

**Minutes of the
ROADS PLANNING AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST**

Monday 1 February 2016

Committee members present: Mr J Spicer (Chairman), Cllr C Hardy (Vice Chairman), Mr R Galley (*ex-officio*), Cllr Holloway, Mr T Reid (*ex-officio*), Cllr J Barnes, Cllr R Stogdon and Mr M Cooper. Also present: Cllr F Whetstone and Mrs K Dirs (Clerk). Minutes were taken by Mrs C Bain.

Ranger Allum attended for Agenda item 03.01/16

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

	Action
01/16 Apologies. Cllr S Tidy and Pat Buesnel sent their apologies.	
02/16 Declarations of any interest by Members of a Personal or Prejudicial Nature. There were none	
03/16 Matters Arising <i>03.01/16 Lark Rise – encroachment on Forest</i> The Chairman reported that the licenced parking area in front of the property has been extended and covered with road plantings. Ranger Allum confirmed that there is ongoing building work taking place at the property. He has been in contact with the owners who admit that a mistake has been made and they wish to rectify the situation but it will take time. It was agreed that Ranger Allum will visit the site and accurately measure the current encroachment on the Forest and the Clerk will then agree a schedule with the owners who will need to cover the full cost of returning the land to its natural state. There is no case for prescriptive rights and the Clerk will update the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Legal Department on the action that will be taken.	RA, KD KD
The Committee agreed that all future planning applications need to be carefully reviewed to ensure that parking areas are included or whether a parking licence will be required.	KD
<i>03.02/16 The Old Surrey and Burstow Hunt</i> The Clerk stated that an unlicensed hunt was held in October 2015 without advanced warning which resulted in a significant number of complaints from other Forest users. The Clerk made repeated attempts to contact the Master of the Hunt and finally in December the licence was signed and paid for and an apology received. The Committee recommended that the Chairman of the Board write to the Master of the Hunt informally to remind them of the conditions of their licence and request a draft programme for upcoming events.	RG
<i>03.03/16 Gatwick proposal for second runway</i> Following a discussion it was agreed that the Committee would continue to monitor the proposal and any possible negative effects it may have on the flora and fauna of the Forest.	KD, JS
<i>04.03/16 Drones</i> It was agreed that the flying of drones on the Forest is not permitted and the Byelaws will be updated accordingly. The Clerk commented she understood Sussex Police had been issued with a drone to assist in the search for missing persons, and if the use of the drone was required for this purpose on the Forest, the Police will be issued a licence to allow such use.	KD
<i>05.03/16 British Model Flying Association – Changes to licence</i> Following a request from the British Model Flying Association (BMFA) it was agreed that the	

permitted flying hours could be extended. It was noted that the BMFA were extremely compliant to the terms of their licence and have been a positive organisation to work with.

KD

04/16 Policy and procedures

04.01/16 Land swap – Yew Tree Cottage

The Clerk stated that a draft report had now been received from Gregg Shemwell (Estates Officer, ESCC) and that the land swap was generous in the Forests favour. **The Committee agreed the land swap, subject to a positive environmental report being received from the Conservation Officer**

KD

The Committee entered Confidential session.

05/16 Access issues

The Committee left Confidential session.

06/16 Planning Issues

The Clerk reported that she had been contacted by several residents alarmed at a planning application submitted for a care home in Nutley. Cllr Hardy and Mr Galley confirmed that they were aware that the scale and mass of the building had raised concerns. There following a brief discussion on what key planning terms should be used when commenting on applications but the overall view was that the Clerk should make an objection in relation to the proposed scale, mass and design.

The Committee entered Confidential session.

07/16 Breach of Bylaw issues

The Committee left Confidential session.

08/16 Strategic Plan (standing item)

08.01/16 Review of Strategic Plan

The final version of the Strategic Plan was presented to the Committee. **A recommendation was made to the Finance and General Purposes Committee that a scale of charges for permitted activities was examined, similar to that already used by Malvern Hills and the Bluebell Railway.** It was felt that the Forest would benefit from any increase in publicity.

KD

It was the view of the Committee that the Visitor Management Strategy should not be 'on hold' as stated in the Strategic Plan. Visitor Management is about the Forest as a whole and progress needs to made in managing the over used parts of the Forest.

KD, PB

A brief discussed ensued in relation to recent Bye-law breaches and it was noted by Cllr Barnes that an encroachment at Badgers Hollow had not been followed up. The Clerk apologised for this oversight and will review immediately.

KD

09/16 Any urgent item for which the Clerk has notice in order to pass to the elected Chairman

The encroachment at Lark Rise which was considered an "urgent item" was discussed as "matters arising".

The meeting closed at 15.35.