

## **NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL**

### **Minutes of the 260<sup>th</sup> Meeting held in the Pine Room, Lyndhurst Community Centre on THURSDAY, 6 DECEMBER 2018**

**Those present:** Harry Oram (Chairman)  
David Stone (Panel Secretariat)  
Jo Murphy (Panel Secretariat)

Members as shown on the Official List, with the exception of those listed below for whom apologies were received

#### **Also in attendance:**

#### **1 Apologies for absence**

- 1.1 Anthony Climpson (Go New Forest)  
Melissa Shephard (Bransgore Parish Council)  
Nick Clark (Newforce)  
Sam Dovey (NFU)  
Heather Gould (NF Dog Owners)  
Purgle Linham (Natural England)  
Patricia Banks (Milford on Sea Parish Council)  
Dionis Manair (Verderers)  
Rob Waite (Environment Agency)  
Mark Carter (Institute of Chartered Foresters)  
Marian Still (Hordle Parish Council)

#### 1.2 Substitutes

Barry Olorenshaw will substitute for Rob Dewing on behalf of New Forest Business Partnership.

Phillip Daubeney will substitute for Robert Clarke on behalf of Burley Parish Council.

#### **2 Approval of Minutes from the meeting held on 6 September 2018**

- 2.1 The minutes from the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.
- 2.2 Matters arising – Brian Tarnoff referred to Fawley Waterside discussion in minute item 3.3 and asked that the information be circulated to the Panel. The main waterside website is <http://fawleywaterside.co.uk/> and the Waterside Economic Prospectus referred to can be found here <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TK7ri9VhEsHgfLBL0imY9CucE1RvFAih/view>

#### **3 New Forest National Park Authority Update – Alison Barnes**

- 3.1 Alison Barnes thanked everyone who had contributed to the Local plan process. She explained that the examination had now taken place and that the

Inspectors were now in the process of writing up their report which we expected to receive early in 2019. In response to a question she explained that the same inspectors were looking at both ours and the New Forest District Council's Local Plan.

- 3.2 Ms Barnes drew the Panel's attention to the Glover review of protected landscapes. She explained that the National Park family had put forward some main themes for all national parks, which included, national parks being big and better places for nature; the development of land management schemes that are bespoke for the special places to support land managers; a celebration of national parks and their contribution to society; access to nature to support health and well being and an ambition that every child should have the opportunity to visit a national park as part of their education. She advised that we were finalising our response which would focus on issues specific to the New Forest.
- 3.3 Ms Barnes highlighted the volunteer Fair which would take place on 27 January 2019 at Lyndhurst Community Centre. She also advised that the Chief Executive of the Solent LEP would be visiting in the new year and that it was an opportunity to promote the Natural Capital, what nature gives us for free, of national parks.
- 3.4 Ms Barnes explained that next year we would be celebrating 70 years of national parks. The national park signage was discussed and Ms Barnes said that one of the themes within the Partnership Plan was about addressing the look and feel of the place and how you know you are in a special place, and that signage played a part in this.

#### **4 Forestry Commission Update – Bruce Rothnie**

- 4.1 Bruce Rothnie updated the Panel on Forest Design Plans, Wetland and Freshwater Strategy, the recent auction of hardwood logs, planting programmes, the 'Keep your Distance' poster campaign, and the 100 year anniversary of the Forestry Commission following the passing of the Forestry Act in September 1919. His slides and notes are available on the website and can accessed via the link below:  
  
<https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/app/uploads/2018/04/fc-panel-presentation-dec18.pdf>
- 4.2 Mr Rothnie responded to a number of questions and explained that he had met with some local residents at Norley Wood and that he believed that there had been some misunderstanding about the work being carried out there and that he hoped he had dispelled their concerns. In response to questions about dog walking he explained that the inclosures were generally more robust for recreational purposes and that we needed to think about how we redirect activity to the least sensitive areas.
- 4.3 Mr Rothnie explained that this time of year was when re-planting took place, however he said that the amount of planting was limited to small areas and that natural regeneration was being encouraged.

- 4.4 Martin Fletcher, Royal Forestry Society read out a presentation in which he expressed concerns about the reduction of conifers, and that we were felling more than was being planted. Mr Rothnie agreed to respond to Mr Fletcher on the points and would circulate his response with the minutes.

## **5 Superfast Broadband – Russell Horne, Glenn Peacey and Shaun Dale**

- 5.1 Glenn Peacey, Hampshire County Council, updated the Panel on the roll out of Broadband across the County and explained some of the challenges that this work had presented. His presentation is available on the website. Shaun Dale, Openreach, was also in attendance to take questions.

## **6 RMS Consultation Findings – Nigel Matthews**

- 6.1 Responding to a query made earlier in the meeting, Nigel Matthews advised that a workshop of 28 commercial dog walkers had been hosted by the Authority on 4 December 2018. This has been a very productive meeting and set in place channels for future communication, training issues and the possibility of setting in place a professional dog walking charter. Those attending the workshop had supported signing up to a charter and the Authority had made available a draft charter for consideration by dog walking organisations in terms of setting a framework of what would be expected of those walking multiple dogs and the standards which would need to be adhered to.
- 6.2 Mr Matthews then summarised the feedback from the RMS consultation and advised that there had been a very high level of support for the 25 draft proposed actions (78% of the 1,074 responses received) and also from the 670 free text comment received. He drew members' attention to response tables setting out in various formats the consultation responses on the draft proposed actions and the themes within the free text comments under the key objectives. He also referred to a map illustrating the location of respondents in relation to the National Park.
- 6.3 Mr Matthews then set out the following areas for further work:
- Clearer descriptions of each action being developed
  - Some actions already started; some new or to be expanded
  - Actions relating to spatial distribution of recreation need to be discussed with local communities, landowners and user groups
  - Footprint Ecology research for local planning authorities due August 2019
  - RMS Steering Group meets 10 December to discuss forward plan
- 6.4 He said that he would provide a further update to the Panel at its meeting on 7 March 2019.

## **7 Freshwater Habitats – Dr Naomi Ewald**

- 7.1 Dr Naomi Ewald of the Freshwater Habitats Trust advised that the New Forest Catchment Partnership was a Defra initiative introduced in 2012 and comprised organisations and groups operating in the 'catchment' area of the New Forest. She then updated members on the actions of the Partnership in terms of four objectives set over the last six years, namely:

- Raising awareness of all fresh and coastal water habitats in the New Forest
  - Maintenance of habitats at the highest standard: unimpacted by pollution and functioning naturally
  - Improving water quality and ecological value to minimum standards under the WFD (Water Framework Directive)
  - Supporting an integrated approach to catchment management with stakeholders
- 7.2 She said that analysis of the water quality of 675 waterbodies tested in the New Forest had resulted in a 74% pristine (unpolluted) water quality compared to a comparative test of 579 waterbodies in Oxford which revealed 69% highly polluted water quality. These results recognized the New Forest as one of the most important areas for coastal and freshwater biodiversity in the UK and the maintenance of such high standards were embodied in the Partnership's vision.
- 7.3 Dr Ewald updated members on significant projects over the last six years which included work at Hatchet Pond - one of the highest quality standing water habitats in the country and Sowley Pond (designated a SSSI) - the largest body of standing water in the region and an important breeding habitat. However, areas of concern had been identified at both sites requiring mitigation measures by the Group. A number of further important initiatives had been commenced with the Beaulieu Estate.
- 7.4 Dr Ewald emphasised the importance of an integrated approach to catchment management with landowners, stakeholders and volunteers which had worked well over the last six years and the Partnership was working closely with local community groups such as the Blackwater Conservation Group and landowners partnerships with the Beaulieu and Sowley Estates and local farmers.
- 7.5 Referring to a query in connection with popularity of Hatchet Pond as a recreational site, she said that an objective of the Partnership had been to help people to enjoy the area but also raise awareness to protect this important habitat and encourage good behaviour. Referring to the next six years she said that Gemma Stride from the Forestry Commission had been made available to the Partnership on a one day a week basis to undertake a consultation exercise canvassing people on their views and future key issues. She encouraged Panel members to engage with the Partnership and her contact details are available on the presentation on the website.

## **8 Any Other Business**

- 8.1 A member of the Panel requested that the views of the Royal Forestry Society as presented in a statement at the meeting by Martin Fletcher.

## **9 Date of the next meeting**

- 9.1 The Panel noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 7 March 2019 at 7.30pm at Lyndhurst Community Centre

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm