

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/Local Development Framework and Business Plan.
- 1.2 To provide a consultative forum for discussion on all issues related to the Broads and its wider catchment area.
- 1.3 To promote two-way communication and closer liaison and understanding between the Authority and the various bodies and organisations which have an interest in the Broads and its wider catchment area.
- 1.4 To have regard, when providing advice and comment, 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.
- 1.5 To 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 Membership

- 2.1 The Chairman and Vice Chairman will be elected by the membership of the Forum. They will be persons who are able to command the respect of the Forum Members and the nominating groups.
- 2.2 The Chairman and Vice Chairman will be appointed for a term of one year. There will be no limit on the number of re-elections.

- 2.3 The balance of the membership will fairly and equitably reflect all the different stakeholder interests in the delivery of the Broads Plan.
- 2.4 Persons who are already members of the Broads Authority will not be eligible for membership of the Forum.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 The bodies and organisations represented on the Forum (the 'nominating groups') will be grouped by category of interest (e.g. boating, cultural heritage, education). The Forum will comprise member representatives of these various categories.
- 2.7 The member representatives will be appointed to the Forum by the nominating groups within each category of interest. Where the groups are unable or unwilling to decide upon a person to represent them, the matter will be referred to the Chairman of the Forum and the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Broads Authority for determination. Nominating groups will be entitled to appoint named substitutes to attend meetings in the event that their member representative is unable to attend.
- 2.8 Each nominating group will be invited to select a correspondent with whom their member representative will liaise to report Forum business and to represent the group's views at Forum meetings.
- 2.9 The nominating groups will be invited to review their member representative every three years, and in so doing to consider the member's attendance record and the extent to which he/she has liaised with and reported back to the groups which he/she represents. If a nominating group is not represented by its member representative or named substitutes at three consecutive meetings, the matter will be referred by the Chairman of the Forum to the nominating group to review their member representative/named substitutes.
- 2.10 The Chairman of the Forum and Chairman of the Broads Authority may delete organisations from the lists of nominating 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 categories of interest must be reported to and agreed by the Broads Authority.
- 2.11 The Chairman Vice-Chairman and Members of the Authority may attend meetings of the Forum.
- 2.12 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.

- 2.13 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.

3 Principles

- 3.1 The role of the Forum will be advisory only.
- 3.2 The Forum will consider strategic/significant issues only. It will not be asked to consider detailed operational matters (such as individual planning applications), except where they may have significant strategic or policy importance.
- 3.3 Members of the Forum may propose items for discussion at future meetings. Nominating groups may also propose items for discussion through the Forum Members. Matters to be discussed at the next meeting will be identified either during the previous meeting or through consultation with the Chairman. In the latter case, a minimum of four weeks' notice should be given if the matter is likely to require the Authority to provide a report with background information.
- 3.4 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. As such, it will not be used merely as a rubber stamping exercise or to endorse decisions already taken.
- 3.5 Meetings of the Forum will be open to the public. Members of the public may pose a question for the Forum to debate or make a statement about any matter on the agenda by prior agreement with the Chairman. Such questions or statements should be submitted to the Chairman at least five working days before the meeting, to allow sufficient time for consideration by members in advance of the meeting. The Agenda will contain a standing item on Parish Issues.
- 3.6 The Forum will be accountable directly to the Broads Authority and a record of its proceedings will be received by the Authority. In addition, the advice or comments of the Forum will be reported to and taken into account by the Authority in the decision making process. The Chairman or Vice Chairman will be invited to attend meetings of the Broads Authority to present the record of the Forum's proceedings.
- 3.7 The Forum will meet quarterly as part of the Authority's regular cycle of committee meetings, and on other occasions as may be required.

4 Amendments

- 4.1 Any amendments to the Terms of Reference, Principles and Membership of the Forum, (other than the replacement of member representatives/named substitutes, as set out in paragraphs 2.7 and 2.9, or changes to individual groups within a category of interest), must be agreed by the Broads Authority following consultation with the Chairman of the Forum and the Forum itself.