

NEW FOREST ACCESS FORUM

Meeting: Monday 01 June 2015

Agenda item 13: *Election of Chair and Vice-Chair*

The Forum is required to elect a Chair and Vice-chair for 2015/16 at this meeting. The national and local background is provided below.

National guidance

The national guidance incorporates the requirements of the national regulations www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2007/20070268.htm, together with more informal advice:

5.2 *Chairman and Vice-Chairman*

5.2.1 *The Regulations require forum members to elect from amongst their number a chairman and vice-chairman, taking such steps as may be necessary to ensure as far as practicable that they are drawn from members representing different categories of interest [categories being access user, land manager, 'other' - they may both represent 'other interests' provided they do not represent the same interest]. Members of the appointing authority should avoid offering themselves to these posts if possible.*

5.2.2 *The length of time to be served by the chairman and vice-chairman is for the forum to determine, but will be constrained by the maximum term of their appointment as a forum member.*

5.2.3 *The precise role of the chairman and vice-chairman should be determined locally by the forum and should not be unduly onerous. Much will depend on the time which the chairman and vice-chairman are prepared to devote. An effective secretary and supportive appointing authority will certainly reduce the call on their time, and there is no reason why other forum members cannot undertake certain tasks if it will help to share the burden.*

5.2.4 *In chairing a meeting the chairman and vice-chairman should adopt an inclusive approach, actively seeking to ensure that all relevant views are heard, and should steer the forum, as far as possible, towards a clear and agreed line. The chairman and vice-chairman should not feel constrained from contributing to the discussion by expressing their own views. It is for the person chairing the meeting to decide whether to allow observers or members of the public to participate in discussions on specific agenda items.*

5.2.5 *Outside of forum meetings the chairman and vice-chairman should work with the secretary in preparing the forward work programme and annual report, finalising the meeting agenda, liaising with the appointing authority(ies) on administrative, training and logistical matters, and dealing with matters that arise between meetings.*

Local background

The New Forest Access Forum 'Structure and Remit' states that:

7.1 *The Chair and Vice-chair will be drawn from Forum members and elected annually by separate secret ballots. In the interests of balance, the chair and vice-chair should represent different categories of interest, the categories being principally (i) landowners and occupiers, (ii) recreational users, and (iii) any other interests; members of the appointing authorities are not eligible for either position. In the event that either post becomes vacant, elections will be held having regard to the balance of interest on the Forum.*

Chair and Vice-Chair for 2015

Alastair Duncan has stood as Chair for three years and will now be standing down. Ruth Croker stood as Vice-Chair during this three year period and is now willing to stand as Chair. This does not preclude anyone else standing for the role of Chair; elections will be held if there are further candidates

If any member is interested in standing for the role of Vice-Chair please contact Amanda. In the interests of balance (and providing that Ruth is standing unopposed) this should ideally be a member representing landowners and occupiers or other interests (i.e. not recreational users).

If any member would like to see a formal election and/or would like to stand for either post, please inform Amanda.hull@hants.gov.uk by Friday 29th May.