



Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Conservators of Ashdown Forest
Monday 11 March 2019 at 14.00
Ashdown Forest Centre

Present: Cllr R Stogdon (Chairman), Cllr S Tidy (Vice Chairman), Mr A Reid, Cllr F Whetstone, Cllr C Hardy, Cllr P Pragnell, Cllr J Barnes, Mr M Cooper, Mrs R St. Pierre, Mr J Spicer, Mr J Francis, Mr C Smith, Mr N Mawdsley and Ms S McAll,

In attendance: Mrs Pat Buesnel (Director) Mrs K Dirs (Clerk) and Mrs L Meehan (Finance Officer)

Minutes were taken by Mrs K Dirs

There were no members of the public present.

	Item	Action
07/19	Apologies. There were apologies from Cllr P Holloway. Cllr S Shing did not attend.	
08/19	Declarations of any interest by Members of a Personal or Prejudicial Nature There were none.	
09/19	To approve the minutes of the Extraordinary Board meeting of 14 January 2019 and matters arising The minutes had been circulated and assessed by the Board for accuracy. The minutes were duly received and were approved in accordance with Standing Order 2.6.	
10/19	To note the minutes of the Extraordinary Board meeting of 04 February 2019 and 28 February 2019 The minutes of 04 February were tabled and reviewed by the Board. The minutes were duly received and were approved in accordance with Standing Order 2.6 Due to the timing of the Board meeting, the minutes of 28 February had not been prepared however paper BD 06/19 had been circulated and the Board noted the importance of additional funding for the office to include extending the hours of part-time staff and the additional support of a part-time office administrator. The Board confirmed staff were under considerable pressure and supported the decision.	PB
11/19	To approve the minutes of the Programme Committee meeting of 21 January 2019 and matters arising The minutes had been circulated and assessed by the Board for accuracy. The minutes were duly received and were approved in accordance with Standing Order 2.6. 11.1/19 Countryside Stewardship Payment The Finance Officer explained the position of the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) that receipt of 75% of the payment due for the Countryside Stewardship (CS) programme in 2018 (iro £390k) would not be received until the end of March 2019 at the earliest. This would make the payment 15 months in arrears – three months after it was due to be received. The RPA have advised that if the payment is not made at the end of March then a bridging loan would automatically be issued by the government. The Finance Officer reported that the effect on cash flow due to the non-payment of the CS funding, meant that after fulfilling outstanding financial commitment and the March pay run, that the Conservators would be approximately £40k into the reserves restricted for 6 months staff and overheads. It was agreed by the Board that due to the commitment of the government to make a payment at the beginning of April at the earliest this would be considered as relatively low risk and that those financial commitments should be met. 11.2/19 SAMMS update The Director explained the SAMMS project would be ready for implementation in April but the legal	

	agreement has yet to be submitted for execution by Wealden District Council (WDC).	
12/19	The Finance and Regulatory Committee meeting of 11 February 2019 The minutes had been circulated and assessed by the Board for accuracy. The minutes were duly received and were approved in accordance with Standing Order 2.6. 12.1/19 To review the General Risk Management plan The Board agreed the General Risk Management plan 12.2/19 To review the Financial Risk Management plan The Board agreed the Financial Risk Management plan It was agreed that moving forward a Working Party would be set up to review risk management plans, policies, standing orders and financial regulations before they are put to the Finance and Regulatory Committee. 12.3/19 To review Health and Safety (deferred from Committee to Board) The Director advised there were no Health and Safety matters to report. Mr Mawdsley asked whether the recent fires should be reported as Health and Safety issues and the Director agreed to seek advice. 12.4/19 To review Data Breaches (deferred from Committee to Board) The Clerk reiterated the importance of confidentiality and reminded Members that internal emails should not be shared with external parties. 12.5/19 To agree to revert to the 2014 Grievance and Disciplinary policy The Board agreed to revert to the 2014 policy whilst the existing policy is amended. Cllr Hardy raised concern that the Board had sanctioned an incomplete policy. 12.6/19 To agree the implementation of the Firearms policy The Clerk advised the wording of the agenda item was ambiguous and that the Firearms Policy had yet to be created but a Working Party was being convened to progress the policy.	FINREG PB PB
13/19	Income Generation Working Party update The Director spoke of a number of positive income generating initiatives that had raised almost £3,000.	
14/19	To approve the revised Standing Orders Subject to a minor wording amendment, the revised Standing Orders were unanimously approved.	KD
15/19	To approve the revised Financial Regulations The revised Financial Regulations were unanimously approved.	LM
16/19	To receive the Directors Report The Director spoke to her report outlining additional pressures placed on the staff team and that the reporting period had seen a rise in school bookings and events.	
17/19	To receive the Clerks Report The Clerk highlighted a number of stressful events the staff had recently dealt with, including a malicious break-in, a number of fires and attacks on livestock.	
18/19	Allocation of Board Members to Committees (as per Standing Order 5.1) See bottom of page 3.	
19/19	Governance Update The Chairman confirmed the charity application was submitted on 08 February and the initial response from the Commission had been positive. The Chairman advised of two issues that require attention. 1) The Licence/Term to which the new operation would occupy the premises and 2) the issue of overall control of the Company by the Conservators.	

20/19	Any Urgent Item of which the Clerk has notice in order to pass to the elected Chairman	
	There were none.	

This part of the meeting closed at 16:36.

Chairman _____
June 2019

Clerk _____

COMMITTEE ALLOCATION		
Conservator	Programme Committee	Finance and Regulatory
Cllr. Barnes		✓
Cllr. Hardy	✓	✓
Cllr. Holloway		
Cllr. Pragnell		
Cllr. Shing		
Cllr. Stogdon (<i>Ex officio</i>)	✓	✓
Cllr. Tidy (<i>Ex officio</i>)	✓	✓
Cllr. Whetstone		✓
Mr AG Reid	✓	✓
Mr C Smith	✓	✓
Mr JA Francis	✓	
Mr JW Spicer		✓
Mr MJ Cooper	✓	✓
Mr N Mawdsley	✓	✓
Mrs R St. Pierre	✓	
Ms S McAll		✓