

## NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL

### **Minutes of the 209<sup>th</sup> Meeting, held in the Council Chamber, New Forest District Council offices, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, on THURSDAY, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2008**

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

#### **ITEM 1** **APOLOGIES**

Peter Turner (Breamore Parish Council)  
Tony Barnett (Caravan Club)  
James Young (Commoners' Defence Association)  
Bill Dow (Fordingbridge Town Council and Hyde Parish Council)  
Jack Sturgess (Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society)  
Barry Olorenshaw (New Forest Business Partnership)  
Edward Heron (New Forest District Council)  
Christine Ames (New Forest Tourism Association)  
Kathy Gulliver and Carol Gates (Sway Parish Council)  
Tony Gentle (Test Valley Borough Council)  
Wendy Simpson (Wellow Parish Council)  
Peter Whapham (East Boldre Parish Council)  
Mike Chilcott (Campaign to Protect Rural England)

#### **SUBSTITUTIONS**

John Korbey for Brockenhurst Parish Council  
Leo Randall for Melchet Park and Plaitford Parish Council  
David Dickenson for New Forest Dog Owners' Group

#### **ITEM 2** **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** (15 November 2007)

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

#### **ITEM 3** **MATTERS ARISING**

##### **a) Letter to Director of Airspace Policy at the CAA (Min. 5.3)**

3.1 The Chairman said that a letter had been sent on behalf of the Panel to the Director of Airspace Policy at the Civil Aviation Authority expressing the Panel's disappointment over the rejection of its concerns regarding the impacts of the proposed airspace changes. The Chairman read out extracts from the reply that had been received.

*Note: copies of the two letters are attached to these minutes.*

##### **b) Animal accident information at visitor information points (Min. 9.2)**

3.2 Steve Trotter (New Forest National Park Authority) said that the National Park Authority had ordered additional animal accident information cards and these

would be distributed at various outlets in the Forest. Further to a suggestion made at the previous meeting, the National Park Authority had considered placing animal accident information posters in the Forest car parks, but this was not felt to be necessary as animal accident information was available on existing car park signage. Geraint James (Copythorne Parish Council) requested that the information be provided electronically to the parish clerks for inclusion on the parish councils' websites.

**Action:** Steve Trotter (New Forest National Park Authority) to arrange for the electronic provision of animal accident information to the parish councils.

**c) Letter to Chairman of Natural England (Min. 9.3)**

3.3 The Chairman told Panel members that he had sent a letter to Sir Martin Doughty, Chair of Natural England, expressing the Panel's concerns regarding the recent non-attendance of a representative of Natural England at meetings of the Panel. The Chairman read out an excerpt of the reply that had been received, which stated that Natural England was reviewing its partner engagement and future attendance at meetings of the Panel.

*Note: copies of the two letters are attached to these minutes.*

**d) Data release consent forms (Min. 9.7)**

3.4 The Chairman reminded Panel members to complete and return the data protection consent letters that had been circulated, if they wished to allow the release of their details in the Panel handbook.

**ITEM 4**

**FORESTRY COMMISSION – REVISED CROWN LANDS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**a) Draft Crown Lands Management Plan**

4.1 Members were advised that the draft Crown Lands Management Plan was now available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7A3F82](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-7A3F82). Mike Seddon (Forestry Commission) invited the Panel to submit any feedback and advised that the closing date for comments would be Friday 7 March 2008.

**b) New houses at Anderwood**

4.2 Mike Seddon (Forestry Commission) made a presentation to the Panel on the construction of new houses for commoners at Anderwood. The houses, which had a frame of local timber, made use of "eco" technology including heat recovery systems and geothermal energy. The use of solar panels was still under discussion. It was expected that construction of the dwellings would be completed in April 2008, tenants would be installed by May 2008 and there would then be a launch event to showcase the new dwellings. In partnership with others, including the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and the National Park Authority, the Forestry Commission would be expanding the project to make publicly available a number of architectural outline drawings for cost effective and sustainable rural housing.

4.3 In response to a query from John Durnell (Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust), Mike Seddon told the Panel that the approximate construction cost of each house was £200,000. Peter Roberts (New Forest Association) commended the Forestry Commission on the project.

## **ITEM 5**

### **WORK OF THE AGISTERS AND ANIMAL SAFETY MEASURES**

- 5.1 Jonathan Gerelli (Head Agister) made a presentation on the work of the Forest's five Agisters, who carried out the instructions of the Court of Verderers, reported breaches of the Verderers' bye-laws, assisted in dealing with injured and trapped animals, collected commoners' stock marking fees, and conducted annual stock 'drifts'. The Agisters assisted with the welfare and management of commoners' stock, namely ponies, cattle, donkeys, pigs and sheep, whereas the Forestry Commission was responsible for matters concerning wild animals such as deer, foxes and badgers, as well as fly tipping and illegal camping.
- 5.2 Jonathan Gerelli explained that an Agister would be summoned to any traffic accident involving stock, to deal with the animal, contact the owner and call a vet or, if the animal's injuries were very extensive, to destroy it humanely and contact the kennels to collect the carcass for incineration. The Agister would also provide a valuation of the animal. The majority of accidents were caused by local drivers and occurred between 4.30 and 7.30 pm, usually at the end of British summer time. In 2006 the Agisters had attended 162 accidents involving stock, in which 82 animals had been killed and 39 injured. Particularly dangerous roads were the B3078 from Cadnam to Fordingbridge and the B3054 from Lymington to Beaulieu on to Dibden Purlieu. Accident statistics had been fairly constant over the last few years despite increases in both stock and traffic, which suggested that prevention measures had had some effect. These included the provision of reflective collars for ponies, education initiatives such as bumper stickers and the publication of accident statistics in the press, working with the police on 'speed trap' days when speeding drivers would be detained and told about animal accidents and a reward scheme for information leading to prosecution of hit and run drivers. In conjunction with the National Park Authority the Agisters were putting up temporary signs at recent accident sites to raise driver awareness. The Forestry Commission regularly cleared vegetation from roadside verges to improve visibility, and had installed post and rail fencing at many blind spots.
- 5.3 In response to a query from Steve Clarke (New Milton Town Council), Jonathan Gerelli said that sometimes drivers believed an accident need not be reported as the animal had run away and the driver had concluded it was uninjured. This was often not the case, as an animal would often attempt to run away even if it had suffered a serious injury such as a broken leg. It was important to educate people in this regard. Peter Roberts (New Forest Association) suggested that the carcasses of animals that had been killed should be left by the roadside for a period to raise driver awareness, but Jonathan Gerelli said that this would be likely to result in a large volume of calls and complaints from the public.

## **ITEM 6**

### **NORTH SOLENT SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

- 6.1 Andrew Colenutt of New Forest District Council's Coastal Projects Team gave a presentation on the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan. Shoreline management plans were non-statutory framework documents, the production of which assisted in the identification of major risks to the shoreline, the strengthening of planning policies, the prevention of inappropriate development, the fostering of partnership working between local authorities and the raising of awareness through public consultation. Such plans presented a number of scenarios based on alternative approaches to the problems identified (for example, habitat loss or

flooding), such as “no active intervention”, “hold the line”, “advance” and “managed realignment”.

- 6.2 One issue identified in the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan was that the Lymington to Keyhaven saltmarsh would have substantially disappeared by 2040, which would have a resulting effect on the harbour as saltmarsh acted as a natural defence against flooding. Accordingly, it might become necessary to raise the level of artificial defences in that area.
- 6.3 In response to a query, Andrew Colenutt explained that there were a number of problems faced by shoreline authorities as some pieces of environmental legislation conflicted with one another or were incompatible. Certain protection designations carried a requirement that if habitat was lost it would have to be re-created elsewhere, which was often problematic as no suitable site was available; an example of this was where a requirement arose to recreate saltmarsh and the only available site was freshwater that was the subject of a separate designation. It was difficult for statutory bodies such as Natural England to provide advice on these issues. In addition, environmental protections often conflicted with the needs of private land owners.

## **ITEM 7**

### **NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MEETINGS**

- 7.1 There were no questions raised on the report on the National Park Authority meeting of 6 December 2007 that had been circulated to Panel members.

## **ITEM 8**

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 8.1 In response to concerns raised by Peter Roberts (New Forest Association) as to redevelopment at the Hollands Wood and Roundhill campsites, Mike Seddon (Forestry Commission) explained that there were two elements to the works at Hollands Wood: some works were merely for the internal refurbishment of washroom facilities and did not require any consents, but the works relating to the connection of a sewer pipe would require Natural England’s consent, which had not yet been obtained. The work at Roundhill involved the replacement of temporary buildings that had been on the site for many years with new portable buildings, which would involve a net reduction in footprint but a difference of alignment would impact on common grazing and consequently the changes would require the consent of the Verderers (although Natural England were content with these alterations). He acknowledged the problems with allowing camping within the ancient woodlands of Hollands Wood, but explained that as yet no viable long-term solution had yet been found.
- 8.2 Sam Dovey (New Forest Pony Breeding and Cattle Society) explained that Forest Friendly Farming intended to submit a bid to SEEDA under the new round of Leader+ funding. He asked that a letter be sent on behalf of the Panel in support of the bid, and also that as many individual organisations as possible should write in support, especially those that had benefited from the previous award and those that would benefit from any new award. Letters should be submitted to Kathryn Boler at the National Park Authority by 10 January 2008.

**Action:** The Chairman to write on behalf of the Panel to support Forest Friendly Farming’s Bid for Leader+ funding.

*Note: A list of projects achieved by Forest Friendly Farming under the previous round of Leader+ funding is circulated with these minutes (entitled "Projects Approved to Date").*

8.3 Mike Seddon noted the comments of Eddie Holtham (Fawley Parish Council), who said that a number of cars had been parked on the verge outside the car parks at Longdown and Dibden Enclosure.

8.4 In response to queries Steve Trotter (New Forest National Park Authority) said that the pony paddocks survey was now complete and a date would be set shortly for a meeting to discuss the results of the report.

## **ITEM 9**

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

9.1 The next Consultative Panel meeting will be held at **7.30 pm on THURSDAY, 6 MARCH 2008** in the Council Chamber, New Forest District Council offices, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst.

The meeting closed at 21.30 hours.