

# NEW FOREST EQUINE FORUM

## Minutes of the meeting held in the Conference Room, South Efford House on Monday 25 July 2011

### Forum members present:

Fiona Macdonald (Chairman)  
Alison Russell  
Anne Moulard  
Charlotte Riddoch  
Dionis MacNair  
James Young  
Jane Murray

John Durnell  
Pat Thorne  
Sue Bennison  
Sue Fairway  
Suzanne Kempe  
Tessa Johnstone  
Vicky Bignell

### Also in attendance:

Naomi Stone and David Stone, NFNPA.  
Jonathan Gerrelli, Head Agister for the Verderers.

### 1. Election of Chairman and Deputy Chairman

- 1.1 Naomi Stone facilitated the election of Fiona Macdonald as Chairman of the Forum and Tina Cant as Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year. Voting on both appointments by show of hands was unanimous.

### 2. New NPA member on Forum

- 2.1 Naomi informed the Forum that at a recent Authority meeting Penny Jackman was nominated as the Authority's representative on the Equine Forum, replacing Clive Maton. Unfortunately Penny was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments.
- 2.2 Naomi also informed the Forum that she would be standing down as secretary and would be replaced by David Stone, who is the Authority's Business Services Manager.
- 2.3 Fiona formally thanked Naomi for all that she had done during the past two years.

### 3. Apologies for absence

- 3.1 Apologies were received from Nicola Stephens, Pauline Filler, Penny Jackman, Rachel Bailey, Tina Cant, Steve Avery and Alison Barnes.

#### 4. **Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising**

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2011 were agreed as a true record.

#### 5. **Review of Constitution**

- 5.1 Forum members reviewed the Constitution and agreed the following changes:
- Meetings will be held at least quarterly unless the Chairman and Deputy Chairman agree otherwise.
  - When a minimum of eight members are present this will be deemed to form a quorum. If less than eight members are present the meeting can proceed but no decisions can be made.
- 5.2 Voting on the changes to the Constitution by show of hands was unanimous.
- 5.3 Forum members requested that a list of members and the organisations they represent be sent to all members. It had been noted that certain members rarely turned up for meetings and some members had resigned from the Forum and their organisation had not replaced them. Attendance to be discussed at the next meeting.

**Action:** Naomi to amend the Constitution and circulate with the minutes. Naomi to also circulate a list of Members and organisations they represent.

#### 6. **Talk by Jonathan Gerrelli, Head Agister**

- 6.1 Jonathan Gerrelli, Head Agister for the Verderers, gave a talk to the Forum on the Agisters current priority topics. These included:
- Dog attacks on stock. The Verderers were logging all current (not historical) dog attacks.
  - Animal accidents. The Verderers were on an animal accident reduction group which meet twice a year. Other members of the group include the National Park Authority, the Forestry Commission, Hampshire County Council and the Police. The Group have produced a credit card sized information card for animal emergencies with the Police, Verderers and Forestry Commission emergency telephone contact numbers on it.
  - Feeding of ponies. The Verderers were working with the National Park Authority and the Forestry Commission on signage for this issue.
- 6.2 Fiona asked what the Forum could do to help promote these topics and get the messages across to more people.

- 6.3 Charlotte felt that the 'do not feed' signs should be larger and appear at the main entrances to the Forest as well as the speed limit signs and the 'animals on road' signs.
- 6.4 Sue Bennison thought that picture signs would be better than words.
- 6.5 Dionis felt that this Forum should press for a 30mph speed limit throughout the National Park and also traffic calming measures like pinch points.
- 6.6 Jonathan agreed that pinch points do work in reducing animal accidents by slowing traffic and making drivers concentrate more on their driving. He stated that any support he could get from groups such as the Forum would be welcome.
- 6.7 James stated that Brockenhurst Parish Council were against the trial traffic calming measures in Brockenhurst.
- 6.8 It was suggested that the Forum write to Ken Thornber expressing their support for the Brockenhurst trial scheme.

**Action:** Fiona to write to Ken Thornber on behalf of the Forum

- 6.9 Sue Bennison asked if Jonathan would be willing to talk to Parish Councils or the Association of Parish Councils as many of them were against pinch points and would prefer to opt for 30mph speed limits instead.
- 6.10 Alison Russell stated that there was a bridge by Storm's Farm that had very steep sides. The National Trust own the bridge and they will not put rails on it as that would make them liable. Jonathan said he would speak to the Agister for that area to see if he is aware of any problems.

**Action:** Jonathan to speak to relevant Agister

- 6.11 Fiona thanked Jonathan on behalf of the Forum for his attendance.

## 7. **Ragwort**

- 7.1 Forum members agreed that the ragwort this year had been much worse than in previous years and asked if something could be done earlier in the year about it.
- 7.2 Dionis stated that Forestry Commission volunteers had been told by a ranger that it was only being pulled because of the ponies. The Forestry Commission would like it left for the Cinnabar moth. There was some discussion on the difference between indigenous ragwort which is fed on by the Cinnabar moth and the much more prolific and invasive exotic version.
- 7.3 Dionis also pointed out that if it was cut at the beginning of July and the end of August that would help to get rid of it as it is a biannual plant.
- 7.4 Fiona asked what the Forum could do to help with this problem.

- 7.5 James felt that they needed to keep pressure on the agencies to deal with it and that could be done via the Consultative Panel.
- 7.6 Dionis felt that where animals could get at it then it should be dug up.
- 7.7 Some Parish Councils do an annual ragwort pull. Pat Thorne suggested that Forum members contact their respective Parish Councils to suggest they do this next year.

## 8. **Horse and Cart drive**

- 8.1 Anne Mouland raised the issue of the horse and cart drive taking place over the weekend of 13 and 14 August. Anne had heard that the organiser had already invited over 200 people to attend the event. Last year there were supposed to be 25-30 rigs but in fact there ended up being over 70.
- 8.2 Naomi informed the Forum that the Police (Forest Watch) and the Forestry Commission were aware of the event.

## 9. **Any other business**

### Dates of future meetings

- 9.1 It was agreed that the dates for future meetings would be discussed at the next meeting.

### Consultation draft Guidelines for Horse Related Development

- 9.2 Naomi updated the Forum on the consultation which was due to close on 10 August. So far the Authority had received five responses, three of which were from Parish Councils. The current intention is to take a paper summarising the consultation comments received and setting out the revised guidelines for formal adoption to the Authority meeting on 29 September.

### Meeting with the Enforcement Team

- 9.3 Tina had asked Naomi to raise with Steve the suggestion of an informal meeting between herself, Vicky and Fiona with the Enforcement Team to discuss the implementation of the new Guidelines.

## 10. **Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting was already agreed as **Monday 5 September**.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.