

Minutes of Tunstall Parish Council Meeting
Held on 22nd October 2021 ~ 7.00pm
Tunstall Community Hall

Present

Cllr. Katherine Barton (Vice Chair)
Cllr. Kevin Ross
Cllr. Sophy Yeoman

Cllr. Oliver Morgan
Cllr. Andy Vince

Cllr. Niels Petersen
Cllr. Patricia Bessey

Tiffany Pollock (Clerk)

Sixteen members of the public in attendance

1. To receive Apologies for absence:

Apologies had been received from Cllr. Silovsky.

2. To receive any Declarations of Interest and any Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items (either pecuniary or non-pecuniary):

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Public Participation - To receive:

Cllr. Barton opened the meeting and welcomed all for their attendance, members of the public were then invited to comment.

a) Reports or comment from any member of the public –

The following questions, comments and concerns were raised;

- When would replanting begin? Would footpaths remain open and unchanged? Would any felling stop during nesting season? Is this the beginning of deforestation and where will it stop?
- Promises of replanting by the Forestry England have been made before but not kept. An example of this can be seen on the from the road going towards Wantidsen.
- Heavy mulching decimates habitats, low impact forestry is a viable and better option for the environment than the one proposed on the plan.
- Greener economy; why not use contactors/foresters locally? Selling timber locally will cut down on timber miles.
- There are real concerns that the Forest will be turned into heath land, any works carried out in the forestry need to be done sensibly. If the forest had been managed more appropriately, we wouldn't be in this position.
- Replanting of Sweet Chestnut; where is this going to be sold? Plant passports are expensive.

Chair's initials:

- The Forestry plan has not been advertised or published well. The plan is not very clear from Forestry England and no dates have been provided for replanting. Can we request an extension to the deadline? as there has not been enough time given for the consultation period.
- The questionnaire is really broad and provides very little scope, interpretations can be read either way. What is meant by new facilities? Will they be man-made? A representative from Forestry England should be attending this meeting.
- Can we have an open event for parishes to come along with Forestry England to explain the plan and listen to our concerns.
- The plan seems to be very ambiguous on purpose, there has been no effort from Forestry England to want to attend a meeting.
- The forestry is busy enough as it is and offers many with a place to go to for solitude and peace, therefore we need full details and a longer consultation period.
- The B1078, Wickham Market to Charsfield trees have been felled from ancient woodland, with a rerouted footpath. They were meant to leave a third but looks as though much more has been felled, will this happen in Tunstall or Rendlesham Forests?
- The vast number of vehicles needed to carry out the works is a problem and is a safety concern, in particular to the current lack of visibility at junctions through the forest.
- We want to see the benefits of the trees as they grow and for future generations.
- Six years ago, similar plans were made but these haven't been fulfilled.
- We don't want any man-made facilities; such as cafes, Go-Ape, man-made paths etc. Can we highlight the plans via the press and media?

4. Tunstall Forest – To discuss ten-year plan for Tunstall and Rendlesham Forests and agree response

Councillors agreed with the sentiments from the members of the public, it was felt that our local MP should be notified along with other Parish Council's, Local Councillors, DEFRA, Public Health England (for mental health) and the local media.

The Parish Council agreed to request an extension to the deadline and will be encouraging other Parish Councils to do the same. However, as the deadline remains 26th October all members of the public are encouraged to complete the survey and forward any comments onto Forestry England.

The Parish Council will seek to ensure views are represented and will work alongside other Parish Council's to do so.

Councillors acknowledged that thoughts are similar to those we had ten years ago for the previous plan; no development of facilities. There was previously a block-coloured map, which has not changed and needs to be kept to.

Chair's initials:

Sustainability and keeping the peace of the forest is key as well as maintaining access and ensuring the forestry is replanted. There is a lack of broad leaf species which is of concern for future generations.

Cllr. Ross discussed the plan further and felt that this should be longer than ten years, fast species such as pine should be on approximately a seventy-year plan. Having a ten-year plan highlight's that this could satisfy grants for the forestry to become heathland. Why are we not replanting the natural seed bed of birch and pine using regeneration which is already there? This regeneration could be made part of the scheme, we acknowledge that Ash die-back is in the area and is a problem but there are better ways of managing it.

Planting further Sweet Chestnut may mean that in the future this will become diseased and the need for felling will be required leading back to deforestation. The market for timber is hugely supported by grants trying to fulfil the need of renewable energy via the bio mass market, there is not enough timber to sustain this as the forest is not being replanted effectively. There seems to be a real lack of knowledge in comparison to contractors who have worked within the forestry.

Forest England have changed the timber market, wood miles used to be a big issue but now contractors are travelling for miles. These contractors are also getting 'add on' jobs that really local foresters and millers could benefit from.

Councillors agreed that six monthly updates from Forestry England would be beneficial.

From a vote of hands all attendants felt that the questionnaire is not fit for purpose and that a representative from Forestry England should have attended the meeting.

It was agreed that the Clerk would draft a response to Forestry England, copying in Cllr's Reid and Herring as well as local MP Therese Coffey. The Clerk will also contact the BBC, East Anglian Daily Times and BBC Radio Suffolk.

Cllr. Barton thanked all for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.11pm.

Signed:

Date:

Cllr. Katherine Barton, Chair

Tiffany Pollock

Clerk to Tunstall Parish Council

Chair's initials: