

## **Broads Forum**

### **1 Terms of Reference**

- 1.1 To act as a reference group to offer advice and comment on the Broads Authority's strategic aims and objectives and other key issues as they arise, including the Broads Plan, Broads Local Plan and Business Plan.
- 1.2 To provide a consultative forum to facilitate two-way communication between the Authority and other bodies and organisations which have an interest in the Broads and its wider catchment area.
- 1.3 To provide a forum for discussion on conservation, navigational, recreational, cultural and built heritage and planning policy issues related to both land and water based activities within the Broads and its wider catchment area.
- 1.4 To promote closer liaison and understanding between the various interest bodies and organisations which have an interest in the Broads and its wider catchment area.
- 1.5 In providing advice and comment the Forum shall have regard to the general duty of the Authority to manage the Broads for the purposes of:
  - (a) conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Broads;
  - (b) promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Broads by the public; and
  - (c) protecting the interests of navigation.
- 1.6 In providing such advice and comment the Forum shall also bear in mind the Authority's requirement to have regard to:
  - (a) the national importance of the Broads as an area of natural beauty and one which affords opportunities for open-air recreation;
  - (b) the desirability of protecting the natural resources of the Broads from damage; and
  - (c) the needs of agriculture and forestry and the economic and social interest of those who live or work in the Broads.

### **2 Principles**

- 2.1 The Forum will consider strategic/significant issues only and will not be asked to consider detailed operational matters such as individual planning applications, except where they may have significant strategic or policy importance.

- 2.2 Members of the Forum may propose items for discussion at future meetings.
- 2.3 The Forum will be a truly consultative body and its advice and views will be sought in advance of matters being considered by the Authority. It will not be used merely as a rubber stamping exercise or to endorse decisions already taken.
- 2.4 Meetings of the Forum will be open to the public. Members of the public may ask a question or make a statement about any matter on the agenda by prior agreement with the Chairman.
- 2.5 The Forum will be accountable directly to the Broads Authority and a record of its proceedings will be received by the Authority.
- 2.6 In addition the advice or comments of the Forum will be reported to and taken into account by the appropriate committee(s) of the Authority in the decision making process.
- 2.7 The Forum will meet quarterly as part of the Authority's regular cycle of committee meetings, and on other occasions as may be required.
- 2.8 The role of the Forum will be advisory only.

### **3 Membership**

- 3.1 The Chair will be an independent person appointed by the Broads Authority who is able to command the respect of the conservation, navigational and recreational interest groups in the Broads area.
- 3.2 The Chair will be appointed for a term of three years.
- 3.3 The balance of the membership will fairly and equitably reflect the three duties of the Authority as set out in paragraph 1.5 above.
- 3.4 The membership will fairly and equitably reflect the various interest groups on the Broads which do not have direct representation on the Broads Authority itself, and will give due weight to those interest groups with large membership.
- 3.5 Persons who are already members of the Broads Authority will not be eligible for membership of the Forum.
- 3.6 The membership will be of sufficient size to ensure that all the various interest groups are adequately represented and there is sufficient experience and knowledge of the various issues which relate to the management of the Broads, but will not be so large as to become unwieldy.
- 3.7 The Forum will comprise representatives of the various categories of interest groups which have an interest in the Broads and the work of the Broads Authority.

- 3.8 The members will be appointed to the Forum by the nominating groups themselves. Where the groups are unable or unwilling to decide upon a person to represent them, the matter will be referred to the Chair of the Forum and the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Broads Authority for determination.
- 3.9 Groups/organisations will be entitled to appoint named substitutes to attend meetings in the event that their representative is unable to attend.
- 3.10 The nominating organisations will be invited to review their membership every three years, and in so doing will be invited to consider the member's attendance record and the extent to which he/she has liaised with and reported back to the organisations which he/she represents.
- 3.11 The Chair of the Forum and Chairman of the Broads Authority may delete organisations from the lists of interest groups where they cease to exist, and add successor and new organisations where it is appropriate to do so. However any wide-ranging review of the membership or list of nominating organisations must be reported to and agreed by the Broads Authority.
- 3.12 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Authority may attend meetings of the Forum, but in a non-voting capacity.
- 3.13 The Chief Executive, together with other officers of the Authority as appropriate, will if available attend meetings of the Forum to present reports and answer questions.
- 3.14 The Forum may, in respect of any particular matter or more generally, invite other persons or representatives of other organisations to attend meetings of the Forum and participate in discussions, but not to vote.

#### **4 Amendments**

- 4.1 Any amendments to the Terms of Reference, Principles and Membership of the Forum, (other than changes to individual changes to the lists of nominating groups as set out in paragraph 3.11), must be agreed by the Broads Authority following consultation with the Chair of the Forum and the Forum itself.