

## Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group

### 18 September 2024 via Teams

Attendance:

Gavin Parker, Chair (NFNPA)  
Steve Avery (NFNPA)  
Charlotte Bartlett (FE)  
Richard Burke (FE)

Tim Guymer (NFDC)  
Graham Horton (NE)  
Graham Smith (TVBC)

#### 1. Welcome / apologies / introductions

- 1.1 GP welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Jonathan Woods (HCC) and Sam Jones (FE).

#### 2. Minutes and matters arising from the last RMSSG meeting on 8 March 2024

- 2.1 The minutes were agreed as a true record. Any matters arising will be covered in the agenda items.

#### 3. Update on spatial plan for recreation management

- 3.1 Thanks were noted to Forestry England colleagues who have provided updated base maps, which means the NPA IT team can liaise with the GIS team at NFDC who will be pulling all the layers of the map together. Various layers such as existing car parks, cycle routes and designations can be turned on and off and this is expected to be completed within the next month. The narrative to accompany the map is almost finished and could be hosted on the NPA website. At this stage it wasn't necessary to seek formal endorsement from all partners as the base map simply showed existing infrastructure; wider consultation would be needed once proposals were suggested. It is hoped to take the map to the Consultative Panel and possibly other forums to help set the scene for future discussions in advance of any proposals.

Action: GP to sense check narrative that will accompany the map

Action: SA to produce a simple timeline for the Spatial Plan to include deadlines, endorsement, any sensitivities, possible delays, consultation dates etc.

#### 4. Update on off road cycle network

- 4.1 Forestry England reported that they made a presentment to the Verderers Court regarding proposals for better management of cycle routes including an extension of around 60kms to the existing routes. Further discussions were had after the Court session and the Verderers were keen to engage to find a way forward. They estimate the earliest they can consider a decision will be at the Verderers Court in November. Verderers expressed concerns about the tranquillity mapping, funding, risk assessment and also the procedural process for the extensions. It was agreed to try to anticipate any issues or

questions from partners or the public so that any queries could be addressed quickly.

Action: SA to contact Ann Sevier (as the NPA appointed Verderer) to brief her on the work to date re the off-road cycle network

Action: SA to discuss tranquillity mapping with GH

- 4.2 TG offered help from NFDC ecologist with regard to the Habitat Regulations and suggested that if it could be demonstrated that monitoring was taking place afterwards this could help as a way forward and answer any concerns people may have. The Group discussed that tranquillity could mean different things to different people and is very subjective.

## **5. Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)**

- 5.1 Jim Mitchell from NPA gave a presentation at the recent Consultative Panel, setting out the current position. All were encouraged to promote the consultation with partners and in public forums and to liaise with each other about any outstanding issues.

Action: SA to circulate LCWIP presentation given to the Consultative Panel

## **5. HCC introduction of car park charges**

- 5.1 This item was not able to be discussed due to the absence of HCC in the meeting.

## **6. Update on Camping in the Forest**

- 6.1 RB reported good booking levels and they are pleased with how Camping New Forest are dealing with any issues and how their understanding of sensitives in the Forest. Discussions have taken place about the future of the campsites through a Liaison Group that contains all the key partners, and this has included suggestions to reduce capacity, sharing benefits with the wider community and proposals to improve the condition of the sites.

## **7. Visitor Engagement over the summer including impact of the PSPOs**

- 7.1 Both NPA and FE rangers have met to have a wash-up session and have reported that August was a very busy month. Current evidence suggests that the PSPOs are having the desired effect and every encounter is recorded. Data from this summer and last summer will be compared and a report will be produced around early October. Consideration will need to be given soon about renewing the PSPO for a further 3 years (after 2025) given the positive impacts. The Fire Brigade have reported reduced call outs and the Fire Brigade along with other partners will be asked for supporting evidence to help with any renewal of the PSPOs.

Action: SA to produce timeline for renewal of PSPOs and discuss at Steering Group

## **8. Update on strategic mitigation scheme for new development focused on strategic access management and monitoring measures (SAMM)**

- 8.1 David Illsley (NPA) joined the meeting to update the Group on the strategic mitigation scheme. David's presentation (attached) included details on various local authorities' approach, what has currently been delivered and details of research reports, explaining how it will have a positive impact once in place.
- 8.2 All local authorities coming within the 'zone of influence' have been fully engaged in the work and sit on the Steering Group. David was thanked for all his efforts in getting the work to this point.
- 8.3 Test Valley Borough Council, subject to Committee approval, will be going public with a draft supplementary planning document for consultation that will include the new SAMM tariff suggested – currently endorsed informally by the Borough Council.
- 8.4 David went through the rationale and the lengthy process that was used to establish the appropriate contribution.
- 8.5 GH added Natural England's support and endorsement and appreciated the huge amount of work that was needed to get to this point. He added that this demonstrated the great collaboration between local authorities to deliver something strategic and meaningful.
- 8.6 GP highlighted the importance of publicising such achievements as this.

Action: DI to liaise with the Steering Group to arrange suitable comms around the strategic mitigation scheme taking consideration of timing and clarity of message

- 8.7 GS expressed challenges around taking forward work at Plaitford Common and requested support from partners to progress.

Action: GS to arrange meeting with SA, GH and Vicky Fletcher to discuss Plaitford Common

## **9. AOB**

- 9.1 None was raised.

## **10. Date of next meeting**

- 10.1 Early December 2024.