

NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL

**Minutes of the 238th Meeting, held in the Louisa Suite, Lyndhurst Park Hotel, Lyndhurst,
on THURSDAY, 4 July 2013**

Those present: Tim Greenwood (In the Chair)
David Stone (Panel Support Officer)
Vicki Gibbon (Panel Secretariat)
Members as shown on the Official List, with the exception of those listed below for whom apologies were received.

ITEM 1

1.1 APOLOGIES

Richard Lemon – Natural England
Mike Seddon – Forestry Commission
Peter Turner Braemore Parish Council
Ian Macon-Smith – Community New Forest
Ted Fleat – Sway Parish Council
Robert Clarke – Burley Parish Council
Alison Russell – British Horse Society
Nick Clarke - Newforce

1.2 SUBSTITUTIONS

Mark Street attended the Consultative Panel on behalf of the Forestry Commission in place of Mike Seddon.

1.3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tim Greenwood announced that Pat Thorne would be standing down from the Verderers and would therefore no longer attend Panel meetings, Tim thanked her for all her support.

Tim Greenwood drew the Panel's attention to minute 8.1 in connection with an Officer from the New Forest National Park Authority briefing members on the Commoners Housing Scheme, and advised that Steve Avery, Director of Park Services was not available for this meeting and would attend the next meeting in September.

ITEM 2

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (2 May 2013)

2.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record.

ITEM 3

MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Stan Wade commented on minute item 4.1 of the last Panel minutes that he was not aware of any recent cases of dog deaths and asked if the Forestry Commission could provide an update. Mark Street advised that no further cases had been reported and that due to similar cases across the country it seemed to be a dog illness rather than an issue specific to the Forest.

- 3.2 The Chairman advised the Panel that in reference to minute item 5.3 of the last minutes he had written to the Minister emphasising the key role played by the Consultative Panel in the New Forest and had received a letter back from the Minister, a copy of which was tabled at the meeting and can be found as **Annex 1**.
- 3.3 Sue Bennison asked if the National Park Authority had made further progress with regards to the cycling charter, as per minute item 8.3 on the last panel minutes. David Harrison advised that a draft charter was now available and would be put out to consultation shortly. It was requested by Panel members that an agenda item could be added to the next meeting.

ITEM 4

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FUND – ANDY BRENNAN (NFNPA)

- 4.1 Andy Brennan presented his report on the Sustainable Communities Fund, explaining that this comprised a merger of the 3 current funds; Sustainable development fund, sustainable solutions transport fund and the energy advice audits. The new fund would ensure less confusion and reflect the high level of community involvement.
- 4.2 It was explained that the fund oversees grants that help to sustain the Forest and should members of the panel require further information on this to contact Andy Brennan on 01590 646676 email – andy.brennan@newforestnpa.gov.uk. Attached is a copy of the presentation **Annex 2**.

ITEM 5

COMMUNITY WILDLIFE PLANS PROJECT – ANGELA PETERS (NFNPA)

- 5.1 Angela Peters from the New Forest National Park Authority gave an update on the Community Wildlife project explaining that it had been an excellent opportunity to get communities involved in recording wildlife and volunteering in their local areas.
- 5.2 For more information on this project or to get involved please contact Angela Peters on 01590 646654 or email – angela.peters@nflandadvice.org.uk. Attached is a copy of the presentation Annex 3.

ITEM 6

NEW FOREST HYDROLOGY SURVEYS AND FINDINGS – JINTI GIFFORD (NATURAL ENGLAND)

- 6.1 Jinti Gifford from Natural England gave a presentation of the geomorphological and eco-hydrological surveys which had been taking place across the Forest. Jinti explained that the aim of the project was to establish physical habitat, eco-hydrological and geomorphological processes and forms typical of the head water, wetland flood plain habitats within the Forest and to provide clear baseline data and recommendations on which a strategic operational restoration programme could be designed.
- 6.2 For more information on the project contact Jinti Gifford on 0300 060 4929 or email jinti.gifford@naturalengland.org.uk. Attached is a copy of the presentation Annex 4.

ITEM 7

PANEL AGENDA SETTINGS

- 7.1 No items were suggested on this occasion

ITEM 8

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1 The Forestry Commission was requested to organise this year's Panel tour for some time later this summer. Members asked that the tour include a visit to ascertain progress on reinstatement of meanders and open forest management (particularly bracken management). Should members have any further suggestions they were requested to contact Mark Street or Mike Seddon at the Forestry Commission offices.
- 8.2 Tony Barnett advised the Panel that the Caravan Club would be seeking planning permission to rearrange the pitching on their touring caravan site in Forest Road, Bransgore. Copies of the drawings for the plans had been made available at the meeting. He invited members to visit the site in order to view the different activities at first hand, this site visit would take place on Wednesday 17 July, commencing from 4pm (Postal Code is BH23 8EB). Those interested in attending were requested to telephone 07771 943818.
- 8.3 Rob Dewing from the New Forest Business Partnership drew attention to the survey of broadband usage currently being conducted by the Partnership and NFDC. The objective of this survey was to compile information on broadband speeds and also to get a picture of the current and future market demand with a view to using this information to petition for a better quality of broadband service in the New Forest. Further information could be obtained on the website of the New Forest Business Partnership.
- 8.4 In response to a query regarding future merging of Natural England and the Environment Agency, the Panel was advised that there were currently no plans for a merger but that there would be closer working between the two organisations.
- 8.5 In response to a question from the Panel on the Government's proposal to establish an independent Public Forest Estate management body, Mark Street advised that there information could be obtained from the Defra website on this but that there would be opportunities for organisations to input into the proposals through a consultation process and new legislation would be required to initiate the new structure.

ITEM 9

DATE OF NEXT PANEL MEETING

- 10.1 Date of the next meeting would be **7.30 pm on THURSDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 2013** in the **Louisa Suite at the Lyndhurst Park Hotel, Lyndhurst.**

The meeting closed at 21.10 hrs.