

NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL

Minutes of the 210th Meeting, held in the Council Chamber, New Forest District Council offices, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, on THURSDAY, 6th March 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

ELECTION OF PANEL CHAIRMAN

- 1.1 David Stone informed the Panel that one nomination had been received, this being for the current Chairman. No other nominations were put forward from the floor and Tim Greenwood was subsequently re-elected on a show of hands.
- 1.2 The Chairman thanked the Panel for the opportunity to continue in his role for the ensuing year.

ITEM 2

APOLOGIES

Lord Montagu (English Heritage)
Nigel Clarke (Ringwood Town Council)
Chris Willard (Solent Protection Society)
Geraint James (Copythorne Parish Council)
Gwen Meaden (Hampshire Federation of Women's Institutes)
John Davison (Hampshire County Council)

SUBSTITUTIONS

Roly Errington for Ellingham, Harbridge and Ibsley Parish Council
Rob Dewing for New Forest Business Partnership
John Korbey for Brockenhurst Parish Council
David Dickenson for New Forest Dog Owners' Group

ITEM 3

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (3 January 2008)

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

ITEM 4

MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 David Illsley (Planning Policy Officer of the New Forest National Park Authority) gave a brief update on the airspace change proposals (min 3.1), which would affect the New Forest National Park. He advised the Panel that the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) had formally endorsed the proposals despite over 500 detailed objections from bodies including the National Park Authority, the Consultative Panel, the New Forest Association and the Council for National Parks, along with a number of parish councils affected by the proposals. He also outlined the reasoning behind the decision and detailed how the National Park Authority and other bodies would be taking this issue forward, which would include the possible referral of the

referral of the decision to the Secretary of State for Transport. The National Park Authority would be writing to the CAA to seek their agreement to share the results of the 12 month operational review and to request clarification as to what would happen if the projected benefits were not realised. The Panel agreed that its concerns should be noted in the letter from the National Park Authority to the Secretary of State for Transport.

- 4.2 Alan Cox from Ashmansworth Parish Council then informed the Panel that the Council was currently considering bringing on action for Judicial Review of the CAA's decision and would therefore welcome letters of support or contributions towards the costs. The Panel agreed that its support be noted in the letter to the Secretary of State and it was suggested that Panel members request support from their individual groups.
- 4.3 The Chairman raised the issue of the non-attendance of a representative from Natural England and asked that that the National Park Authority note his concern.
- 4.4 In response to a query from Sue Bennison (Bramshaw Parish Council) Steve Trotter explained that, although a delay had resulted due to IT difficulties, a meeting would soon be taking place to discuss the review of pony paddocks and a report would be available before the meeting.

ITEM 5

FORESTRY COMMISSION – REVISED CROWN LANDS MANAGEMENT PLAN

a) Crown Lands Management Plan Consultation

- 5.1 Mike Seddon (Deputy Surveyor, Forestry Commission) gave a brief update on the consultation and said that a number of responses had been received from both New Forest organisations and other bodies. He said that Jane Smith would be considering the responses and a document detailing these should be available in late May 2008. He answered various queries from Panel members relating to gorse burning and forest management techniques, the inclusion of the Dog Walkers' Concord Act in the Management Plan (the Act was an agreement between the Kennel Club and the Forestry Commission to ensure harmony between dog walkers and the Forest) and the scheduling between the Forestry Commission and the National Park Authority's Management Plans.
- 5.2 In response to a request from Peter Roberts (New Forest Association) Mike Seddon confirmed that responses would still be considered if they were received slightly outside the deadline.

b) Minister's Mandate

- 5.3 Mike Seddon advised the Panel that a letter had been circulated to Panel members explaining that the Minister's Mandate for the New Forest was due for renewal. He explained that the Mandate had set out key objectives for the management of the New Forest and that this was the only area in England to have a document of this type. A consultation exercise would be taking place to seek the views of organisations as to whether the Mandate should a) be extended to when the National Park Management Plan had been produced in 2009, or b) be renewed when it was due. Panel members expressed various views as to what action should be taken and Mike Seddon invited them to forward their comments to him in writing.

ITEM 6

COMMONERS' REVIEW

6.1 Emma Rigglesworth (Head of Sustainable Development, New Forest National Park Authority) gave a detailed presentation on the Commoning Review.

She informed the Panel that the Review Panel was set up by the National Park Authority to consider all aspects of commoning and make recommendations to the Authority on how best it could help secure its long term future. The Review commenced in Autumn 2006 and reported back to the Authority in October 2007 with 28 recommendations to address key issues identified including:

- Open Forest grazing needs and conservation;
- financial returns and young people;
- planning, housing and back-up land; and
- education and awareness raising, including conflicts between recreation, conservation and commoning.

She then updated the Panel on how the recommendations had so far been implemented, which included the following:

- Various funding had been given by the National Park Authority and LEADER to projects such as a Farm Advisory Service, Pony Publicity Group, an annual budget to run a young commoners' group, the Living Register project, the New Forest Stallion Scheme and towards a new incinerator for the New Forest Hunt.
- A review of the New Forest Commoners' Dwelling Scheme was currently taking place to improve the application process and create a better understanding of 'commoner' needs, along with the production of generic designs for future use by scheme applicants as part of the Forestry Commission's scheme of two new commoners' dwellings at Anderwood.
- A survey report was taking place into the location of lost forest lawns for future reinstatement.
- Work between the National Park Authority, New Forest Trust and New Forest Livestock Society was taking place to progress a bid for SEEDA funding for the Beaulieu Sale yard.
- The National Park Authority was supporting the production and distribution of emergency animal accident cards and provision of roadside signs.
- An initiative by the National Park Authority and partners had tripled the Single Payment for commoners claiming for stock turned out on the Open Forest.
- Commoners would have input into the developing National Park Management Plan and Core Strategy to reflect commoners' planning concerns, e.g. recognising relationship between ancillary rural trades and commoning enterprises.
- Various National Park Authority educational and interpretative projects had been initiated including awareness panels on commoning at various visitor locations around Forest and a virtual commoning pony game on their website.

6.2 James Young (Commoners' Defence Association) said that the Association fully endorsed the Review and were very thankful for all the hard work that had gone into it.

ITEM 7

NEW FOREST COMMUNITY MEDIA – PROPOSED COMMUNITY BROADCASTING SERVICE TO THE NATIONAL PARK AREA

- 7.1 Catherine Lake (Founder and Managing Editor of New Forest Community Media) gave a presentation on proposals by her organisation to bid for a community radio licence based in Brockenhurst and broadcasting to the National Park. Community Media was a non profit organisation and the aim of the radio station would be to inform, educate and entertain by providing:
- an opportunity for local organisations to submit press and news releases;
 - airtime to local communities;
 - opportunities for discussion on topics of local interest;
 - coverage of local events;
 - affordable advertising;
 - opportunities for programme sponsorship; and
 - information on local travel and weather.
- 7.2 She described the timetable leading up to the launch of the radio station, commencing with the application for the community radio licence in the spring of 2008. This programme included a trial broadcast at the New Forest Show in July 2008, Ofcom's decision on the licence in late 2009 and the anticipated launch in mid-2010.
- 7.3 She then responded to questions from Panel members in connection with aspects of her presentation.

ITEM 8

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MEETINGS

- 8.1 Steve Trotter (New Forest National Park Authority) briefly took the Panel through reports of the previous two Authority meetings.
- 8.2 The Panel was advised that the date of the next Authority had changed to 26 March 2008, and would be taking place at the Moorhill House Hotel in Burley.

ITEM 9

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 9.1 In response to a query from Peter Roberts (New Forest Association), James Young of the Commoners' Defence Association read a statement which explained the commoners' reasons for their decision not to proceed with the New Forest Landscape Partnership Heritage Lottery Fund Bid. He was thanked for clarifying the position.

A copy of the statement is appended to these minutes.

- 9.2 In response to a query from David Banks (Denny Lodge Parish Council) regarding the legality of cycle racing on highways, Kevin Fuller (Hampshire Highways) explained that events of this type were governed by the Police Town Clauses Act and were organised through a Safety Advisory Group at New Forest District Council. He advised Mr Banks to send his concerns in an e-mail and he would raise it with the relevant people.

- 9.3 Christine Ames (New Forest Tourism Association) raised a concern regarding the impacts of road works during the Easter period on local residents and businesses and requested that this was taken into account when scheduling works. Kevin Fuller explained that the Council did this as much as possible but it was sometimes unavoidable if the works were essential.
- 9.4 In response to a query from Jenni Tubbs (New Forest Friends of the Earth), Mike Seddon informed the Panel that although Forestry Commission Campsites were opening earlier this year, the season length was fixed each year so the sites would close earlier.
- 9.5 Panel members agreed that a Panel tour should take place later in the year.
- 9.6 Arthur French, Boldre Parish Council, informed the Panel that Boldre Parish Council was of the view that the consultation process for the designation of Forest South East Conservation Area was too rushed and insufficient notice was given of the proposals. He invited the Authority to make a presentation to the Panel on the probable impact on residents of the designation of a conservation area. Steve Trotter explained that the Authority had followed the prescribed procedure in designating the areas but would note the Parish Council's comments.
- 9.7 Mike Seddon informed the Panel that Kevin Penfold, the current Head of Land Management, would be leaving the Forestry Commission and would be replaced by Nick Tucker, currently the Harvesting Manager.

ITEM 10

DATE OF NEXT PANEL MEETING

- 9.1 The next Consultative Panel meeting will be held at **7.30 pm on THURSDAY, 1 MAY 2008** in the Council Chamber, New Forest District Council offices, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst.

The meeting closed at 21.25 hours.