

## Minutes of the

### FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST

1430, Monday 15 February 2010  
Lancaster Room, Ashdown Forest Centre

Present: Cllr F Whetstone (Chairman), Mr M Cooper, Cllr R Galley, Mr P Glyn, Cllr M Hoy, Mr R Parsons (co-opted), Dr H Prendergast (Clerk), Cllr T Reid, Cllr R Stogdon and Mr R Thornely-Taylor (*ex officio*). Minutes were taken by Mrs R Marriott.

The Chairman opened the meeting. There were no members of the public present.

**01/10 Apologies.** Apologies had been received from Mr J Spicer.

**02/10 Declarations of many interests by Members of a Personal or Prejudicial Nature**  
There was none.

#### **03/10 Financial Report**

03.1/10 The reports FGP01 and FGP01 part 2 were examined. It was agreed that a note should be added to the reports clarifying the financing of the renovation of the Vachery Garden. The Clerk explained that the Friends held the funds donated by a private individual and a company specifically for the renovation of the Garden.

03.2/10 The Clerk explained that the claim for Forestry Commission funds for work done in the current year would be done in March and the payment made in April. This would be the final claim to the Forestry Commission.

03.3/10 Mr Thornely-Taylor asked by how much the County Council wanted the budget cut. The Clerk replied that the shortfall was £9,100 and savings had been made to account for this, as shown in the revised budget for 2010/2011 in FGP01 Part 2. He also reminded the Committee that there was a possibility that VAT would be increased in the Budget. The Committee agreed that any revisions to be made in the budget, if an increase occurred, would be made at the time.

**03.4/10 The Committee agree to recommend acceptance of the revised budget subject to the clarification of some outstanding issues to be sorted out by email.**

03.5/10 Cllr Whetstone asked that a three year financial plan, as recommended by ESCC, be ready for the next FGP meeting. Mr Thornely Taylor commented that three years was a long time in the financial world. Cllr Whetstone and Cllr Reid commented that it was customary within local authorities to make assumptions and revise budgets as circumstances changed. Mr Parsons agreed that a three year plan was good planning.

03.6/10 There was a discussion about the presentation of the reports. It was agreed that the first column should show the budget agreed with the County Council. A cashflow statement would be circulated with the Minutes.

**04/10 Change from HSBC to The Cooperative Bank**

Mrs Marriott reported that the current account was now active. The Co-op internet banking was being updated which has led to some practical difficulties and the day to day practicalities were more time-consuming.

**05/10 Response to advice from the External Auditors on the Annual Return to the Audit Commission**

The comments made by the External Auditors were noted and the Clerk reported that the actions recommended had been taken. The increase in the Fidelity Guarantee and resulted in a small increase in the insurance premium.

**06/10 Any Urgent Item of which the Clerk has notice in order to pass to the elected Chairman**

06.1/10 The Clerk reported that Mrs Temple had informed him that she would be unable to continue preparing reports for the Board from the end of April. The Committee expressed its thanks for all the help she had given the Board.

06.2/10 Mr Thornely-Taylor commented that the Board's administration was under review and that any changes must fit into the budget. Cllr Reid commented that the Board should be aware of future overheads.

The meeting closed at 1545.