

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF  
ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH  
CROSS ON MONDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2000 AT 2.30pm.**

Present: Mr DHO Allen (in the Chair), Mrs DM Bagshawe, Miss M McPherson, Mrs S Stokes, Messrs DC Cumming, P Glyn, DL Hall, FJC Marshall, RIF Parsons, AG Reid, R Stevens, RM Thornely-Taylor, FWJ Whetstone, AN White.

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the member of the public present.

**ITEM 1      Apologies for absence**

1.1      There were apologies for absence from Mr LJ Gillham.

**ITEM 2      To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 September 2000**

2.1.1    The Minutes of the last Meeting, which had been previously circulated, were presented by the Chairman. The Minutes were then approved and signed as an accurate record.

2.1.2    The Chairman proposed that if there were no matters arising from the Confidential Minute No 93 from the meeting on 11 September 2000, they should be approved and signed before the meeting continued. The Board agreed and the Confidential Minute was approved and signed as an accurate record.

**ITEM 3      Matters arising**

3.1      There were no matters arising.

**ITEM 4      To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 2 October 2000**

4.1      The Minutes which had been previously circulated, were presented by Mr Parsons. Heath fires The Clerk informed the Board that he had been invited to speak at a seminar for the East Sussex Fire Services. He was optimistic that a proposal for joint training early in the new year would prove mutually beneficial.

4.2      Special Area of Conservation The Clerk informed the Board that although he was not aware of resources linked directly to the proposed designation, he thought resources may come from the EU to the Government and thence to the Forest as a result of the Forest being a Site of Special Scientific Interest, as indeed had already been the case in the grant from English Nature for the tractor.

4.3      Sheep mauling The Board was unanimous in its condemnation of the number of sheep mauling incidents during the grazing season and agreed that before the next season, steps should be taken to remind all dog owners in the vicinity of the grazing area that their dogs should be kept under strict control. The Clerk informed the Board that only the owner of the sheep had the right to shoot a dog caught actively worrying a sheep.

4.4      There being no other questions, Mr Parsons moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

**ITEM 5      To receive the Minutes of the Roads, Planning & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 16 October 2000**

- 5.1      The Minutes, which had been previously circulated, were presented by Mrs Stokes.
- 5.2      Turning area at Ranger's Cottage Mrs Stokes informed the Board that a letter had been received from the owner of the property agreeing to the conditions. Mr Cumming was concerned that a precedent should not be set. The Clerk confirmed that the current solution had the least impact on the Forest.
- 5.2      Kings Standing Police Training Centre Mr Parsons informed the Board that an outline planning application had been submitted to Wealden District Council and had been considered by the relevant planning committee; a site visit had been made that morning. English Nature had agreed a small change in the boundary of the SSSI to allow the Administration Centre to be developed. There was some concern that the boundary of an SSSI could be changed for reasons of development.
- 5.3      Millbrook car park The Clerk informed the Board that he was due to be meeting with the Chief Highways Engineer from the County Council on Wednesday next to discuss possible solutions and remedial work to the problem caused by surface water erosion along the edge of the highway.
- 5.5      There being no further questions, Mrs Stokes moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

**ITEM 6      To receive the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 6 November 2000**

- 6.1      The Minutes, which had been previously circulated, were presented by Mr White.
- 6.2      Forest Rate increase 2001/2002      **The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to an increase in the Forest Rate by 4.3% being the RPI (as 1st November) of 3.3% plus 1%.**
- 6.3      Revised Estimates for 2000/2001 and Estimates for 2001/2002
- 6.3.1      Mrs Bagshawe advised the Board that in view of pressure on the County Council budget, it should be aware that the increase in the contribution from the County Council may not be the estimated 2.1%. It was noted that the proposed contribution from the County Council came to approximately 42% of the budgeted income.
- 6.3.2      **The Board agreed the Revised Estimates for 2000/2001 and the Estimates for 2001/2002.**
- 6.4      The dates for Board and Committee Meetings in 2001/2002
- 6.4.1      It was noted by one or two members of the Board that there could be a possible clash of dates with other commitments in 2001.
- 6.4.2      **The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation for the following dates for Board and Committee Meetings in 2001/02:**

## **BOARD MEETINGS**

2001 12 MARCH, 18 JUNE, 10 SEPTEMBER, 19 NOVEMBER

2002 18 MARCH.

## **CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

2001 22 JANUARY, 9 APRIL, 2 JULY, 1 OCTOBER

2002 21 JANUARY.

## **ROADS, PLANNING & AMENITIES COMMITTEE**

2001 12 FEBRUARY, 30 APRIL, 30 JULY, 15 OCTOBER

2002 11 FEBRUARY.

## **FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

2001 26 FEBRUARY, 4 JUNE, 20 AUGUST, 5 NOVEMBER

2002 25 FEBRUARY.

- 6.5 Delegation of the Board's powers in an emergency **The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to adopt the following wording in delegation of their powers to cover an emergency:**

**In an emergency an 'Urgency Committee' shall be formed (a quorum being 3) from the Chairman of the Board, the Vice Chairman of the Board, and the Chairmen of the three Committees to exercise all the powers and duties of the Board in respect of the emergency.**

### 6.5 VAT

- 6.5.1 The Clerk informed the Board that the County Council's VAT Officer had been present at the meeting with VAT officers. Her support and advice had been most helpful. Subsequently, written details of the decision taken by the VAT office had been forwarded to the County Council's VAT Officer for her information and action. The VAT Officers had advised that there would be no requirement to pay VAT retrospectively but a formula for working out the proportion of VAT which could be claimed back would need to be in place for the final quarter of this financial year. The Clerk felt the way forward would be to await the County Council's view on an appeal and then be prepared to work out the formula with them.
- 6.5.2 The Board agreed to give authority to the Clerk to seek professional advice as required outside the County Council.
- 6.6 There being no further comments or questions, Mr White moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **ITEM 7 The Clerk to report on sundry matters**

- 7.1 Boiler The Clerk apologised to the Board for the low temperature in the barn and said this was because the boiler was undergoing urgent repairs.
- 7.2.1 Weather The Clerk informed the Board that between 1 October and 18 November, just under half the average annual rainfall had been recorded at the Centre. On the Forest some damage had occurred to bridges, most had been recovered and reset. Some tracks had been badly eroded and would need to be repaired next summer. Only one road had been closed due to a fallen tree and some work would need to be done on wind blown trees loosened in the gales. The fact that there had been so few

incidents with trees was attributed to the vigilance of the Rangers and their annual programme dealing with dangerous roadside trees.

7.2.2 There had been some complaints about flood damage, in particular in Fairwarp and the Clerk had agreed that a ditch would be dug beside a ride to divert excess surface water runoff where appropriate but generally, the advice to property owners had been that it was customary to ditch and bank against the common land.

7.3 Centre aerial The Clerk informed the Board that the tree to which the aerial for the two-way radio system was attached was due to be felled in the near future as it was rotting. The aerial would be placed on the near by beech tree but there might be some loss of reception as it is lower than the Scots pine. The Board may have to consider a single mast.

**ITEM 8      Any other business**

8.1 Remembrance Day at Airman's Grave The Clerk informed the Board that a local resident had offered to fly over the grave and drop the poppies at next year's ceremony. This was generally welcomed by the Board and they thanked the Clerk for organising the ceremony so successfully.

8.2 There being no other business, the meeting closed at 3.50 pm.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_  
12 March 2001

Clerk \_\_\_\_\_