

## **NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL**

### **Minutes of the 214<sup>th</sup> Meeting, held in the Council Chamber, New Forest District Council offices, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, on THURSDAY, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

Those present:

Mike Seddon (In the Chair)

David Stone (Panel Support Officer)

Rosalind Alderman (Panel Clerk)

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

#### **ITEM 1**

##### **APOLOGIES**

###### **1.1 APOLOGIES**

Tim Greenwood, Chairman

Mike Chilcott, CPRE

Peter Whapham, East Boldre Parish Council

Lord Montagu, English Heritage

Eddie Holtham, Fawley Parish Council

Mary Barnes, Hampshire Federation of Women's Institutes

Alex Wade, Hythe and Dibden Parish Council

Sophie Beeton, Milford on Sea Parish Council

Julian Evans, Royal Forestry Society and Institute of Chartered Foresters

Caroline Morrison, Salisbury District Council

Kathy Gulliver, Sway Parish Council

###### **1.2 SUBSTITUTES**

Peter Stammers, Godshill Parish Council

David Dickenson, New Forest Dog Owner's Group

Richard Reeves, New Forest History and Archaeology Society

Richard Lemon, New Forest National Park Authority

Ray Miles, Ramblers' Association

###### **1.3 SPECIAL NOTE**

The Chairman welcomed the following new Panel representatives:

- Tony Taylor, New Forest History and Archaeology Group (not present – Richard Reeves subst.). It was noted that the Group replaced the New Forest branch of the Hampshire Field Club, which had now been wound up.
- Phil Dupres, Bransgore Parish Council

#### **ITEM 2**

##### **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** (4 September 2008)

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

#### **ITEM 3**

##### **MATTERS ARISING**

3.1 There were no matters arising.

## **ITEM 4**

### **FLYTIPPING AND LITTERING**

- 4.1 Dave Robinson of the Environment Agency made a presentation on flytipping and littering. He explained that as available landfill space had decreased, the Government had levied a landfill tax, which led to an increase in the cost of legitimate disposal and a corresponding increase in the illegal disposal of waste. Local authorities were responsible for investigation of small scale offences; the Environment Agency investigated offences involving greater volumes or hazardous waste. Flytipping followed broad seasonal trends, being most prevalent in late spring. Mr Robinson emphasised that the occupiers of property should take responsibility for the disposal of waste produced on the property, referring to the Waste (Household Waste Duty of Care) (England and Wales) Regulations 2005 which provided that waste producers should ensure that any transfer of household waste was to an authorised person. Measures that could be taken in respect of those illegally disposing of waste included sending warning letters, full prosecution or the imposition of fixed penalty notices. At present this was not a route favoured by the Environment Agency as it was often perceived as a revenue raising exercise.
- 4.2 In response to a query on the local authority responsible for investigating flytipping incidents in the local area, Richard Lemon (New Forest National Park Authority) explained that the National Park Authority was the relevant planning authority for matters regarding waste but that New Forest District Council was responsible for waste collection and the investigation of flytipping offences. Edward Heron (New Forest District Council) said that money collected as landfill tax was not passed back to local authorities to fund measures to alleviate littering and flytipping. Peter Frost (Natural England) said school children should receive better education on the negative impacts of littering. Peter Sopowski (Ashurst and Colbury Parish Council) said he had been surprised to learn that no one locally had been prosecuted during the last year for such offences; he felt that this power should be used more widely. Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Watch schemes could be useful in alerting local authorities to offences; the Environment Agency had a 24 hour hotline for reports (0800 807060). Mike Seddon (Forestry Commission) then showed Panel members a number of slides, including maps showing the areas affected by flytipping and the number of incidences in each location.

## **ITEM 5**

### **NATIONAL PARK PLAN CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Richard Lemon (Director of Strategy and Planning, New Forest National Park Authority) presented an overview of the consultation process on the National Park Plan. The National Park Authority had received a high volume of responses to the Plan, many of which concerned recreational horse keeping, which it was considering carefully. A number of responses had also related to the mention of road pricing in the document; Mr Lemon explained that this was part of Hampshire County Council's Transport Strategy, adopted in 2006. The draft National Park Plan would probably be amended to include a clearer statement on the responsibilities of the various local authorities in the region and who would lead on this and other partnership issues. He explained that the National Park Authority had two statutory purposes, namely conservation and the promotion of understanding and enjoyment of the Park. In achieving these purposes the National Park Authority had a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities. The challenge would be in achieving a balance between these principles (bearing in mind that the principle of conservation took priority). On the whole the vision and objectives of the Plan had received a positive

response, with most criticisms relating to specific policy issues and in particular to the perceived impact on recreational horse keepers. He welcomed further responses to the consultation.

- 5.2 Once the consultation ended on Friday 14 November 2008, the National Park Authority would consider a phase of further consultation with key stakeholders. The Plan would be submitted to the Secretary of State in 2009, and would then be examined by the Planning Inspector, who would issue a binding report. Following this the National Park Authority would adopt the Plan, probably in Spring 2010.
- 5.3 Panel members then raised various questions and comments. The National Park Authority was asked to consult with youth groups in the Forest, and to consider the Sustainable Community Strategy, which would be distributed shortly. Martina Humber (Lymington and Pennington Town Council) asked that the National Park Authority print any future drafts in black type on white paper to assist those who were partially sighted, and that the substance of the Plan take account of partially sighted and hearing impaired people. Alan Shotter (Marchwood Parish Council) said that the New Forest Association of Local Councils would like to invite Mr Lemon to a meeting on the consultation draft. Ian Taylor (newforce) requested that details of the ongoing consultation process and timetable be included on the National Park Authority's website, and asked what part in the process was played by the sustainability appraisal and habitats assessment. Mrs Russell (British Horse Society) requested that any meetings held as part of the second phase of the consultation process be open to the public and well advertised.

*Note: details of the consultation process can be found at:*

[http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/local\\_development\\_framework\\_process.pdf](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/local_development_framework_process.pdf)

- 5.4 Tina Cant of Forest Uprising Group then gave a presentation on the draft Plan, explaining that she was particularly interested in the draft as a recreational horse keeper. She said that a petition had been circulated and had collected 9,000 signatures and would be presented to Westminster. Although they were in agreement with some aspects of the Plan, the Forest Uprising Group had been dismayed by the consultation process and felt the consultation should have been better publicised from the start. The Group felt that the National Park Authority should take a more democratic and accountable approach in future. Referring to the dog free car park proposals contained in the draft document, Ms Cant said that there was no evidence that dogs disturbed ground-nesting birds and argued that scientists did not accept that public health issues were caused by dog fouling. She said there was no evidence that erosion was caused by recreational horse keeping and that unsightly landscape impacts were a subjective issue, advocating an educational approach rather than a rule-based approach.
- 5.5 Peter Roberts (New Forest Association) questioned how Forest Uprising Group had been allowed to speak despite not being included on the published agenda. He said that most people who were interested in caring for the Forest had taken part in the 'New Forest, New Chapter' stakeholder workshops where there had been an opportunity to input into this process. Peter Sopowski (Ashurst and Colbury Parish Council) said that recreational horse keeping was a planning issue. Chris Aldhous (New Forest Equestrian Association) said he felt the National Park Authority had not sufficiently engaged with the Association prior to the issue of the draft Plan and he did not wish to work with the National Park Authority further.

## **ITEM 6**

### **NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MEETING**

- 6.1 Richard Lemon (New Forest National Park Authority) updated Panel members on the National Park Authority meeting on 16 October 2008, noting that a number of speakers had raised comments and criticisms on the draft Plan. The National Park Authority had adopted a Conservation Areas Management Plan, received character appraisals for the Conservation Areas of Lyndhurst, Swan Green and Bank and had adopted minor amendments to the boundaries of Lyndhurst and Bank Conservation Areas.

## **ITEM 7**

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 7.1 Panel members paid tribute to National Park Authority member Diana Halford who had passed away recently, and who had been a valuable and long term member of the Panel.
- 7.2 In response to a query from Peter Sopowski (Ashurst and Colbury Parish Council), Richard Lemon and Peter Frost clarified that the National Park Authority had incurred no expenditure on the advice of the SEEDA equestrian champion, who had been commissioned by SEEDA to undertake research work for the South East region. A Bristol-based consultancy 'Land Use Consultants' had been commissioned by the National Park Authority to facilitate stakeholder workshops and draft the Recreation Management Strategy at a cost of £65,000. Stewart Hall (Woodgreen Parish Council) drew Panel members' attention to the fact that the draft Plan took 1974 (rather than 1982) as the date at which to take the existing size of a property, when calculating the permissible size of an extension. Panel members also asked the National Park Authority to bear in mind gypsies and travellers in the revised draft of the Plan.
- 7.3 In response to a query from Jo Russell (Denny Lodge Parish Council), Mike Seddon (Forestry Commission) said he would check that Roundhill campsite was cleared of all debris left at the end of the camping season. In response to a query, Kevin Fuller (Hampshire County Council) said that noise caused by the recent surface dressing of local roads would reduce over the next three years. Barry Olorenshaw (New Forest Business Partnership) asked that New Forest District Council and the National Park Authority consider what could be done to combat rapidly rising unemployment in the area. He pointed out that there was currently a Government consultation under way regarding the possible election of National Park Authority members in future. Panel members criticised the size of new speed limit signs that had been put in place in areas where the speed limit had recently been reduced to 30 mph; Kevin Fuller explained that there was a minimum statutory size for such signs.

## **ITEM 8**

### **DATE OF NEXT PANEL MEETING**

- 8.1 The next Consultative Panel meeting will be held at **7.30 pm on THURSDAY 8 January 2009** in the Council Chamber, New Forest District Council offices, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst.

The meeting closed at 21.30 hours.