

NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL

Minutes of the 215th Meeting, held in the Council Chamber, New Forest District Council offices, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, on THURSDAY, 8 January 2009

Those present: Tim Greenwood (Chairman)
David Stone (Panel Support Officer)
Jo Murphy (Panel Clerk/Secretary)
Members as shown on the Official List, with the exception of those listed below for whom apologies were received.

ITEM 1

1.1 APOLOGIES

Mrs Barnes, Hampshire County Federation of the Women's Institutes
Nigel Clarke, Ringwood Town Council
Roly Errington, Ellingham, Harbridge and Ibsley Parish Council
Kathy Gulliver, Sway Parish Council
Eddie Holtham, Fawley Parish Council
Peter Kelly, Environment Agency
Ian Mason-Smith, HCVYS
Lord Montagu, English Heritage
Wendy Simpson, Wellow Parish Council
Peter Sopowski, Ashurst and Colbury Parish Council
Peter Whapham, East Boldre Parish Council
Mike Womersley, Redlynch Parish Council

1.2 SUBSTITUTIONS

David Dickenson, New Forest Dog Owners' Group
David Livermore, New Forest Access for All
Steven Lorton, New Forest Tourism Association
Brian Tarnoff, New Forest Association
John Thompson, Ramblers' Association

1.3 SPECIAL NOTE

The Chairman welcomed new panel representative Peter Kelly for the Environment Agency.

The Chairman announced that Dr Chris Willard of Solent Protection Society had stepped down after 6 years on the panel. A new representative had not yet been appointed.

ITEM 2

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (6 November 2009)

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

ITEM 3

MATTERS ARISING

- 3.1 Mr Chris Aldhous (New Forest Equestrian Association) referred to the comments recorded in the final sentence of Minute 5.5 and clarified that he had been speaking in his personal capacity and not as a representative of the Association. He added that the Association was happy to discuss any further recreational horse keeping issues in relation to the Plan with the National Park Authority.

The above clarification was noted by the Panel for recording in the current minutes.

- 3.2 Referring to Minute 5 (National Park Plan Consultation), Mr Dickenson (NFDOG) advised that the minute did not record his question to Richard Lemon as to why over 650 responses relating to dog walking and car park closures had not been included in the figures for responses to the National Park Plan. He added that, Mr Lemon had replied that these had been included in the responses to the Recreation Management Strategy but subsequently agreed, by email, that in future the figures would be included in the Park Plan response statistics.

The Panel noted that the panel minutes were a summary of the meeting and it was not necessary to record all the discussion. However, members agreed to note the above comments for further elaboration by Mr Lemon under Agenda Item No. 5 (Minute 5.2).

ITEM 4

FORESTRY COMMISSION

a) Operational practice with respect to traveller or gypsy occupation of Forestry Commission land.

- 4.1 Mike Seddon (Deputy Surveyor, Forestry Commission) confirmed that occupation of Forestry Commission land by travellers was viewed as trespass. He explained there were two stages to the process, firstly, a member of staff visited the site and negotiated a deadline by which the travellers could vacate the land. He pointed out that this approach could take up to 6 weeks but was successful in most cases. If negotiations failed, the next step was to bring a prosecution, which was costly in both financial terms and staff time.

- 4.2 During discussions, concerns were raised by various members about the lack of provision of a travellers' site in the area, the cost of clearing up once sites had been vacated and the length of time taken for travellers to move on.

b) Outbreak of Phytophthora ramorum (Sudden Oak Death)

- 4.3 Mike Seddon advised Members' that Phytophthora ramorum had been discovered on Rhododendrons in Rhinefield Ornamental Drive. The Forestry Commission would be removing the infected Rhododendrons and surveying the area to establish if there were any other cases. He informed the Panel that further information was available on both Defra's and the Forestry Commission's web sites.

ITEM 5

NATIONAL PARK PLAN CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Richard Lemon (Director of Strategy and Planning, New Forest National Park Authority) advised members of the Panel that the National Park Authority had sent a response to everybody who had commented on the National Park Plan and Recreation Management Strategy consultation documents. He also confirmed that the response analysis was available on the Authority's web site and that responses had been sent to all Parish Councils even if they had not commented. He then took the Panel through the summary of responses highlighting the number of responses on each policy and the top ten issues. Mr Lemon also outlined the next stage of the process. Copies of the response analysis and next stage can be found on the Authority's website at www.newforestnpa.gov.uk.
- 5.2 In response to Mr Dickenson's earlier question, Mr Lemon explained that the NFD OG responses had initially been included in the analysis on the Recreation Management Strategy but had later been moved to the National Park Plan figures at the request of Mr Dickenson. He explained that the responses could not be recorded under both consultations as this would be double counting. He reassured Mr Dickenson that the responses from NFD OG would be taken into account at the next stage in both consultations.
- 5.3 Panel members raised several issues following Richard Lemon's presentation including the cost of the consultation, the volume of response, the need for the Authority to take into account support for local businesses, the level of joint working with New Forest District Council and the fact that 80% of the policies had either no comments or were supported by respondents. On the issue of costs, Richard Lemon responded that he did not have the figures at the meeting but that since this had been the subject of several Freedom of Information requests to the Authority, the information was readily available. He agreed to furnish Mr Shotter with the information requested.

Action: Richard Lemon to send Mr Shotter details of the cost of the consultation process. The Chairman suggested that a note on the cost of the National Park Plan and Recreation Management Strategy process be circulated with the minutes.

ITEM 6

ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE NEW FOREST

- 6.1 Frank Green (Archaeologist, New Forest National Park Authority) circulated an object for Members to view and guess its purpose. He later informed members that it was a Tudor chimney brick. He drew the newly formed New Forest History and Archaeology Group to the Panel's attention and recommended that anyone with an interest should get in touch with them.
- 6.2 Mr Green then gave a presentation and slide show on the Archaeology of the New Forest. He emphasised how important the Forest was, having 10% of all known Ancient Monuments in the south of England and these were only the ones that were known about. Following questions from members about local historical maps Mr Green said that it was his intention to put as much archaeological information as possible on the Authority's web site and that he would inform the Panel when it was available.

ITEM 7

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MEETINGS

8.1 No questions were raised on this occasion.

ITEM 8

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1 Barry Olorenshaw (New Forest Business Partnership) advised the Panel that he was stepping down and introduced Rob Dewing, Vice-Chairman of the New Forest Business Partnership as his replacement. Tim Greenwood welcomed Mr Dewing and thanked Mr Olorenshaw for his contribution to the Panel over the years.
- 8.2 Sue Bennison (Bramshaw Parish Council) asked the Panel to bring pressure on Natural England and the Hampshire County Council Highways to repair the severe erosion on the roadside at Blackhill Road. Cllr Bennison circulated photographs of the eroded verge. Mr Fuller (Hampshire County Council, Highways) advised the Panel that his department was almost ready to start the work but were in the process of sourcing local materials for the repairs. Rachel Green (Natural England) apologised for the length of time it had taken and confirmed that the details had now been agreed. Mr Fuller said that he did not have a date for the work but it would be as soon as possible and that it would be a permanent repair. Following representations from other Panel Members it was agreed that Mr Fuller and Ms Green would discuss the issue further with Cllr. Bennison outside the meeting.

Action: Kevin Fuller and Rachel Green to arrange a further discussion outside the meeting on the repair of the verge at Blackhill Road.

ITEM 9

DATE OF NEXT PANEL MEETING

- 9.1 The next Consultative Panel meeting will be held at **7.30 pm on THURSDAY, 5 March 2009** in the Council Chamber, New Forest District Council offices, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst.

The meeting closed at 21.25 hours.