



**Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Conservators of Ashdown Forest
Monday 11 March 2013 at 14.30
Ashdown Forest Centre**

Present: Mr R Galley (Vice Chairman acting as Chairman), Cllr C Dowling, Mr J Francis, Mr P Glyn, Cllr C Hardy, Mrs D Hurrell, Cllr R St. Pierre, Mr J Spicer, Cllr R Stogdon, and Cllr F Whetstone.

In attendance: Mrs P Buesnel (Director), Mrs R Marriott (Clerk) and Mr I Hurst.

There were no members of the public present.

Item	Action
01/13 Apologies.	
Apologies were received from Mr R Thornely-Taylor (Chairman), Cllr J Barnes, Mr M Cooper, Cllr A Reid, Cllr S Tidy and Cllr M Weaver.	
02/13 Declarations of any interest by Members of a Personal or Prejudicial Nature.	
Mr Galley declared an interest in all minutes relating to Millbrook Farm.	
03/13 Verbal Report of the Commoner's Annual Meeting held on 1st March 2013.	
<p>Mrs Marriott reported there had been a successful election with 70 votes being cast, 21 for Mr Dimopolous and 48 for Mr Galley. One paper was spoilt. There were very few questions other than those directed at the candidates. The Friends film was shown and Mr Thornely-Taylor presented a short report. Mr Glyn commented that there had been some procedural difficulties and that the Clerk had made a very eloquent statement. There followed a short discussion on the problems that had been encountered and how the process would be improved in the future.</p> <p>Mrs Hurrell suggested that an information pack be provided for candidates and for new Board members. Although candidates would be expected 'to do their homework' a pack that would steer them in the right direction, explain what was expected of them and give an indication of the workload. It was also suggested an induction should be arranged for all new Board members.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion on a suggestion made at the Commoner's meeting regarding creating commoners. The Clerk said that it would be the landowner and not the Board that had that power.</p> <p>The Chairman congratulated the Clerk on her handling of the election process and the Commoner's meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that an induction pack and induction programme be created for candidates and appointees to the Board.</p> <p>It was agreed that the position on Commoner's rights be clarified by scrutinising the Commoners Acts of 1965 and 2006.</p> <p>It was agreed that Mr Leslie Gillham, who chaired the Commoners meeting, be formally thanked.</p>	<p>PB/RM</p> <p>RM</p> <p>RM</p>
04/13 To approve the minutes of the Board meeting of 26th November 2013, and matters arising – BD 01/13.	
<p>The minutes of the last meeting had been circulated and were assessed by the Board for accuracy. A minor typographical error was corrected in 46/12 and with that correction made the minutes were duly received and approved in accordance with Standing Order 2.6.</p> <p><i>04.1/13 Matters Arising</i></p> <p>Minute 41.2/12 it was noted that Cllr Barnes had not yet sought legal advice on this matter and a gentle reminder would be needed. It was noted that all other action points had been completed.</p>	RM

05/13	<p>To approve the minutes of the Conservation Committee meeting of 7th January 2013 - BD 02/13 and 31st January 2013 – BD 03/13 and to receive the paper “The Future of Grazing” – BD 04/13.</p>	
	<p>The Chairman asked Cllr St Pierre to present the minutes of the meeting which had been assessed by the Committee for accuracy. Two minor typographical amendments were made in BD 02/13 <i>minute 04/13</i> and in BD 03/13 in <i>minute 09/13</i>. The minutes were duly received and approved in accordance with Standing Order 2.6.</p> <p><i>05.1/13 Matters Arising</i></p> <p>Cllr St Pierre reported how and why the current version of the “Future of Grazing” paper had come about. She explained that the committee would like to move the project forward and that Natural England (NE) had taken an interest. Mr Glyn said that the current remit on what could be done was constrained by the Ashdown Forest Act 1974, hence the recommendations made in the paper.</p> <p><i>05.2/13</i> There was a wide ranging discussion. Cllr St Pierre said that NE had been very supportive and they were currently seeking funding to assist with the costs of a part-time/fixed contract ecologist to prepare a long-term grazing plan as set out in recommendation three. Costs implications were a concern given the financial issues and Mr Glyn said that nothing in the paper was a departure from Board policy it was, in fact, looking ahead and a work in progress. After much discussion it was agreed that recommendation five be removed.</p> <p>The Chairman suggested that the Board vote on acceptance of the four recommendations made in the “Future of Grazing” paper. The Chairman proposed acceptance and was seconded by Mr Spicer. There was a show of hands in support and all agreed.</p> <p>The Board agreed to accept recommendations 1 to 4 made in the “Future of Grazing” paper.</p>	
06/13	<p>To approve the minutes of the Roads, Planning & Amenities Committee meeting of 4th February 2013 - BD 05/13.</p>	
	<p>The Chairman asked Mr Spicer to present the minutes of the meeting which had been assessed by the Committee for accuracy. The minutes were duly received and approved in accordance with Standing Order 2.6.</p>	
	<p><i>06.1/13 Matters Arising</i></p> <p>Mr Spicer said there had been some confusion regarding the detail that was required for the Strategic Plan. Cllr Barnes had agreed to draft ideas and circulate them in time for the next committee meeting.</p> <p>There was a short discussion over points raised in <i>minute 04/13</i>. Mrs Marriott gave an indication of the costs of the signs for ‘major’ car parks and for the proposed leaflet. The Director gave an update on the proposed new deer warning signs. ESCC highways had agreed to fund two new double-sided deer signs with an updateable casualty number. She went on to say new ‘Corex’ signs had been delivered and there was general agreement that the deer signs (placed on the highway by the Parishes and the Forest Rangers) were liked and obvious. Furthermore the Director reported that ESCC were exploring the feasibility of moving the fixed highway deer signs. Also, the Friends had agreed to fund a ‘Welcome to Ashdown Forest’ leaflet.</p>	
07/13	<p>To approve the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meetings of 25th February 2013 - BD 06/13.</p>	
	<p>The Chairman asked Cllr Whetstone to present the minutes which had been assessed by the Committee for accuracy. The following amendment was made in <i>minute 04.2/12</i> line two will be changed from ‘<i>met with</i>’ to ‘<i>spoken to</i>’ and the final line should be amended to read ‘<i>He hoped she would be able to do this by the time of the next Board meeting.</i>’ There was a factual amendment to be made in <i>minute 04.1/13</i> in relation to the Sompriti funding. The Director would provide the minute taker with the appropriate wording.</p>	

	<p>07.1/13 Matters Arising</p> <p>A contingency fund was discussed and Mrs Hurrell advised the Board that finding such a sum may prove difficult to find. The Clerk was currently looking back through previous years to gauge what sort of sum might be made available.</p> <p>The budget for the Forest Centre Development Committee was discussed. Cllr Whetstone said it should be shown on the accounts as a ring-fenced part of the reserves. Mr Francis said £7,000 rather than the agreed £5,000 would be needed.</p> <p>Mrs Hurrell reminded the Board that the newly agreed accounting format would be presented at the next meeting.</p> <p>The Board agreed that £7,000 would be made available from the reserves, and ring-fenced, for the Forest Centre Development Committee to use as detailed in <i>minute 08.1/13</i>.</p>	
<p>08/13</p>	<p>To approve the minutes of the Forest Centre Development Committee of 15th January 2013 – BD 07/13 and to note the reports of the Sub-Group meetings of 24th January 2013 – BD 08/13 and 14th February 2013 – BD 09/13.</p>	
	<p>The Vice Chairman presented the three sets of minutes as a whole. They had been assessed by the Committee for accuracy. There were two typographical errors (BD 07/13 in <i>minute 3.9/13</i> there was duplication and in BD 08/13 there was a duplicated line in <i>minute 07/13</i>. All references to ‘scale drawings’ were to be amended to read ‘schematic’ and with those amendments made the minutes were duly received and approved in accordance with Standing Order 2.6.</p>	
	<p>08.1/13 Matters Arising</p> <p>Mr Francis gave an overview of the discussions and recommendations made at the three committee meetings, the meeting held with staff, the meeting with Mr Kenebel, WDC planning department, and with the quantity surveyor. He reported that schematic plans had been drafted and these were presented and explained in general terms to the Board by Mr Hurst. The Committee made the following recommendations to the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Board would go forward with the redevelopment of the existing Forest Centre site; • That the quantity surveyor be instructed to proceed with costings; • That the architect be instructed to amend the existing plans and resubmit the planning application; • That the improvements to signage on the A22 and elsewhere should proceed to encourage visitors to the existing Forest Centre; • That the Director continues discussions with the Scout Association and, if successful, that a planning application is made for the extension to the workshop and grazing project accommodation. <p>There was a discussion on the recommendations made by the Committee, after which the Chairman suggested that the Board vote on acceptance. Cllr Whetstone proposed acceptance and was seconded by Mr Spicer. There was a show of hands in support with a majority in agreement. There were three abstentions Cllr Dowling, Cllr Stogdon and Cllr St Pierre.</p> <p>The Board agreed to accept the Committee’s recommendations in regard to the points bulleted above.</p>	
<p>09/13</p>	<p>To determine the future remit of the Forest Centre Development Committee and amend the Standing Orders accordingly.</p> <p>It was noted that the Committee had met its current remit and Mrs Hurrell read out the remit as laid down in the Standing Orders. After discussion it was agreed that the new remit would be:</p> <p><i>“To progress the Board’s decision to develop the Forest Centre and to produce a project plan for the agreed option”.</i></p> <p>It was also agreed that the Committee would be kept in its current form as it had achieved a degree of momentum. It was noted that the Committee could spend the monies allocated to it without</p>	

	having to refer to the Board. Mr Francis asked that the Board thank Mr Hurst for his hard work thus far and all whole-heartedly agreed.	
	The Board agreed to accept the wording for the new remit, shown above in italics, for the Forest Centre Development Committee.	
10/13	To receive the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of 19th November 2013 – BD 10/13.	
	The Chairman presented the minutes which had been assessed by the Committee for accuracy. There were no amendments and the minutes were duly received and approved in accordance with Standing Order 2.6.	
11/13	To receive the Director's report – BD 11/13 and 11/13a.	
	The Director talked to her report and to the tabled 'Facts and Figures' document. There were no comments. There was a long discussion on the 'Objective Statement' title. It was agreed to change the title to simply 'Objective'.	
12/13	To receive the Clerk's report – BD 12/13.	
	The Clerk talked to her paper. There were no comments.	
13/13	Any Urgent Item of which the Clerk has notice in order to pass to the elected Chairman.	
	There were none.	

The meeting closed at 16.55

Chairman _____ June 2013

Clerk _____