

North York Moors National Park Authority

Public Minutes of the meeting held at The Old Vicarage, Helmsley on 15 December 2014.

Present:

Jim Bailey, Malcolm Bowes, David Chance, Alison Fisher, Janet Frank, Bryn Griffiths, David Hugill, Jane Mitchell, Heather Moorhouse, Caroline Patmore, Ted Sanderson, Andrew Scott, Hawson Simpson, Bill Suthers, Richard Thompson, Jeremy Walker.

Apologies:

David Jeffels, Christopher Massey, Sarah Oswald, Herbert Tindall

Officers in Attendance:

Andy Wilson (Chief Executive), Richard Gunton (Director of Park Services), Irene Brannon (Director of Corporate Services), Ian Nicholls (Assistant Director of Corporate Services), Catherine Raistrick (Finance & Performance Officer), Richard Smith (Authority Solicitor), David Smith (Senior Ranger), Tammy Andrews (Hedgehogs and Explorer Club Co-ordinator), Graham Stubbs (Head of Volunteer Services), Stephen Croft (TEL Programme Manager), Chris France (Director of Planning), Mark Hill (Head of Development Management), Michael Graham (Assistant Director of Park Services), David Renwick (Director of Conservation), Rachel Pickering (Natural Environment Team Leader), Vanessa Burgess (Committees & Customer Services Officer), Paul Hamblin (Executive Director – National Parks England)

Copies of All Documents Considered Are In The Minute Book

The Chair welcomed Heather Moorhouse.

45/14 Minutes

Resolved:

That the public minutes of the meeting held on Monday 22 September 2014, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

46/14 Public Question Time

There were no questions from Members of the public.

47/14 Members Interests

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

48/14 **Exclusion of the Public**

Resolved:

That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of each of the items of business shown in column 1 of the following table on the grounds that each involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 specified in column 2:-

Item No on the Agenda	Paragraph No
8	10
9	10

49/14 **Voluntary Group – Tammy Andrews and Explorer Club Volunteers (verbal presentation)**

Members were given a short presentation by 7 young volunteers from the Explorer Club on the projects they undertake. Members were very impressed with the detailed presentation, the interesting range of projects which the group assist with and the excellent level of presentation skills shown by the volunteers.

Richard Gunton (Director of Park Services) and Graham Stubbs (Head of Volunteer Services) advised Members that money had been received from Redcar & Cleveland Public Health team to expand the project to 6 schools in Redcar & Cleveland.

Members asked how people find out about the scheme. Officers informed Members that the scheme was publicised through schools, facebook, word of mouth and via the Authority's website. Bill Suthers commented that he was very pleased to hear that his Local Authority were helping to fund the scheme and offered support if needed.

Paul Hamblin (Executive Director – National Parks England) left the meeting before the start of the Private Session.

Private Business – Minutes Circulated To Members only, public summary available at the end of these public minutes

David Hugill arrived at 11.35am

50/14 **Visitor Centre Business Plans**

51/14 **Property Review**

Public Business Resumes

52/14 **The Ethical Framework and Employee Code of Conduct**

Considered:

The report of the Assistant Director of Corporate Services

Resolved:

Richard Thompson, Authority Member, agreed to contribute to the review process. Members approved the timetable and process for updating the Framework and Code of Conduct

53/14 Budget Estimate

Considered:

The report of the Director of Corporate Services

The Chief Executive informed Members about a meeting which had taken place with Defra on 12 December 2014. Defra were, as yet, unable to advise what the NP grant figure would be for 2015/16. There was the possibility of an in-year cut next year.

One Member commented that some Defra money was already ring-fenced for flood defences and animal health, so it may be prudent for the Authority to develop 'an offer' to government rather than waiting.

Irene Brannon (Director of Corporate Services) presented a one year budget estimate to Members, advising that figures had been updated to show a small decrease due to the staff pay award.

Resolved:

Members approved the report and the Appendix as the assumptions for the start budget 2015/16 subject to the flexibility to revise in March if significant changes become known.

Heather Moorhouse left the meeting at 12.25pm

54/14 Implementation of Further Reductions in Spending and Increased Income

Considered:

The report of the Senior Management Team

The Chief Executive informed Members that the Authority was unable to commence the 3 year business plan cycle as the budget figure from Defra was still outstanding. Therefore, Irene Brannon had completed an interim plan to cover 1 year.

Members commented on the following:

- Helpful report, sensible proposal
- Public ROW, concerns about cumulative impact, would developing a County-wide joint approach be a good way forward
- PR message to get Land Owners to help
- The situation with coastal work and the Forward Planning post

The Chief Executive informed Members that the Forward Planning post was on hold until funding for the post could be assured.

The Director of Park Services explained that the Authority's presence on the ground had been greatly increased in recent years with the establishment of the volunteer service and two teams of apprentices. These reductions would mean a return to the levels of presence on the ground last seen in around 2009, but with a different skill set.

The Director of Park Services informed members that rights of way outside of the National Parks received less investment and that this was being further reduced and that there was therefore little to be gained for the National Park by developing a county wide approach. He also explained that initial consultations had taken place via

the Primary Land Users Group and Local Access Forum and that further discussions would be held following approval of the recommendations.

The Director of Conservation advised Members that not all of the current funding partners would be in a position to continue funding coastal work, a meeting would be held in the New Year. A draft of the Heritage Coast Management Plan was currently being worked on.

Resolved:

Members agreed the recommendations at paragraph 8.1 of the Appendix on page 36 of the agenda, plus noted and approved the report.

55/14 Extending Planning Charges for Pre-application and Enforcement Advice

Considered:

The report of the Director of Planning

Chris France, Director of Planning advised Members on the proposed Schedule of Charges, highlighting in particular one new key area – charging for enforcement.

Members asked about/commented on the following:

- Prospective pre-application advice should be encouraged and the fee for Retrospective planning should be doubled
- Agreed with exemption/concessions in relation to Not for Profit Groups
- Would Parish Councils receive a 50% discount on pre-application advice?
- How would quota sites be handled in relation to no fees for affordable housing schemes

Richard Smith the Authority's Solicitor informed Members that the Authority only sought to recover overall cost, couldn't make an overall profit, and couldn't punish parties dealing with matters retrospectively. Chris France added that the 50% Not for Profit discount, currently offered to Parishes would be extended to include local charitable bodies.

Resolved:

Members agreed,
- to the adoption of the Schedule at paragraph 3.4 of the report with effect from 1 April 2015,
- to adopt the exemptions and concessions stated at paragraph 5.1 of the report subject to the qualification that the "no fee" for Registered Providers relate only to exception sites,
- to the proposed approach to recover staff costs at section 4 of the report in relation to enforcement work.

56/14 Progress toward Establishing the North York Moors National Park Trust – Verbal Update

Michael Graham handed Members a paper entitled: Establishing the North York Moors National Park Trust – Developing Charitable Objects. Members commented on the list of Charitable Purposes and whether there was a need to include all.

Michael Graham said the Authority had opted to keep the list as broad as possible to link with NP purposes and the Management Plan. A copy of the paper would be circulated to Members via e-mail for further/additional comments.

Action: MG to e-mail to Members.

57/14 **Paul Hamblin to speak to Members**

Paul Hamblin, Executive Director – National Parks England, gave Members a presentation on the work of NPE. At the end of the presentation Paul asked Committee Members to give some thought/feedback on the following:

What 3 things would you do to...?

1. Enhance the reputation of the work of the NPAs?
2. Provide a more supportive policy environment for them?
3. Help NPAs to raise income in new or different ways?

Action: Member suggestions on these questions to be fed back to Paul Hamblin

Jim Bailey left the meeting at 12.50pm, Malcolm Bowes (Deputy Chair) took over as Chair

Malcolm Bowes thanked Paul Hamblin for his presentation. Members asked the following:

- Members requested a copy of Paul Hamblin's presentation
- Alison Fisher asked about NP Direct Elections Bill
- Richard Thompson asked about rural broadband provision
- Caroline Patmore asked about mobile phone coverage

Paul Hamblin advised Members that there was a commitment to prepare a draft Bill on Direct Elections to give the Secretary of State powers to introduce a 4th Member category. With regard to rural broadband and mobile phones, there was still much more work to do in relation to broadband and Paul Hamblin had meeting with senior Vodafone personnel to try to improve mobile coverage in rural areas.

Action: Presentation slides to be e-mailed on to Members

Jeremy Walker left the meeting at 1.05pm, Bryn Griffiths left at 1.10pm

58/14 **Developing a New Volunteering Strategy – Framework and Timetable**

Considered:

The report of the Director of Park Services

Richard Gunton (Director of Park Services) advised Members on the framework and timetable for the development of the new Volunteering Strategy:

- The Authority is in a good volunteering position but there is more that can be done
- A key is the development of a 'One team approach'
- Corporate Volunteering – possible area to generate income
- More information would be provided to Members at NPA in March 2015

A number of the Members asked about rewards for those who volunteer, and the volunteering situation within other NP's. All Members were supportive of the paper.

Richard Gunton and Graham Stubbs informed Members that in their experience, volunteers didn't seek specific rewards for volunteering. They volunteer because it is something that they want to do, it is a good thing to do and they enjoy it. It is important however that volunteers know that the work they do is valuable and that they feel part of the National Park Authority Team. The Authority does highly value the contribution of volunteers and ensures that they have the correct equipment, a safe working environment and meaningful and varied work tasks.

Resolved:

Members approved the framework at paragraph 3 of the report and the timetable at paragraph 4 of the report.

David Chance left the meeting at 2.30pm

59/14 Health and Safety

Considered:

The report of the Assistant Director of Corporate Services

Ian Nicholls, Assistant Director of Corporate Services updated Members and advised that a further update would be provided at FRASC in Feb 2015. With regard to the accident on 22 Oct, the HSE had been happy with the way the Authority handled the incident.

Members commented on the need for good communication of the Policy to Authority Staff and Volunteers and that the listing of key H&S personnel on page 65 of the agenda would be more helpful if it included the specific responsibilities/roles held by each person.

Ian Nicholls advised Members that the specific roles were included in the full report, but that he would include in the listing as requested.

Action: IN to add specific responsibilities/roles to listing

Resolved:

Members approved the Health & Safety Policy and noted the report

60/14 Broadband and Mobile Phone Delivery: Proposal to Temporarily Amend Scheme of Delegation in Relation to Planning Determination

Considered:

The report of the Director of Planning

Resolved:

Members agreed to delegate to the Director of Planning (via the Chief Executive delegation) decisions on planning applications relating to the Airwave Broadband pilot project in the Esk Valley and the Mobile Phone Infrastructure Project in the National Park subject to there being no material circumstances arising from the proposals that would warrant referral to the Planning Committee.

Richard Smith, Authority Solicitor, declared a potential conflict of Interests in Item 19 and left the room, prior to discussions

61/14 **Arrangements for Consideration of the of the York Potash Planning Application by Members**

Considered:

The report of the Director of Planning

Resolved:

Members agreed the resolution of the Planning Committee on 23 October 2014 that the previous protocol is continued so that the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Authority be appointed as Chair and Deputy Chair of the Special Planning Committee meeting to determine the York Potash planning application.

62/14 **Community and Parish Forums**

Considered:

The report of the PA to Chief Executive

The Chief Executive asked that Members agree to the Authority changing the dates for the Parish Forums so they are in future set to April and Oct each year with a Joint Forum being held in July, to make the most of longer evenings and better daylight hours.

Members commented on the following:

- Closer links between Ranger Services and Parish Forum areas
- Make sure WI included on list of invitees

Action: David Renwick, Director of Conservation to confirm with Janet Frank that WI Members were included in the list of Invitees to Parish Forums.

Resolved:

Members approved the replacement of the Community Forum with specific interest and less formal meetings to be held as and when required and agreed that Parishes' views be sought on dates for Parish Forums being set in April and October of each year with the Joint Parish Forum in July.

63/14 **This Exploited Land**

Considered:

The report of the TEL Programme Manager

Stephen Croft, TEL Programme Manager, updated Members on the TEL project.

Andrew Scott thanked the TEL team on their fantastic work to date.

Resolved:

Members noted the report and agreed to receive a further update on the TEL programme ahead of the Stage Two submission at September 2015 NPA.

64/14 **Feedback from Lead Members of Forums – written report for Alison Fisher – CLM**

Considered:

The report of the Chair of Countryside and Land Management Forum

Resolved: Members noted the report.

65/14 **Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014**

Considered:

The report of the Authority Solicitor

Richard Smith informed Members that the changes would be noted in each agenda and a notice would be placed on the door to the Committee Room. Members need to be aware of these important changes.

Resolved: Members noted the changes in relation to the recording of meetings
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66/14 **On the Record**

Considered:

The report of the Committees Officer

Resolved: Members noted the report.

67/14 **Reports from Members on Outside Bodies**

Considered:

The report of the Committees Officer

Resolved: Members noted the report.

..... (Chair)
23 March 2015

Public Summary of Items considered "in private"
at the meeting of the Authority
on 15 December 2014

Visitor Centre Business Plans & Property Review

Michael Graham (Assistant Director of Park Services) and Irene Brannon (Director of Corporate Services) gave a presentation to Members on the Business Plans for the Moors Centre and Sutton Bank Centre and proposals for the future use of Property belonging to NYMNPA.

Members approved the proposals for the Business Plans and further investigations regarding income generation at the two Centres. Members also noted the work being undertaken with regard to Property and the need to further investigate certain options.