

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF  
ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE,  
WYCH CROSS ON MONDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2001 AT 2.30pm.**

Present: Mr RIF Parsons (in the Chair), Mrs D Bagshawe, Mrs S Stokes,  
Mrs J Wirdnam, Messrs C Dowling, LJ Gillham, PJ Glyn, FJC Marshall,  
AG Reid, P Scott, T Slack, RM Thornely-Taylor, M Tunwell,  
FWJ Whetstone, AN White.

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the public present. He also informed the Board that he had attended the Remembrance Day service at Airman's Grave and had laid a wreath on behalf of the Board. Owing to other commitments, this had been the first time he had been present and he complimented the Clerk on his conduct of the ceremony.

**ITEM 1      Apologies for absence**

1.1 There were no apologies but Mr Thornely-Taylor and Mr Slack informed the Chairman that they would need to leave the meeting early.

**ITEM 2      To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 September 2001**

2.1 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.

**ITEM 3      Matters arising** There were no matters arising.

**ITEM 4      To receive the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 5 November 2001**

4.1 The Minutes which had been previously circulated, were presented by Mr White.

4.2 Revised Estimates for 2001/02 and Estimates for 2002/03

4.2.1 In anticipation of East Sussex County Council possibly having to reduce its annual contribution to the Board by up to 10% in 2002/03, there was a wide ranging discussion on methods of raising income from other sources. It was argued that the Board should not normally exceed agreed expenditure and should not set a deficit budget. It was felt priorities should be set for expenditure and the Board should decide whether it could fund non core activities such as education. The Clerk reminded the Board that the County Council, as landowner, had international and national obligations to protect the landscape and habitat of Ashdown Forest. English Nature could take steps to enforce directives and the Board itself had a remit through the Ashdown Forest Act to conserve and protect the Forest.

4.2.2 It was agreed the Clerk should approach the Ashdown Forest Trust for funds to cover the costs of the Foot and Mouth Disease precautions incurred in the current year's expenditure and that he should investigate the possibility of the Trust funding future projects on the Forest. It was also agreed that the Clerk should write to those Parish

Councils falling within the Forest boundary and seek their views on the possibility of the Parish Councils making a contribution to the Board's income.

4.2.3 The Board agreed that, if necessary, it could use reserves to cover any additional expenditure for 2001/02; however, a deficit should not be shown in the estimates for 2002/03.

4.2.4 **The Board approved the Revised Estimates for 2001/02 and the Estimates for 2002/03.**

4.3 Forest Rate increase 2002/2003. **The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to increase the Forest Rate by 2.7% (being RPI of 1.7% + 1%). The Board also agreed the Committee's recommendation to give advance notice to the Secretary of State DEFRA that they will be seeking to raise the Forest Rate to a more realistic level for the year 2003/04.**

4.4 Review of the Board's fees and charges for 2002/2003 . **The Board approved:**

- i) **the increase in fees and charges listed, which, unless stated should become effective from 1 April 2002.**
- ii) **a preliminary study into the feasibility of charging for parking in the public car parks on the Forest in accordance with Section 18 (1)(e) and Section 18 (2) of the Ashdown Forest Act 1974.**

4.5 The dates for Board and Committee Meetings in 2002/2003 **The Board approved the following dates for Board and Committee meetings in 2002/03:**

#### **Board Meetings**

2002 18 MARCH, 17 JUNE, 9 SEPTEMBER, 18 NOVEMBER  
2003 17 MARCH.

#### **Conservation Committee**

2002 21 JANUARY, 8 APRIL, 1 JULY, 30 SEPTEMBER  
2003 20 JANUARY

#### **Roads, Planning & Amenities Committee**

2002 11 FEBRUARY, 29 APRIL, 29 JULY, 14 OCTOBER  
2003 10 FEBRUARY.

#### **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

2002 25 FEBRUARY, 27 MAY, 19 AUGUST, 4 NOVEMBER  
2003 24 FEBRUARY.

4.6 Financial Regulations

4.6.1 Paragraph 7.1 of the Financial Regulations was amended to read "The payment of all salaries for full-time staff shall be made by the RFO through the Mid-Tel system operated by HSBC or any other system subsequently approved ...."

4.6.2 **The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to accept the Financial Regulations with the above amendment, and agreed the regulations should be reviewed after one year.**

4.7 There being no further comments, Mr White moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

**ITEM 5 To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 1 October 2001**

5.1 The Minutes, which had been previously circulated, were presented by Mr Gillham.

5.2 The Clerk informed the Board that winter grazing had begun in the temporary enclosure. He awaited written confirmation from DEFRA for the derogation.

5.3 There being no further questions, Mr Gillham moved the adoption of the Minutes.

**ITEM 6 To receive the Minutes of the Roads, Planning and Amenities Committee Meeting held on 15 October 2001**

6.1 The Minutes, which had been previously circulated, were presented by Mrs Stokes.

6.2 Isle of Thorns The Board's observations on the planning application for an access on to the A275 had been sent to Wealden District Council. The planning application had been refused but it was not known if an appeal would be made by the Cats Protection League.

6.3 There being no further questions, Mrs Stokes moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

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

7.1 The Clerk informed the Board that the fire in Wrens Warren Valley in May had destroyed large quantities of Scots pine - potential Christmas trees. As a result there would be some difficulty finding trees to sell this year, with the consequent reduction in income from this source.

**ITEM 8 Any other business** There being no other business, the meeting closed at 4.10pm.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

18 March 2002

Clerk \_\_\_\_\_