

NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL

**Minutes of the 208th Meeting, held in the Council Chamber, New Forest District
Council offices, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, on
THURSDAY, 15th November 2007**

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**

Arthur French (Boldre Parish Council)
Anne Millar (Combined Hunts)
Geraint James (Copythorne Parish Council)
Brenda Turk (Ellingham, Harbridge and Ibsley Parish Council)
John Durnell (Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust)
Ian Mason Smith (Hampshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services)
Gwen Meaden (Hampshire Federation of Women's Institutes)
Jenni Tubbs (New Forest Friends of the Earth)
Barry Olorenshaw (New Forest Business Partnership)
John Thackaray (Ramblers' Association)
Jacquie Shaw (Totton and Eling Town Council)

SUBSTITUTIONS

David Dickenson for New Forest Dog Owners' Group
Colin Draper for Godshill Parish Council

SPECIAL NOTE

The Chairman welcomed Sophie Beeton, the new Panel representative for Milford on Sea Parish Council.

ITEM 2 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** (6 September 2007)

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

ITEM 3 **MATTERS ARISING**

3.1. Further to discussions at the previous two Panel meetings (5 July and 6 September 2007) regarding seasonal pitching of caravans at Forestry Commission campsites (mins. 9.2 and 3.5, respectively), Eddie Holtham (Fawley Parish Council) outlined a number of concerns that he still had in connection with the issue. In response, Mike Seddon (Forestry Commission) explained that a small number of seasonal pitches had been allowed on Forestry Commission campsites for at least 10 years and pitches of this type only amounted to a small proportion of the total number. He also explained that the seasonal pitches did not apply to

warden's caravans; these would be removed over the winter period. Caravans were currently pitched on some of the sites due to building work and discussions between the Forestry Commission and the Local Planning Authority had ensured that any necessary planning consent was sought. In reply to a query regarding structures that were apparently on some of the sites, he said that he would require further clarification as to the location of these before he could indicate their purpose.

- 3.2 The Chairman thanked Mike Seddon and other Forestry Commission staff who had organised the Panel Tour, which took place on 12 September 2007.
- 3.3 Further to discussions that took place at the previous meeting, a concern was raised regarding the use of cementitious gravel in highways maintenance, which Panel members considered could widen roads significantly (min.7.3). In response, Kevin Fuller (Hampshire Highways) explained that, although the Council were responsible for the maintenance of the area one metre either side of the road, the gravel mix would not necessarily cover this entire area as it would be used only to prevent deterioration at the edge of the black-top.
- 3.4 In response to a query regarding the status of the Highways Maintenance Strategy, Kevin Fuller explained that it was a consultation document and Hampshire Highways were keen to receive feedback. Panel members were invited to submit any comments or concerns to Hampshire Highways via the Panel Secretariat. The final Strategy would be launched in summer 2008.
- 3.5 Panel members expressed concerns regarding the handling of the unveiling of proposals for a Lyndhurst bypass by Hampshire County Council.
- 3.6 In response to a request for an update on the New Forest National Park Authority's survey of pony paddocks, Steve Trotter (New Forest National Park Authority) advised that the survey would be completed within the next week and a meeting would be held shortly afterwards to discuss the results.

ITEM 4

FORESTRY COMMISSION – REVISED CROWN LANDS MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 4.1 Mike Seddon (Forestry Commission) gave a presentation on the draft revised Crown Lands Management Plan, which would be available for consultation at the end of November 2007. Earlier in the year, the Panel had been requested to submit its views on the "Issues, Policies and Actions" paper; these comments had been taken into consideration during the production of the draft Management Plan. He advised the Panel that the timescales for the production of the Management Plan had moved so that the Forestry Commission could work alongside the New Forest National Park Authority, which was also in the process of drafting its Management Plan.

He advised the Panel that the revised Crown Lands Management Plan would be a smaller, updated version of the original Plan produced in 1991 as part of the SAC Management Plan. The revised Management Plan would include eight sections, which would be slightly different to those in the previous version, and a separate Deer Plan and 'Mission Statement'.

The Forestry Commission would make a limited number of hard copies available from enquiries.new.forest@forestry.gsi.gov.uk. The document would also be available at www.forestry.gov.uk/newforest. He invited the Panel to submit any

feedback and advised that the closing date for comments would be the end of January 2008. The Panel would be notified when the Management Plan became available for comment, via the Panel Secretariat.

Action: Panel Secretariat to notify Panel members when Management Plan is available for comment

4.2 Following a request from a Panel member, it was agreed that the Management Plan consultation be included as an agenda item in a Panel meeting early next year.

Action: Forestry Commission Crown Lands Management Plan consultation to be included as an agenda item for Panel meeting in January or March.

ITEM 5

NATIONAL AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES CONSULTATION: PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE AIRSPACE OVER THE NATIONAL PARK

5.1 David Illsley (Planning Policy Officer of the New Forest National Park Authority) gave a presentation updating the Panel on the National Air Traffic Services consultation on the proposed air space changes over the National Park. The National Park Authority and the Consultative Panel had received replies to their responses to the consultation at the end of October. He outlined the response, which the National Park Authority viewed as unsatisfactory, and advised the Panel of the remaining stages in the process which would provide stakeholders with the opportunity to make final representations, including any new evidence, to the Civil Aviation Authority. The National Park Authority would be liaising with other bodies in producing a further response to ensure that a consistent case against the proposals was presented. A final decision on the proposals would be reached by the Civil Aviation Authority within the next few months.

5.2 David Illsley then introduced Alan Cox from Ashmansworth Parish Council, a conservation village located within the North Wessex Downs AONB, which would also be affected by the proposals. Alan Cox gave a brief summary of the work that has been carried out by the parish councils within that area in relation to their objection to the proposals. He informed the Panel that they had received a high level of support from parish and borough councils within the area. In addition to this, their local MP had called a debate in the House of Commons, which would be taking place on Monday 19 November, to discuss the issue. He encouraged the Panel to carry out a similar campaign in order to rally support from parish councils and local MPs and offered to help organisations in doing this.

5.3 The Panel unanimously agreed that a strong letter of response, drafted in collaboration with the New Forest National Park Authority, be sent to the Civil Aviation Authority in the Chairman's name, including the following points:

- The Panel is a forum representing more than 80 organisations within the New Forest, representing a wide range of different interests.
- The groups on the Panel in turn represent a very large number of people both in the New Forest and wider area.
- The Panel was disappointed that no representative from NATS or the CAA was prepared to attend the meeting; other bodies would usually attend to explain their views if invited.
- The information contained in the response and consultation documents was inconsistent and, in some cases, factually incorrect.

- The consultation process was insufficient.

Action: A letter be sent, in the Chairman's name, to the Director of Airspace Policy of the Civil Aviation Authority outlining the concerns of the Panel, as set out above.

ITEM 6

NORTH SOLENT SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN

6.1 The Chairman informed the Panel that this item would be deferred to a later date.

ITEM 7

OUR NEW FOREST – A LIVING REGISTER OF LANGUAGE AND TRADITIONS

7.1 Steve Trotter (New Forest National Park Authority) informed the Panel that the National Park Authority was enthusiastic about supporting the 'Living Register' project. The information gathered would help inform the Authority's Cultural Heritage Strategy.

7.2 Jo Ivey (representing the Living Register project) gave a presentation on the project, which aimed to record the local history, traditions and culture of the New Forest. She informed the Panel that the Living Register would be a public document that could be used as a reference source for information about the Forest and would contain local words, phrases, place names, traditions and memories. The public would be able to add to the entries so that it would remain a 'living' register.

Behind the reference document there would be a repository of photographs, objects, recorded stories and documents, which would be available to the public for research and use in exhibitions about the New Forest. The creation of the document would involve the collection of life histories and memories of those who had been born, lived or worked in the New Forest area.

Six volunteers had so far been trained in the recording of oral histories. The strands of the oral histories currently being collected were based on both localities and themes (including local hospitals, pony breeding, farming and forestry and New Forest gypsies).

7.3 Lyndsey Stride of the New Forest Museum Project then coordinated an exercise in which the Panel were prompted to think about any local words, phrases, place names, traditions or memories they could contribute to the Living Register.

7.4 Members of the Panel were invited to donate any relevant pieces of equipment or memorabilia to the project. Any information or objects collected would be placed in the museum at the New Forest Centre and would be made available to the public. Postcards containing information about the project could be provided to groups holding meetings to encourage them to contribute towards the project.

ITEM 8

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MEETINGS

8.1 The Panel agreed that an item to discuss the outcomes of the New Forest Commoning Review should be included on the agenda for the next Panel meeting.

Action: New Forest Commoning Review to be included on the agenda for the meeting on

- 8.2 The Panel noted that the venue for the Authority meeting on 6 December 2007 had changed and would now be in the Avon Suite at the Ashburn Hotel, Fordingbridge.

ITEM 9

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 9.1 The Panel were informed that the New Forest National Park Authority, along with the Forestry Commission and the Verderers, had recently launched a 'credit card' designed to increase awareness of animal accidents, detailing the numbers to call in the event of an emergency. The Panel were advised that the cards were distributed in the recent edition of 'Park Life' but should they wish to obtain more they should contact the Panel Secretariat.
- 9.2 In response to a request, Steve Trotter (New Forest National Park Authority) indicated that he would speak to relevant officers of the Authority as to the possibility of making the information on the animal cards available at visitor information points.

Action: Steve Trotter to speak to the New Forest National Park Authority's Head of Visitor services about the possibility of making animal accident information available at visitor information points

- 9.3 The Panel agreed that a letter should be sent to the Chairman of Natural England to express the Panel's concern, regarding the low attendance of a Natural England Representative at recent Panel meetings. The Panel were informed that the Chief Executive of the New Forest National Park Authority had been made aware of this and was currently pursuing the issue.

Action: A letter be sent, in the Chairman's name, to the Chairman of Natural England expressing the Panel's concern, as set above.

- 9.4 Peter Sopowski (Ashurst and Colbury Parish Council), representative for the Panel on the New Forest Landscape Partnership Board, requested that the Panel note the New Forest Landscape Partnership newsletter 'Life in Common', which had been distributed at the meeting.
- 9.5 Steve Trotter (New Forest National Park Authority) gave a brief update on the Heritage Lottery Fund project and advised the Panel that the deadline for project proposals to be considered for inclusion in the Life in Common Scheme would be Wednesday 5 December 2007.
- 9.6 A concern was raised regarding the use of tropical hardwood for barriers in the Lyndhurst Town Centre car park and it was suggested that New Forest timber would have been more sustainable. Edward Heron (New Forest District Council) informed the Panel that the Council was currently reviewing sustainability issues and he would take this comment to the relevant officers.
- 9.7 In response to a query in connection with Panel members' contact details being included in the handbook updates, members were advised that individual consent forms would need to be completed in accordance with data protection requirements – these would be circulated by the secretariat in due course.

ITEM 10

DATE OF NEXT PANEL MEETING

- 10.1 The next Consultative Panel meeting will be held at **7.30 pm on THURSDAY, 3 JANUARY 2008** in the Council Chamber, New Forest District Council offices, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst.

The meeting closed at 21.30 hours.