

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON 19TH SEPTEMBER 1994.

Present: Mr L.J. Gillham (In the Chair), Mr D.C. Cumming, Mrs S.F. Whitley, Mrs S.Stokes, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.H.O. Allen, D.L. Hall, L.Hamilton, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B.Hughes, R.I.F. Parsons, C.W. Riley, A.N. White.

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming Mrs Elizabeth Hemsley as the new Personal Assistant to the Forest Superintendent.

Item 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Mrs E.M. Gabriel, Mr J.M. Dunn and Mr G. Griffiths.

Item 2. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th June 1994.

The minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct and accurate record subject to the following amendments:

Page 3 2nd Paragraph. Last word should be 'affected'.

Page 4 4th Paragraph. Delete 'and tarmac'.

Page 5 After first paragraph insert 'The Chairman moved the adoption of these minutes. This was agreed.'

Item 3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

Item 4. To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 11th July 1994.

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs Whitley.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommended policy for the woodlands at Chelwood Vachery.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to open a Borrow Pit on the eastern side of the Forest, providing the hole was worked on a 'cut and cover' basis.

On the subject of squirrel damage, Sir Frederick Sowrey reminded the Board this had been discussed with Mr Denyer at a Management meeting in March 1991. After some discussion it was agreed that the subject should be considered further by the Conservation Committee later in the year.

Mrs Whitley moved the adoption of the minutes. This was agreed.

Item 5. To receive the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 5th September 1994.

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr D.H.O. Allen.

The Board accepted the Audited Accounts for 1993/4.

In discussion of Item 3, the Board noted the results of the meeting held between the Superintendent and the representatives from the County Council, and further noted that a meeting was planned for 4th October 1994 between the Chairman, Superintendent and the County Council Personnel Services Manager. The Board also agreed a letter sent on their behalf to the County Planning Officer seeking a review of the annual contribution made by the County Council to the Conservators.

The Board agreed the increase in Riding Permit Fees for 1994/5.

Mr. Allen moved the adoption of the minutes. This was agreed.

Item 6. To confirm the Board's line when commenting upon Planning Applications within the Forest Pale.

The Chairman introduced this item by saying that there was a need to review the line taken by the Board on Planning Applications to give the Clerk a clear set of guide lines, so that he could comment on the Board's behalf without further consultation and also to enable members of the Board to speak with one voice. In discussion it was agreed that, where necessary, comments should be made on any application within or adjacent to the Forest Pale that impacted unfavourably upon the Ashdown Forest. The Board agreed that the following aspects might be cause for comment:

1. Whether the appearance and size of a new building is in keeping with its neighbours and the surrounding area.
2. Whether external alterations to an existing building are in character.
3. Whether there will be any increase in noise and disturbance, for example from the comings and goings of extra traffic.
4. Whether new roads and accesses and adequate parking will be safe for road users and pedestrians.
5. Whether there is any visual affect upon the landscape.

The Board agreed that the Clerk should not have to comment on 'favourable' applications and that the views of the Board represented should be entirely objective. Where subjective views were required, the Clerk would need to consult with members of the Board in the form of an Urgency Committee.

Item 7 To consider the Board's response to the Highways and Transportation traffic calming discussion paper.

The Board considered the Clerk's draft response to East Sussex County Council on Traffic Calming and made a number of alterations. A copy of the agreed version is attached.

Item 8 The Clerk to report on Sundry Matters

Barn Refurbishment.

A written brief was provided for the Board and the Clerk outlined the planned refurbishment of the Information Barn. The Board agreed the plan as briefed.

The Weir at Newbridge.

The Clerk reported that he had received a letter from Mr. Hammersley about the condition of the weir at Newbridge, the banks of which had been eroded during winter storms. He sought the Board's direction on whether or not to accept the liability for repair and ongoing maintenance of this attractive feature. After discussion, the Board agreed that repairs should be made to the weir.

Recycling Point in St. John's Car Park.

The Clerk reported that Wealden District Council had written seeking the Board's permission to install a mini recycling station in St. John's Car Park, for use of local residents. The Board felt this request would not be in keeping with their remit to "conserve the forest as a quiet and natural area of outstanding beauty", and did not agree to the installation of a recycling point in the St. John's car park.

Benches.

The Forest Superintendent stated that he had received requests to place benches on the Forest from Maresfield Parish Council and the firm of Monson Engineering of Tunbridge Wells. The Board agreed that Maresfield Parish Council could place a commemorative bench at Fords Green, Nutley and Fairwarp Village Green. The Chairman restated the Board's policy not to accept any further benches out on the Forest, but agreed that if a suitable place could be found within a Car Park, this would be acceptable.

Request to use a Mountain Bike on the Forest.

The Clerk reported that he had received a request from Mr Hooker of 'Little Barnsden' to ride his Mountain Bike on Forest tracks to reach the Poundgate Road and Fairwarp. After discussion, the Board agreed that Mr Hooker should be allowed to use his Mountain Bike on the track for which he had licenced access to his own property. He had the options of walking the bicycle on the other

tracks concerned and across the Forest but the Board agreed he should not be issued a licence to cycle on tracks used for access to other dwellings

Item 9. Any other business.

Mr Parsons informed the Board that East Sussex County Council were looking at the reburishment of Pooh Bridge and ways of raising the water level in the stream.

The Chairman read out a letter from Mrs Hudson thanking the Board for inviting her to dinner and for their farewell present.

THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE

See Confidential Minute No.80

THE BOARD THEN CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 5.15p.m.

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Chairman

November 1994