

## EPPING FOREST CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 16 June 2021

**Minutes of the meeting of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee held at remotely at 7.00 pm**

### **Present**

#### **Members:**

Graeme Doshi-Smith (Chairman)	George Lund, Epping Forrest Transport Action Group
Benjamin Murphy (Deputy Chairman)	Gordon Turpin, Highams Park Planning Group (inc Snedders)
Judith Adams, Epping Forest Heritage Trust	Tim Wright, Orion Harriers
John Sharpe, Friends of Wanstead Parklands	Carol Pummell, Epping Forest Riders Association
Elizabeth Burn, Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation	Steve Williamson, Royal Epping Forest Golf Club
Susan Creevy, Loughton Residents Association	Verderer Nicholas Munday
Valerie Jones, West Essex Ramblers	Verderer Paul Morris
Tim Harris, The WREN Group	
Andy Irvine, Bushwood Area Residents Association	
Francis Baker, Lee Valley Youth Cycling Club	
Nick Owen	

#### **Officers:**

Richard Holt	- Town Clerk's Department
Lorraine Brook	- Town Clerk's Department
Paul Thompson	- Superintendent, Epping Forest
Colin Buttery	- Director of Open Spaces
Jeremy Dagley	- Head of Conservation, Epping Forest
Geoff Sinclair	- Head of Operations, Epping Forest
Jacqueline Eggleston	- Head of Visitor Operations, Epping Forest
Martin Newham	- Head Forest Keeper, Epping Forest
Sarah Reid	- Community and Engagement Officer, Epping Forest
Fiona Martin	- Management Planning Assistant, Epping Forest

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Robert Smith and Bruce Mackie. It was noted that Francis Baker would be attending as a named substitution for Bruce Mackie as the Lee Valley Youth Cycling Club representative.

The Chairman welcomed the new Members of the Committee to their first meeting.

### **2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

The Committee considered the minutes of the previous meeting of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2021.

A Committee Member requested that the attendance of his named substitute for the last meeting be added to the record.

**RESOLVED-** That, subject to the correction specified, the minutes of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2021 be approved as an accurate record.

4. **MINUTES OF THE EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the draft minutes of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2021.

**RESOLVED-** That the draft minutes be noted.

5. **EPPING FOREST - SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE FOR FEBRUARY TO MARCH 2021 (SEF 19/21)**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces providing the Superintendent's update for February to March 2021.

Responding to query from a Committee Member the Director of Open Spaces explained that the report only dealt with the period up to March 2021 because of an issue of the committee meeting's timing and that usually the Consultative Committee received two reports both on two month periods.

Following a question from a Committee Member the Director of Open Spaces explained that the successful grant for the Epping Forest Heritage Trust to promote the Centenary Walk had been provided from the Bridge House Estates Charity Fund and not the Epping Forest Local Budget.

A Committee Member commended the Epping Forest management team for the success of the temporary fencing at Wanstead Flats which had allowed skylarks and quail to use the area.

The Director of Open Spaces, responding to a Committee Member's question, provided the Committee with an update on the issue of car parking in Epping Forest.

The Committee discussed how best for Members to suggest items of business for committee agendas to allow for the meetings to be more open a forum of discussion. It was noted that this would be explored further going forward.

The Director of Open Spaces, responding to a query from a Committee Member, provided an update on the City of London Corporation's response to the Epping Forest District Council Local Plan. It was noted that a further report will be provided to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee in July.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

6. **CHINGFORD INDIVIDUAL SITE PLAN (SEF 26/21)**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Chingford Individual Site Plan. The Director of Open Spaces introduced the report and highlighted the central elements.

The Committee discussed instances of anti-social behaviour by cyclist in Chingford. The Director of Open Spaces confirmed that most cyclists used Epping Forest in a manner that doesn't negatively affect the Forest however there were issues with the behaviour of some cyclists. It was noted that the representative of cyclist groups on the Epping Forest Consultative Committee would be helpful to discuss these issues.

The Committee commented on the access concerns for Chingford and Epping Forest more generally. A Committee Member observed that Chingford, Loughton and High Beech access concerns were evidently linked. It was noted that guided walking routes within the Forest were also to be considered.

A Committee Member commented on the issue of signage that it was possible for signs to be appropriately sized but not adversely impact the natural environment.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

7. **COPPED HALL PARKLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN (SEF 27/21)**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Copped Hall Parkland Management Plan. The Director of Open Spaces introduced the report and thanked colleagues for their contributions.

A Member of the Committee acknowledged the wonderful work completed on this report and highlighted the original role of the buffer land in protecting the Forest which now has the opportunity, through carbon sequestration to make an even more significant contribution to Epping Forest. In addition, it was suggested that thought be given to how best to chronicle this project as an important part of the history of Epping Forest. The Director of Open Spaces agreed that the project represented an exciting opportunity and informed the Committee that the funding of the project included hiring new staff that will be asked to consider the question of how best to record the work.

Following concern raised by a Committee Member the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that Copped Hall would not be considered as a formal SANG. In addition, responding to an expression of concern by a Committee Member it was explained that the issue balancing car access at Copped Hall was due to be considered by the Epping Forest and Commons Committee later in the year.

A Member noted that the report was originally produced in 2018 and questioned if the funding for the Carbon Removals project was likely to be approved. The Director of Open Spaces explained that the delay had been caused by other Officer responsibilities and, in part, due to the effective of

COVID. Furthermore, it was confirmed that details on the funding of the project were included in Appendix 7 and that further reports on this matter would be considered over the next eighteen months.

A Committee Member commented that there was no reference to horse riders within the report and that they felt that the horse riders were being forced out of Epping Forest. The Chairman thanked the Committee Member for informing of their views and noted that it was good to see the Consultative Committee being used as a forum to discuss these concerns. The Director of Open Spaces confirmed that the City of London Corporation aims to make the Forest more user friendly for all users including horse riders.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

8. **WANSTEAD PARK PERMISSIVE CYCLING EXTENSION (SEF 28/21)**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Wanstead Park Permissive Cycling Extension.

A Committee Member expressed interest in working to circulate the code of conduct for cyclists to relevant stakeholders. The Director of Open Spaces explained that the City of London Corporation was looking to secure funding for further cycling infrastructure and would be happy to discuss how best to circulate the Cycling Code of Conduct to stakeholders.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

9. **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2019/20 - EPPING FOREST**

The Committee received a joint report of the Director of Open Spaces and Chamberlain on the Epping Forest Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2020.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

10. **QUESTIONS**

Responding to a question from a Committee Member the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that the City of London Corporation had not yet been invited to the Epping Forest District Council's stakeholder group for the Council's Local Plan but noted it was a requirement for the Council to be compliant with relevant legislation.

Following a question from a Committee Member the Committee discussed the implementation of the fencing at Wanstead Park to protect bluebell plants in the area. It was noted that this fencing was generally seen this fencing as a success however Officers were aware that there was a different opinion expressed on social media. It was noted that the signage should be reassessed for its effectiveness.

In response to a Committee Member's question the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that an updated link for reporting instances of fly tipping in Epping Forest would be provided.

11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no further business considered.

**20:35**

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Chairman

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