

NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL

Minutes of the 244th Meeting, held in the Main Hall, Brockenhurst Village Hall on THURSDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2014

Those present: Clive Chatters (In the Chair)
Vicki Gibbon (Panel Secretariat)
Debbie Copping (Panel Secretariat)
Rachel Pardey (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

Cllr Eddie Holtham – Fawley & Denney Lodge Parish Council
Alison Russell – British Horse Society
Ian Hibberd – Test Valley Borough Council
Stephanie Stokes – Community First New Forest
Diana Kitcher – Hampshire Federation of Women's Institute
Sally Owen - Bransgore Parish Council
Christine Ames – New Forest Tourism Association
Heather Gould – New Forest Dog Owners Group
Robbie Roberts – RSPCA
Sam Dovey – National Farmer Union
Dionis MacNair – Verderers
Christine Ford – Ringwood Town Council

1.2 SUBSTITUTIONS

John Clarke for Stewart Hall on behalf of Woodgreen Parish Council
Ann Cakebread for Colin Draper on behalf of Godshill Parish Council

1.3 NEW REPRESENTATIVES/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Bruce Rothnie from the Forestry Commission to the Panel and welcomed back Natural England, who were represented by Matt Carter and Peter Greenslade.

ITEM 2

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (4 September 2014)

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

ITEM 3

MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Mike Moriarty commented that the figures in the presentation that was given by the Environment Agency during the May meeting and subsequently the updated report at the September meeting did not accurately reflect the figures for the flooding which took place in Copythorne. Mr Moriarty advised the panel that at least 17 properties were flooded rather than the 14 that were reflected. David Horne from the Environment agency apologised for

any inaccuracies and advised Mr Moriarty to contact Wes Jones (Wesley.jones@environment-agency.gov.uk) to enable these figures to be amended.

ITEM 4

NFNPA UPDATE – ALISON BARNES

- 4.1 Alison Barnes updated the panel on the recent Government plans on reforming the current Section 106 agreements which would result in development schemes of less than 10 houses not needing to provide a contribution to affordable housing. Ms Barnes commented that this is a major concern for the Authority and for all National Parks. A letter had been sent to the Communities Secretary of State Eric Pickles asking for National Parks to be exempt from this ruling as it would be detrimental to local people in the Forest and that there is a need to support the provision of affordable homes.
- 4.2 Ms Barnes advised the Panel that the Single Payment Scheme which is part of the European-wide Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is being replaced and that this is posing challenges to the New Forest commoners. The NPA and Land Advice Service are currently working with the commoners to ensure this is a smooth transition.
- 4.3 The Parishes of Barton and Milford on Sea have recently been working with the Land Advice Service to bring back grazing after 50 years, this has proved extremely beneficial for the improving access together with the management scrub and wildlife.
- 4.4 The New Forest Tour is growing year on year with over 50,000 people using the service this year. There are now 3 routes plus the Beach Bus which links in with the Hythe ferry.
- 4.5 This year's New Forest Christmas Fayre which is run in association with New Forest Marque is planned to be held on 6 and 7 December at New Park, Brockenhurst.

ITEM 5

CYCLING EVENTS UPDATE – NIGEL MATTHEWS

- 5.1 Nigel Matthews apologised to the Panel on behalf of James Knight as he was unable to attend the meeting. Nigel reminded the Panel that the Cycling Code had been produced and was being widely promoted. The draft Cycling Charter was released in April and many comments had been received. In June, NPA Members agreed that they would not support the Charter unless it included a cap of 1000 riders and that participants should be clearly identified with both front and back numbers. Support for the Charter (including these key clauses and various changes made in response to comments received) by statutory organisations is being sought before finalising and launching the Charter – it may not be till April 2015 before we know if the Charter is working.

During October it had been regrettable that two cycle events had taken place on the same day. The SAG had written to both organisers, and the Gridiron had to reverse its route to avoid unacceptable clashes with the Wiggle event. Nigel advised the panel that if they would like to comment on a specific cycle event that had taken place, this can now be done on the Safety Advisory Group website which can be found at <http://www.newforest.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=8426>.

- 5.2 Sue Bennison (Bramshaw Parish Council) commented that in Bramshaw they don't have huge numbers of riders go through the village. During April she had observed an event and found that the stewards had been helpful although one incident did occur.

- 5.3 Ann Cakebread (Godshill Parish Council) raised five points that the organiser of the Gridiron cycle event would like to be included in the Charter –
- Limit advanced entries to 1000 and do not accept on the day entries
 - 1000 entry cycling events should NOT be run on consecutive days on the same roads
 - Allow only one 1000 entry cycling event to run on New Forest roads on any day
 - Events on open roads should have a minimum time limit to control the speed of the ride
 - Ban the use of tri-bars as they do not allow the degree of control necessary to safely ride in a group
- 5.4 Others suggested that only the Wiggle events cause significant problems; the Gridiron (which has been running for over 20 years) and the Cycletta were fine.

Nigel thanked Panel Members for their comments and confirmed that he would take them into account and update the Panel in due course, hopefully with evidence that the Charter is working.

ITEM 6

FORESTRY COMMISSION DEPUTY SURVEYOR INTRODUCTIONS AND FC UPDATE – BRUCE ROTHIE

- 6.1 Bruce Rothnie introduced himself to the Panel as the new Deputy Surveyor for the Forestry Commission. Bruce explained that he has worked for the Forestry Commission since 1995 in various roles including operational management and recreation. He has been away from the New Forest for 5 years working on a project for managing tree diseases. He has only been in post for a few weeks so will provide a full update to the next meeting.

ITEM 7

MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE – NICK EVANS

- 7.1 Nick Evans advised Panel Members that a copy of the Management Plan had recently been sent, asking for views. This can be found on the NPA website at <http://www.newforest.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=8426>
- 7.2 This is a supplement to the existing Management Plan with the actions suggested by many of the statutory organisations in the forest. It brings together a range of proposed projects to help deliver the purposes and duty of the NPA.
- 7.3 The initial draft for discussion and comments will run from 20th October until 19th December. In January the comments will be considered by partner organisations followed by further public consultation from February to March 2015. The final version will be formally agreed by all partners in June 2015. Any comments should be sent by email to the Policy Team at policy@newforest.gov.uk.

ITEM 8

NATURAL ENGLAND UPDATE – MATT CARTER

- 8.1 Matt Carter commented that a recent review of Natural England had occurred and that they are now working on team basis with Hampshire and the Isle of Wight covering the New Forest. Peter Greenslade and Jenny Thomas will be the advisors in the New Forest. A representative from Natural England will attend future Panel meetings.

ITEM 9

PANEL AGENDA SETTING

- 9.1 Edward Heron would like an agenda item covering the delivery of high speed broadband in the forest.
- 9.2 Clive Chatters suggested that the Local Enterprise Partnership are invited to attend a future meeting to give an overview of their work.

ITEM 10

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 10.1 Sue Bennison (Bramshaw Parish Council) made the Panel aware that they are having a problem with the location of a new Super Broadband cabinet in the Parish. The current cabinet must remain in situ however BT are proposing that the new cabinet be placed on the other side of the green. Ms Bennison wanted to know why the new cabinet could not be placed next to the old cabinet, as this would be less intrusive.

It was agreed that this should be checked with BT and that the officer who is working on this at the NPA is Sarah Applegate.

- 10.2 Jenni Tubbs (New Forest Friends of the Earth) asked the Forestry Commission and Natural England how they are monitoring the situation of fungi collection in the forest for commercial use.

Bruce commented that the Forestry Commission had seen an increase in fungi collection especially from the Eastern European community who are being employed to undertake collection for commercial use. The Forestry Commission currently are not sure of the long term effects on the forest through this amount of foraging however there is a code for people to follow in the forest which limits picking to no more than 1kg per day per person. It is difficult to police however when rangers come across this problem they can investigate.

It was agreed that the NPA, Forestry Commission and Natural England should look into this further, Alison Barnes asked the Panel to send any comments to Nigel Matthews at the NPA nigel.matthews@newforestnpa.gov.uk

- 10.3 Richard Reeves (New Forest History and Archaeology Group) raised the subject of commercial exploitation of the forest, e.g. commercial dog walkers, do these people need a licence.

Richard also asked the Forestry Commission how they are dealing with 'turkey oak'. Bruce Rothnie advised that they are trying to tackle this and would like to know areas of where this had been spotted.

ITEM 11

DATE OF NEXT PANEL MEETING

- 11.1 The next meeting would be held at **7.30 pm on THURSDAY, 15 JANUARY 2015** in the **Main Hall, Brockenhurst Village Hall, Brockenhurst.**