

Minutes of the Meeting of the Programme Committee

Monday 06 June 2022 at 14:00

Ashdown Forest Centre

Committee Members present: Cllr S Tidy (Chair), Mr J Squire (Vice Chair), Mr N Mawdsley, Mrs L Maudslay and Mr N Goldie-Scot

Co-opted Members/Advisors present: None

Ex-officio: Mrs R St. Pierre

Also present: Mr J Adler (CEO) and Mr A Walmsley (Countryside Manager)

Minutes taken by the CEO

There were no members of the public present

		Action
08/22	Apologies Ms S McAll, Ms J Howell, Ms E Drury, Mr R Stogdon, Cllr P Pragnell and Mr T Reid	
09/22	Declarations of interest by Members of a Personal or Prejudicial Nature There were none.	
10/22	Matters arising <u>10.01/22 Countryside Stewardship update</u> There are changes proposed, from January 2023, by Defra which would move the Forest's CS agreement from EU regulations to domestic rules. This would mean, if the Forest chose to, that the present CS agreement could be left to join a different scheme. There is not sufficient information available at present to make such a decision. <u>10.02/22 Management Plan update</u> The mapping and ground truthing is complete. The external contractor will provide the GIS mapping in June. The wider plan will then follow. AW gave a brief overview on the mapping process and the importance of this stage to the management of the Forest. <u>10.03/22 DEFRA ELMS Test and Trial update</u> Four of the five workshops have been held. There is significant interest from local landowners in working closely with the Forest to manage the surrounding area better for wildlife. Reporting will be complete by the end of 2022. Thought is beginning into whether to apply for a formal pilot scheme from November 2022. Defra would fund this pilot. <u>10.04/22 SAMMs update</u> Wealden DC are working on an updated legal agreement to allow the Forest to recruit the SAMMs officer with the local authorities paying the salary and costs. Ashdown Forest has created a job description and had the role graded. When WDC have finalised the legal agreement then recruitment can start.	

<p>11/22</p>	<p>Progress Reports</p> <p><u>11.01/22</u> <u>Countryside Manager’s report</u> The Countryside Manager gave an overview of his report highlighting the salient points.</p> <p>Gorse clearance works were carried out in early 2022 over almost 10 hectares. The works at Gills Lap to restore habitat and views have been well received. The arisings have gone to produce greener energy.</p> <p>Storm Eunice created a significant work load to clear up.</p> <p>The Pickett Puddle rewetting project has gone well with considerable volunteer input and external funding secured.</p> <p>Biological monitoring is ongoing with a large number of Early-purple Orchids recorded in 2022. The now annual Nightjar survey is to take place on the 14th June.</p> <p>Planning works for Bracken control via cutting and spraying and winter scrub and Gorse works is underway.</p> <p>Pony grazing is continuing at Pippingford until 2023.</p> <p>The large (35ha) enclosure at King’s Standing is operational. This incorporates all three livestock types and is successfully trailing Invisible Fencing collars on the cattle.</p> <p>The deer cull night licence is being updated. Work to build wider partnerships to manage the local deer population is ongoing following the March drone census.</p> <p><u>11.04/22</u> <u>Education programme report</u> The CEO gave an update of the Education Programme.</p> <p>Between January and May 2022 1,314 children visited the Forest from 21 different schools. The CS funded visits are now fully booked. Outreach sessions for three other schools have been undertaken.</p> <p>Workshops and drop- in sessions during half term and Easter have taken place and a family dawn chorus walk was held. Monthly mini explorer groups are being held.</p> <p>Two Nightjar walks were arranged as part of the Elderflower Festival at Pippingford Park and four Duke of Edinburgh volunteers are assisting with rare bird surveys on the Forest.</p> <p>The Committee asked the CEO to pass on his thanks to the education team</p>	<p>CEO to action</p>
<p>12/22</p>	<p>Nature’s Recovery Consultation The Committee and CEO worked together to produce a response to the Government’s Green Paper on Nature’s Recovery. There were suggestions in the Green Paper that concerned the Committee around protections for the natural world. The response has been submitted.</p>	
<p>13/22</p>	<p>Any Urgent Item for which the Clerk has notice in order to pass to the Chairman. There was none.</p>	

The meeting closed at 15:00