

## **NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL**

**Minutes of the Meeting held at the Linden Hall, Lyndhurst Community Centre,  
Lyndhurst, SO43 7NY  
on THURSDAY 2 MARCH 2023 at 7.30 pm**

### **Those present:**

Andrew Gilruth (Chair)  
Steve Avery (NFNPA)  
Richard Burke (FE)  
Graham Ferris (Verderers)  
David Russell (NFDC)  
David Stone (Panel Secretariat)  
Vicki Gibbon (Panel Secretariat)  
Sami Reece (Beaulieu Parish Council)  
Alison Bolton (Boldre Parish Council)  
Melissa Shepherd (Bransgore Parish Council)  
John Korbey (Brockenhurst Parish Council)  
Peter Brown (Camping & Caravan Club)  
Sylvia Wiggins, Graham Chilcott, John Goodwin (Copythorne Parish Council)  
Ian Moyse (East Boldre Parish Council)  
Roly Errington (Ellingham Parish Council)  
Robert Waite (Environment Agency)  
Diana Kitcher (WI)  
Mike Proctor (Marchwood Parish Council)  
Tim Cook (Netley Marsh Parish Council)  
Nick Clark (NewForce)  
Brian Tarnoff (Friends of the New Forest)  
Janet Bache (NF Dog Owners Group)  
Ailsa Farrard (NF Equestrian Association)  
Pamela Keen (Norleywood & District Society)  
Frank Weller (Ramblers Association)  
Gareth Deboss (Ringwood Town Council)  
Peter Hebbard (Brockenhurst Flood Action Group)

### **1 Apologies for absence**

Craig Harrison – FE  
Hannah Marsh (BHS)  
Martin Fletcher (Royal Forestry Society)  
Margaret Bunyard (CPRE)  
Sue Bennison (Bramshaw PC)  
Alexa Carcas (Fawley PC)  
Stephanie Osbourne (Hythe & Dibden PC)  
Gordon Bailey (Test Valley)  
David Horne (Hordle PC)  
Lynne Aggas (Braemore PC)

## **2 Election of Chair**

- 2.1 David Stone (Secretariat) opened the meeting and facilitated the election of Chair. Following a presentment by the two candidates for the position of Chair (Andrew Gilruth and Brian Tarnoff), Andrew Gilruth was duly elected as Chair for the ensuing year.

## **3 Approval of Minutes from the meeting held on 1 December 2022**

- 3.1 The minutes were approved.

## **4 Matters Arising**

- 4.1 There were no matters arising on this occasion.

## **5 Solent Freeport Update – Brian Johnson, Chair of Solent Freeport**

- 5.1 Brian Johnson made a presentation to Panel members on the proposed Solent Freeport and advised that this was one of 8 Freeports bids which had been successful for development in England and which were a major component of the Government's Levelling Up programme.
- 5.2 The initiative had achieved the legislative requirement for a freeport site totalling between 400 and 600 hectares being a total of 460 hectares and covering the whole of the New Forest National Park area. The final business case had been approved on 7 December 2022 and a Memorandum of Understanding had been signed shortly thereafter permitting the Freeport to be up and running with financing totalling £400m - £500m in retained rates. The Freeport would provide opportunities for all communities living and working in the New Forest with tax incentives for employers and the opportunity to apply for government grants.
- 5.3 Mr Johnson then used PowerPoint slides to illustrate the Freeport sites and boundary (particularly those affecting Southampton Water as well as the Solent Freeport Tax sites and transport links).

## **6 Matters for Reporting**

### **6.1 Forestry England Update – Richard Burke**

Richard Burke (substituting for Craig Harrison from Forestry England) introduced himself and provided an update to Members.

Richard gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting various aspects of work which had recently been carried out by Forestry England. This included tree planting, placement of new ground nesting bird signs, work being carried out at Hatchet Pond, the return of volunteering and felling of trees to encourage habitat to return to heathland.

Mr Burke also advised members of the new contract which had recently been signed by 'Camping in the New Forest' to manage Forestry England's ten campsites in the New Forest and the recent joint working with partners to support the rollout of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO)

A copy of the presentation is available on the website.

## **6.2 NFNPA Update – Steve Avery**

Mr Avery was pleased to announce that the Environment Secretary had recently advised that extra funding would be provided to UK National Parks in order for them to protect vital assets and provide more opportunities for people to enjoy National Parks. The Farming in Protected Landscape scheme would be extended until March 2025 and the HLS scheme had also been extended for five years.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill was now in the House of Lords and a consultation on the new draft National Planning Framework (NPPF) had recently been completed. Mr Avery explained that there was significant changes within the new NPPF with regards to how Authorities produce their Local Plans and a new set of National Planning Policies for 'nationally important matters'. National Parks England (NPE) had sent in a collective response on behalf of all the English National Park Authorities.

Mr Avery went on to highlight the Building Design Awards which would take place at the March Authority meeting along with recent events which included the volunteer fair, the family tree planting event and the upcoming New Forest Awakening Festival.

It was explained that the Public Space Protection Orders were yet to be approved but would hope that this would be ready to roll out in the summer.

A question was asked regarding the PSPO's and how this would be enforced and managed. Mr Avery responded that it would need to be managed within existing resources and a list of those who would be able to enforce a PSPO had been sent to NFDC.

A copy of the presentation is available on the website.

## **6.3 NFDC Update – David Russell**

Mr Russell gave a brief update from NFDC advising that the PSPO's would go to consultation one last time and would be determined at the April cabinet meeting. Seven hundred and twenty trees had recently been planted and following a residents' survey it was evident that people enjoyed living in the New Forest.

## **7 Statutory Consultations – Steve Avery**

Mr Avery advised that there was a call for evidence consultation being run by the Office for Environmental Protection which would help to influence future

SSSI designations. More information can be found here - [Call for Evidence - Protected sites for nature in England and Northern Ireland | Office for Environmental Protection \(theoep.org.uk\)](https://www.theoep.org.uk/call-for-evidence-protected-sites-for-nature-in-england-and-northern-ireland)

**8 Any other items the Chairman feels urgent**

There were no further items.

**9 Dates of next Panel Meetings.**

9.1 Thursday 1 June 2023, Thursday 7 September 2023, Thursday 7 December 2023.