to: centre@devon.gov.uk or write to the Democratic and Scrutiny Secretariat at County Hall, Exeter, EX2 4QD.</p>
<p> Induction loop system available</p>

The County Farms Estate

Revenue Monitoring (Month 4) 2016/17

Report of the County Treasurer

1 Revenue Monitoring (Month 4) 2016/17

- 1.1 The Revenue Budget presented to Corporate Service Scrutiny Committee on 22 January 2016 included a target surplus of £318,000 for the County Farms Estate, in accordance with targets set by Cabinet at its meeting on 13th January 2016.
- 1.2 Members are reminded that with Insurance Budgets having subsequently been centralised, as reported to this Committee on 28 April 2016, the revised target surplus has increased to £362,000. This has no impact on the County Farms Estate Revenue Budget as insurance costs will no longer be borne by the budget.
- 1.3 Appendix A provides a summary of the annual budget. It also provides details of income and expenditure to date.
- 1.4 As at month 4, there is very little expenditure to report although some of the Tenant Rights Valuations accruals are now being paid out and a significant programme of repairs and maintenance has been set which is currently being designed, specified and tendered.
- 1.5 It is currently anticipated that the forecast level of income will be achieved and the target surplus delivered, albeit there may well be some fluctuations within expenditure items.

2 Options/Alternatives

- 2.1 Alternative options have been considered and discounted as they are believed to either be contrary to current Estate policy and/or not in the best financial interests of the Estate.

3 Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

- 3.1 The views and opinions of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs and the Estate Tenants Association will be presented by the two co-opted members to the committee.

3.2 No other parties have been consulted and no other representations for or against the proposal have been received.

3.3 The technical data is believed to be true and accurate.

4 **Considerations**

4.1 The Author is not aware of any financial, sustainability, carbon impact, equality, legal, risk management or public health issues arising from this report.

5 **Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations**

5.1 The Author has prepared this report in accordance with the findings of the County Farms Estate Strategic Review (April 2010).

Mary Davis – County Treasurer

Electoral Divisions: ALL

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

None

Who to contact for enquiries:

Name: Dan Meek, Director of Property Management, NPS South West Ltd, Venture House, One Capital Court, Bittern Road, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7FW

Contact: 01392 351066 or dan.meek@nps.co.uk

Name: Martin Oram, Chief Accountant, County Treasurer's, County Hall, Exeter

Contact: 01392 382418 or martin.oram@devon.gov.uk

Agenda Item 4

APPENDIX A

COUNTY FARMS ESTATE - FINANCIAL REPORTS FINANCIAL STATEMENT - (MONTH 4) 2016/17

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE £'000</u>	<u>ANNUAL TARGET £'000</u>	<u>CURRENT FORECAST £'000</u>
Rent	15	(1,022)	(1,022)
Other	(23)	(50)	(50)
TOTAL INCOME	(8)	(1,072)	(1,072)
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
<u>STATUTORY COSTS</u>			
Tenant Right Valuation	(123)	2	2
SUB - TOTAL	(123)	2	2
<u>PREMISES COSTS</u>			
Building Maintenance - unforeseen	6	127	127
Building Maintenance - programmed	12	150	150
Building Maintenance - Surveys	1	10	10
Building Maintenance - STC	(1)	20	20
Building Maintenance - other (incl. land agents initiatives, redundant buildings, asbestos and health & safety)	0	65	65
Grounds Maintenance	2	10	10
Rents & other landlord charges	0	14	14
Rates, Electricity and Water Charges	2	12	12
SUB - TOTAL	22	408	408
<u>SUPPLIES & SERVICES</u>			
Insurance	0	0	0
Adverts	0	2	2
NPS Fees	55	230	230
Legal Fees	(4)	3	3
Professional Fees	(9)	6	6
Other Fees & Charges (DFYF, SHLAA, GPDO)	0	59	59
SUB - TOTAL	42	300	300
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	(59)	710	710
NET OPERATIONAL SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(67)	(362)	(362)
<u>FARM IMPROVEMENTS inclusive of fees</u>			
Revenue funded Restructuring (BM other)	0	0	0
SUB - TOTAL	0	0	0
TOTAL COSTS SURPLUS	(67)	(362)	(362)

The County Farms Estate

Capital Monitoring (Month 4) 2016/17

Report of the County Treasurer

1 Capital Monitoring (Month 4) 2016/17

- 1.1 The Capital Programme presented to Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee on 22nd January 2016 (and subsequently approved by County Council) included schemes totalling £1,671,000.
- 1.2 The programme includes £271,000 for existing Nitrate Vulnerable Zone compliance schemes, and £900,000 in respect of additional scheme priorities.
- 1.3 The remaining £500,000 relates to additional scheme priorities for Decent Homes standards, Energy Act and other associated infrastructure projects.
- 1.4 On 4 July 2016 delegated officer approval gave authorisation to purchase specific plots of land. The resulting purchase saw DCC acquire one plot at a cost of £150,000.
- 1.5 Added to this is scheme slippage of £771,000, resulting in a capital programme of £2,592,000 for 2016/17.
- 1.6 Expenditure and commitments (orders) to date is £842,000 with a forecast year end spend of £1,692,000.
- 1.7 **Nitrate Vulnerable Zone Compliance**
 - 1.7.1 The construction of two previously approved concrete box slurry stores are well underway and are due to complete before this winter.
 - 1.7.2 Included in the 2016/17 Capital Programme, approved via the Cabinet Member for Resources and Asset Management on 11 August 2016, is a further concrete box slurry store at Lower Alminstone Farm, Woolsery. A tendering exercise has been concluded for this scheme but due to the successful contractors busy work programme, it has been agreed that this scheme will slip to the 2017/18 financial year. The

contract will be awarded shortly and the contractor has agreed to hold his price.

- 1.7.3 A fourth scheme has been designed but approval has not been requested to include this scheme in the 2016/17 capital programme due to the current tenant reviewing the future of his own dairy farming business.
- 1.7.4 A fifth scheme is at a very early feasibility and design stage.
- 1.7.5 Expenditure and commitments to date currently stands at £620,000 with a year end forecast of £762,000 due to anticipated slippage of £900,000.

1.8 **Compensation Payments (Tenants Improvements, etc..)**

- 1.8.1 Forecast spend in respect of existing liabilities stands at £20,000 in accordance with the previously approved programme. This excludes any additional liabilities that may fall due in year or at 25 March 2017.

1.9 **Enhancements and Improvements**

- 1.9.1 Expenditure and commitments to date currently stands at £222,000.
- 1.9.2 Included in the 2016/17 Capital Programme, approved via the Cabinet Member for Resources and Asset Management on 11 August 2016, is the following priority schemes with a total forecast spend of £489,015:
 - (i) Churchlands Farm, Ermington – farmhouse renovation
 - (ii) Coppa Dolla Farm, Denbury – replace incoming mains water supply
 - (iii) Little Stone Farm, South Molton – farmhouse renovation
 - (iv) Higher Leigh Farm, Churchstow – new wet heating system
 - (v) Prixford Barton Farm, Marwood – new wet heating system
 - (vi) Lower East Week Farm, South Tawton – new incoming mains water supply
 - (vii) Moorhouse Farm, Bovey tracey – new oil tank and oil fired combi boiler
 - (viii) Higher Artiscombe Farm, Gulworthy – farmhouse roof replacement, insulation and clean water drainage works

- (ix) Middle Yeo Farm, Down St Mary – farmhouse roof replacement and mechanical ventilation
 - (x) Westcott Farm, Burlescombe – conservatory roof replacement
 - (xi) Lower Henland Farm, Kentisbeare – bore hole water supply
 - (xii) Higher Henland Farm, Kentisbeare – bore hole water supply
 - (xiii) East Catkill Farm, Rose Ash – farmhouse roof replacement and insulation
 - (xiv) East Catkill Farm, Rose Ash – new wet heating system
 - (xv) Waterford Farm, Musbury – new timber boarding, insulation and replacement heating system
- 1.9.3 Total forecast spend by year end remains on target and amounts to £760,000.

1.10 **Land Acquisitions**

- 1.10.1 On 4 July 2016 delegated officer approval gave authorisation to purchase specific plots of land at auction up to a maximum cost of £485,000.
- 1.10.2 Actual spend was £150,000.

2 **Options/Alternatives**

- 2.1.1 Alternative options have been considered and discounted as they are neither practical nor in the financial best interests of the Authority.

3 **Consultations/Representations/Technical Data**

- 3.1.1 The views and opinions of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs and the Estate Tenants Association will be presented by the two co-opted members to the committee.
- 3.1.2 No other parties have been consulted and no other representations for or against the proposal have been received.
- 3.1.3 The technical data is believed to be true and accurate.

4 **Considerations**

- 4.1.1 The Author is not aware of any financial, sustainability, carbon impact, equality, legal, risk management or public health issues arising from this report.

5 **Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations**

- 5.1.1 The Author has prepared this report in accordance with the Councils capital funding procedures and guidelines.

Mary Davis – County Treasurer

Electoral Divisions: ALL

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

None

Who to contact for enquiries:

Name: Dan Meek, Director of Property Management, NPS South West Ltd, Venture House, One Capital Court, Bittern Road, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7FW

Contact: 01392 351066 or dan.meek@nps.co.uk

Name: Martin Oram, Chief Accountant, County Treasurer's, County Hall, Exeter

Contact: 01392 382418 or martin.oram@devon.gov.uk

THE COUNTY FARMS ESTATE RECOGNISING SUCCESS AT THE DEVON FARM BUSINESS AWARDS 2015 and 2016

Report of the Head of Business Strategy and Support

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation(s):

1. That on behalf of the Committee, letters be sent to all the Estate tenants nominated for the Devon Farm Business Awards in 2015 and 2016, recognising and congratulating them on their outstanding achievements.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 For approximately the last 25 years the Estate has supported and participated in the John Neason Memorial Awards. John Neason was a former Devon County Land Agent. Over the years the Estate and its tenants have been able to use the annual competition to showcase best practice in terms of their entrepreneurial spirit and achievements. Many previous winners have come from the Estate.
- 1.2 Since 2015, the Award has been linked to the Devon Farm Business Awards which are organised by a partnership of the Addington Fund, the Devon County Agricultural Association, and Stephens Scown Solicitors and as such receives far greater publicity and recognition culminating in a prestigious black tie awards ceremony in the Presidents Pavilion on the eve of the Devon County Show.
- 1.3 The Suite of Awards are:
 - (i) Best Commercial Farmer – Sponsored by Francis Clark Chartered Accountants
 - (ii) Best Dairy Farmer – Sponsored by Crediton Dairy
 - (iii) Best Woman in Farming – Sponsored by Nat West Bank
 - (iv) CAAV John Neason Diversification – Sponsored by the CAAV
 - (v) Farming Champion – Sponsored by the NFU and NFU Mutual
 - (vi) Best Young Farmer – Sponsored by Savills
 - (vii) Lifetime Achievement Award – Sponsored by Cornish Mutual
 - (viii) Devon Farmer of the Year Award – Sponsored by Mole Valley Farmers
- 1.4 The awards are considered to be a very valuable publicity and marketing opportunity for the Estates high quality tenants to promote themselves to other institutional and private sector landlords and their agents.
- 1.5 In 2015 the NPS Land Agents nominated:

1.5.1 Chris Carpenter of Fairfield Farm, Denbury in the CAAV John Neason Diversification Awards

Although runner up in this category the judges feedback was incredibly positive. The judges noted:

'Chris and Louise Carpenter have very recently taken the step of adding value to the very high quality milk produced by their pedigree Guernsey Cows in the form of 'Aunty Moo's' ice cream. As new entrant tenants of a Devon County Council owned farm they have already invested significantly in an on farm processing unit. Although the product is relatively new and only recently sufficiently well established to finance specialist marketing support, the high quality ice cream is selling increasingly well. The ability to produce a consistent quality product available to both wholesale and retail markets combined with the added value premium over the volatile wholesale milk price is beginning to yield attractive financial returns. Although not new, adding value to a raw milk product is becoming much more than a niche market outlet for the dairy industry. Chris and Lou have incredibly exciting plans for developing further added value products. The potential health benefits of the apparent unique proteins found in Guernsey cow milk makes Aunty Moo's a product to watch for the future!'

1.5.2 Marcus Warner of Lower Henland Farm, Kentisbeare in the Best Young Farmer Category

Runners up for this category in 2015 but more successful in an alternative category in 2016 (see below for further details).

1.6 In 2016, the NPS Land Agents nominated:

1.6.1 Marcus Warner of Lower Henland Farm, Kentisbeare in the CAAV John Neason Diversification Awards

Winners of this category. The judges awarded Marcus and Liz Warner, the CAAV John Neason Farm Diversification Award, for their business selling quail eggs and duck eggs.

When taking on the tenancy at Lower Henland Farm (181acres), Marcus & Liz didn't want to farm entirely in the conventional sense, and wanted to find something a little bit different, a bit of a premium product.

That led them to Quail. Having started with 5000 quail at the end of 2012, they have recently expanded and currently have 15,000 quail on site, producing eggs on contract for supermarkets and restaurants including some top London outlets. They produce on average, 9,500 quail eggs/day, approximately 15% of the UK's commercial production.

As a follow on from this business, quail have a limited laying lifespan (10 months). At the end of these 10 months, they kill, chill and freeze the quail and then sell them on as falconry feed.

As well as quail, they also have 2000 ducks whose eggs also go into the same premium market as the quail eggs.

Marcus and Liz Warner have built up a very successful alternative business at Lower Henland Farm. They have only been on the Devon County Farms Estate for 4 years but in that short time have set up and substantially grown the business. Neither Marcus or Liz came from a farming background but they have a passion for agriculture and coupled with boundless energy and enthusiasm they have developed Westcountry Quail alongside the more conventional farming activities.

Marcus and Liz keep a close eye on the performance of the business and monitor the costs and benefits of each enterprise.

The business is very labour intensive so the Warners rely on local employment to assist with the collection of the eggs and mucking out of the birds. Marcus and Liz are also key to the Farmwise Devon educational event running the poultry zone since it was first launched in 2013.

Marcus and Liz are fantastic ambassadors for the Devon County Farms Estate and by thinking outside the box have developed their enterprise to become one of the top quail producers in the Country.

1.6.2 Gordon Davis of Westcott Farm, Burlescombe in the Best Dairy Farmer Category

Winner of this highly competitive category. Gordon farms a total of 340 acres with 130 acres in maize and 210 acres to pasture. He has a herd of 210 high yielding jersey cows averaging 6753 litres at 5.6 % butterfat and 4.01 % protein. Alongside the Jersey herd he trades between 200-300 Holstein and crossbred freshly calved cows and heifers throughout the year through South West livestock centres. The youngstock for the Jersey herd are all reared on the farm. All the beef and dairy calves from the trading enterprise are sold. The business is very much a family concern.

Alongside the day to day farming the family takes pride in showing the Rivermead Jersey herd. They have taken the title in three interbreed championships at major agricultural shows and have won breed champion at every show they entered in 2015.

Gordon and his family were nominated for their contribution to the dairy industry. Gordon was a supplier to Cricketer Farms but following their decision to close this year has found himself without a milk contract along with the other Cricketer suppliers. In order to carry on farming he was forced to seek out a new milk contract. After speaking with numerous different processors and manufacturers he has now set up a new company specialising in marketing high quality channel island milk. He has established demand in London and the Midlands from companies manufacturing high end specialist products ranging from Indian desserts to cheese and butter.

This new company has not just saved his own business but he has also been able to include five other farmers who previously supplied Cricketer totalling close to 7 million litres of channel island jersey milk. Without this lifeline these additional producers would also have been forced to sell their herds and leave the industry. In order to deliver the milk to the processors he has employed two HGV drivers and bought two milk tankers. Gordon is confident that there is demand out there for his specialist product and has been enthused meeting factory owners who have a passion for their product.

Gordon and his family have also been instrumental in the development and success of the Farmwise education initiative. The Jerseys have taken place in many milking demonstrations helping to teach children where their milk comes from and to enthuse the next generation of farmers.

As further industry wide recognition of his outstanding achievement Gordon Davis was **selected from all of the nominees and named Devon's Farmer of the Year.**

Chairman of the judges and Addington Fund Chief Executive, Ian Bell OBE, said that Mr Davis was not only an outstandingly efficient dairy farmer, but also a great ambassador for his industry.

"Standards on this farm are second to none", he said. "The Rivermead herd is one of the finest Jersey herds in the country and the farm is a model of tidy efficiency, where attention to detail is everything.

"But over and above that is the work that Gordon does for his fellow farmers, in setting up his own dairy company to provide an outlet for his own and five other dairy farmers' milk, and as an ambassador and educator for the dairy industry. Put all of that together and you have an outstanding Farmer of the Year."

1.6.3 Louise Moorhouse of East Fingle Farm, Drewsteignton in the Best Woman in Farming Category

Runner up in this category. Alongside running a pedigree and commercial ewe flock, Louise has converted part of the farmhouse into a self-contained holiday let, encouraging holiday makers to experience "life on a farm" where they can walk amongst the stock, take part in duties and leave having a life changing fun experience on a farm in Devon.

Louise is a key member of the Beltex Sheep Association organising the South West Regional Beltex Club. She has also for the past three years run the sheep section at the Farmwise Devon education event at Westpoint explaining to children what sheep farming is all about. Before taking on the tenancy Louise was a lecturer at Bicton College and is passionate about promoting agriculture to the next generation. She is a committed exhibitor at all the local and regional agricultural shows and has had much success particularly with the Beltex breed.

Louise's energy and determination to grow her farm business as well as supporting the agricultural industry through education and breed improvement is admirable. She is a fantastic asset to the Devon County Farms Estate.

1.6.4 Chris Creeper of Waterford Farm, Musbury in the Best Young Farmer Category

Runner up in this category. Chris took over the tenancy of the Devon County Farms Estate's Waterford Farm in March 2015 aged just 27 ably supported by his partner Connie. He rents 65 acres from Devon County Council and a further 25 acres rented privately all down to pasture. Currently he is milking 60 primarily Jersey cows averaging 6,500 litres, 4.52 % butterfat, 3.44 % protein, 90 cell count and 17 bactoscan from a simple forage based ration. Within the herd are a small number of elite genetic Ayreshire cows that have been very successful on the national and local show circuit and also have produced bulls sold to AI stud. These cows are flushed and the eggs are implanted into the commercial cows. Alongside the dairy enterprise Chris also has a very successful foot trimming business, he trims on average around 4000 cows a year.

1.6.5 Martyn Mills of Middle Yeo Farm, Down St Mary in the Best Young Farmer Category

Runner up in this category. Martyn and his wife Laura took over the tenancy of Middle Yeo Farm in March 2014 after a swift rise through the dairy industry progressing from being a herdsman then into share farming before moving to the Devon County Farms Estate. They milk a herd of 70-80 British and Irish Friesian cows averaging 7300 litres. Martyn is focused on producing milk from home grown forage and minimal concentrate and tries to add value to every lactation by rearing premium Limousin calves. He regularly achieves top price in Exeter Market for his youngstock. Soon after Martyn took over the tenancy at Middle Yeo he had to reconsider his original business plan to ensure it could cope with the falling milk price. He moved from a high input system to focus on a more grass based enterprise and ensured his cost of production reduced. The business has now grown so that he is able to employ one part time member of staff and is diversifying into sheep and some contracting work.

2.0 Options/Alternatives

2.1 Alternative options have been considered and discounted as they are believed to either be contrary to current Estate policy and/or not in the best financial interests of the Estate.

3.0 Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

3.1 The views and opinions of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers Clubs and the Estate Tenants Association will be presented by the two co-opted members to the committee.

3.2 No other parties have been consulted and no other representations for or against the proposal have been received

3.3 The technical data is believed to be true and accurate.

4.0 Considerations

4.1 The Author is not aware of any financial, sustainability, carbon impact, equality, legal, risk management or public health issues arising from this report

5.0 Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 The Author has prepared this report in accordance with the findings of the County Farms Estate Strategic Review (April 2010)

Rob Parkhouse, Head of Business Strategy and Support

Electoral Divisions: All

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers
None

Who to contact for enquiries:

Dan Meek, NPS South West Ltd, Venture House, One Capital Court, Bittern Road, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7FW.

Tel No: (01392) 351066 - Email: dan.meek@nps.co.uk

