

## North York Moors National Park Authority Special Authority Meeting

Public Minutes of the meeting held at The Old Vicarage, Helmsley on Thursday 24 May 2012. .

**Present:** J Bailey, M Bowes, Mrs J Frank, D Hugill, M Knaggs, T Lawn, P Lawson, Mrs J Mitchell, E Sanderson, S Scoffin, G H Simpson, B Suthers, Mrs H Swiers, R I Thompson, H Tindall, P Wheeler.

**Apologies:** Mrs V Arnold, B Briggs, D C Jeffels, Mrs C Seymour

**Officers in attendance:** Andy Wilson (Chief Executive), Irene Brannon (Director of Corporate Services), Peter Barfoot (Director of Conservation), Sarah Housden (Policy Manager), Andrea McMillian (Planning Policy Officer), Richard Smith (Deputy Monitoring Officer), Fiona Farnell (Committees Officer)

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### Copies of All Documents Considered Are In The Minute Book

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#### 26/12 **Public Question Time**

There were no questions from Members of the public.

#### 27/12 **Members Interests**

Members were reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interests relating to any agenda item prior to its consideration.

#### 28/12 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure – The Chairman to inform Members of the Public of the emergency evacuation procedure**

#### 29/12 **Review of National Park Management Plan**

Considered:

The report of the Policy Manager.

This item was presented by the Policy Manager and the Director of Conservation, a powerpoint presentation was shown, a copy of which appears in the minute book.

The Policy Manager updated Members that additional text needed be added to take into account the comments of English Heritage and the National Farmers Union, which were still awaited. Changes to the targets for grassland/woodland and restoration of plantation on ancient woodland sites have also been made. Ongoing discussions with the North East Yorkshire Geology Trust with regard to Geopark status are also taking place.

The Director of Conservation confirmed that he had had a discussion with a representative from the National Farmers Union who had confirmed that they were happy with the plan; that targets in the Plan for species rich grassland, new tree planting and restoration of plantation on ancient woodland sites had been redrafted to 150 hectares of species rich grassland, 300 hectares of new tree planting and 600 hectares restoration of plantation on ancient woodland sites.

Members made the following comments/asked the following questions:

- Would connectivity spread disease and predators?
- In Farndale and Bransdale could the Grey Squirrel be eradicated and the Red Squirrel reintroduced?
- Does natural tree regeneration play a part?
- Pleased to see that a strategy for delivering the woodland, grassland and PAWs restoration is now included which is very exciting.
- The new targets appear achievable.
- There is a lot of geological expertise in the area, support working with them.
- Pleased that the extra round of consultations produced results.
- Are Scarborough Borough Council in agreement with the affordable homes target?

The Director and Policy Manager answered Members questions as follows:

- As connectivity involves a range of habitat types it is unlikely that it would facilitate the spread of disease or other types of problems.
- The reintroduction of the red squirrel is exceptionally complicated, time consuming and costly to do.
- Officers are keen to work with landowners to look at tree planting.
- The target of at least 15 affordable homes to be built each year is realistic and achievable; subject to confirmed funding from the Homes and Communities Agency for small rural schemes.

The Chair informed Members that a meeting had taken place with the Chief Executive and Leader of Scarborough Borough Council which had been hugely beneficial and that the Chair and Chief Executive had a greater appreciation of the unique position that the Borough Council was in.

**Recommendation:**

1. That Members provide any comments on the draft that they would wish to see incorporated into the final version.
2. Officers are authorised to make any further changes needed to respond to any outstanding comments from the National Farmers Union and RSPB.
3. That the final version of the Plan is presented to the June meeting of the Authority for adoption.

**Resolved:**

1. That Members provided comments on the draft that they wished to see incorporated into the final version.
2. Officers are authorised to make any further changes needed to respond to any outstanding comments from the National Farmers Union and English Heritage.
3. That the final version of the Plan be presented to the June meeting of the Authority for adoption.

**30/12 Standards Regime Developments**

Considered:

The report of the Director of Corporate Services

The Director asked for Members views on whether the Authority's Values should be incorporated into the code.

Members made the following comments:

- Considered it appropriate to incorporate Members leaving the room when a pecuniary interest is declared as Members do now.
- Feel that the Values should not be added, but referred to.

Members noted that 5 days was not sufficient time to submit information and agreed that 15 working days was acceptable and that it should be 5 working days for the decision to be given by the Monitoring Officer.

A Member noted that the numbered paragraphs within Appendix A needed attention.

**Recommendation:**

That Members:

1. Comment on the issues raised in this report, in particular
  - a. The proposed regime in section 5.
  - b. The draft Code of Conduct at Appendix A.
  - c. The proposed framework for dealing with allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct at Appendix B.

**Resolved:**

That Members:

1. Commented on the issues raised in the report, in particular
  - a. The proposed regime in section 5.
  - b. The draft Code of Conduct at Appendix A to include amendments to the following paragraph references:
    - Paragraph 9 – 1<sup>st</sup> sentence change paragraph 12 to paragraph 11
    - Paragraph 9 – 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence change paragraph 11 to paragraph 10.
    - Paragraph 10 – change paragraph 10 to paragraph 9.
    - Paragraph 12 – change paragraph 12 to paragraph 11
    - Paragraph 13 – change paragraph 15 to paragraph 14
    - Paragraph 14 – change paragraph 14 to paragraph 13
  - c. The proposed framework for dealing with allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct at Appendix B to include amendment to the following:
    - Paragraph 6 – change 5 working days to 15 working days.
    - Paragraph 11 – change 5 days to 5 working days.

**31/12 Further Consultation by Defra on the Governance Arrangements for National Park Authorities**

Considered:

The report of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer)

Members made the following comments:

- Members have discussed direct elections before. Need to come down strongly on saying no to direct elections without closing the door on democracy.

- Strongly agree that 8 years is not a long enough term.
- Agree that a nominated candidate should have 10 people subscribed.
- Believe that all employees of every constituent principle authority should not be able to stand for a seat on the Authority.

**Recommendation:**

That Members approve the responses to the Governance Review as outlined in this paper, determining an appropriate response where none has been recommended.

**Resolved:**

That Members approved the responses to the Governance Review as outlined in the paper, determining an appropriate response where none had been recommended as follows:

Question 8 - take out second paragraph which read 'The current restriction on all employees of every constituent principal authority does however seem unnecessary particularly since it covers such a large number of people.

Question 9 - Agree that nominated candidates should have 10 subscribed eligible people.