

North York Moors National Park Authority

21 March 2016

On the Record

1. Power of Competence

The 'Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016' came into force on 28 January 2016. Section 22 of that Act added new parts to Section 65 of the Environment Act 1965 to create a function-specific general power of competence for National Park Authorities in England ("NPAs"), along similar lines to the power conferred on other Local Authorities by the Localism Act 2011.

The new power enables an NPA to do anything it considers appropriate for the purpose of carrying out any of its functions and anything it considers appropriate for purposes incidental (whether directly or indirectly) to its functional purposes. This can include commercial activity though boundaries to the exercise of the power are stipulated. The new power does not override existing legislation and NPAs must continue to act in accordance with their statutory purposes.

Supporters of the new power express their hope that it will enable NPAs to be more entrepreneurial and innovative, to maximise opportunities to fulfil NPA statutory purposes, and to participate fully in new devolution arrangements.

Contact Officer:
Richard Smith, Solicitor NYMNPA.

2. NPE Minutes

The minutes from the National Parks England meeting held on 10 February 2016 are attached as **Appendix 1**.

3. Miscellaneous Items

a) Emergency/Temporary Closure of Public Footpaths

1. Public Footpath 33 Hinderwell at Port Mulgrave due to a significant landslide on the steep coastal slope from 11 January 2016. This steep beach access path has been lost, but it is hoped that another safe path can be established on open access land here.
2. Public Footpath 27 Bilsdale Midcable (Chop Gate Toilets) at Chop Gate village hall from 7 March 2016 for one month due to the installation of a package water treatment plant. An alternative route is available within the site.

b) Public Path Orders taking effect after their date of confirmation

ID	Reference	Confirmed	Took effect on	Description
1388	5/12/DIV 21	17/10/2015	7/1/2016	Diversion of Footpath 21 Farndale East (Mercer's Bridge)

Contact Officer:
Karl Gerhardsen, Head of Recreation and Park Management
Tel: 01439 772700

**NATIONAL PARKS ENGLAND
MEETING**

**Minutes of meeting held on 10 February 2016 between 11.00am-3.00pm at Mary Sumner House,
London**

Items listed in order of discussion

Present			
<u>Directors</u>	<u>NPOs/ Chief Executives</u>	<u>NPAs</u>	
Jacquie Burgess (JBU)		Broads Authority	
Peter Harper (PHr)	Kevin Bishop	Dartmoor NPA	
Andrea Davis		Exmoor NPA	
Mike McKinley	Richard Leafe	Lake District NPA	
Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre	Alison Barnes	New Forest NPA	
Jim Bailey (Chair)	Andy Wilson	North York Moors NPA	
Glen Sanderson	Tony Gates	Northumberland NPA	
Lesley Roberts	Sarah Fowler	Peak District NPA	
Margaret Paren	Trevor Beattie	South Downs NPA	
Peter Charlesworth	David Butterworth	Yorkshire Dales NPA	
<u>Contributors</u>	<u>Organisation</u>		
Paul Hamblin	National Parks England		
Amanda Brace (AB)	National Parks England		
Meriel Harrison (minutes)	National Parks England		

Item		Agreed Actions
1.	Welcome and introductions The Chair welcomed all present.	
2.	Apologies Apologies were received from John Packman (Broads Authority) and Nigel Stone (Exmoor NPA). The Chair reported that Glen Sanderson and Tony Gates (Northumberland NPA) and Peter Harper and Kevin Bishop (Dartmoor NPA) had been delayed due to train problems and would arrive during the meeting.	
3.	Declarations of interest There were no declarations of interest.	
4.	Approve minutes from meeting held on 10 June 2015 The minutes were approved .	
5.	Matters arising <u>25 Year Plan Ministerial workshop</u> TB stated that there was no substantial update further to the note that had been circulated on the day of the workshop. Defra was showing a real willingness to engage. A framework is expected to be published in late March / early April. The Chair said that this was a fantastic opportunity to be helpful, and thanked NPOs for their work. TB and PH would have a follow up meeting with Tom Surrey (Defra) on 16 February. <u>Secretary of State appointments process</u> JBU stated that the inability to pay caring costs was still an issue, and impacting on the ability of NPAs to increase the diversity of Board members. It was agreed that this would	

	be addressed as part of Item 13.	
6.	<p>Sharing session / reflections on implications of Spending Review</p> <p>NPE Directors gave an update around the table, sharing views on the Spending Review outcome and what the implications were for their own NPA. The outcome was seen as very positive, especially with the certainty it gave over a 4 year period. It was recognised that the outcome had been the result of hard work by the Minister and also the efforts of NPE Directors and NPOs working together. More work will now be needed on where we want to be in four years' time and looking beyond that period. The Chair noted that this would be relevant for the new NPE Business Plan.</p>	
7.	<p>NPE Business Plan: progress, achievements and priorities</p> <p>GS and TG joined the meeting.</p> <p>PH gave a brief presentation highlighting some of the achievements and highlights in the past year against the three strategic aims of the current NPE Business Plan, and priorities for the next quarter. The following points were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PH gave an overview of the work Defra is undertaking on flooding, both on short-term recovery and longer-term resilience and flood defences • MM stated that DCMS was a key Department for NPE to work with on tourism, culture, heritage and sport. AB noted that NPE had written to David Evernett MP (maternity cover for Tracey Crouch MP) and received a positive response, with dates for a National Park visit under discussion. NPE had been successful in working with partners to get key messages into the recent Sport Strategy; and was closely following developments in the changes to VisitEngland / VisitBritain • DB noted that while NPAs were being treated well by Government, there still remained threats to National Parks relating to housing and planning. Local authority cuts would have an impact • LR suggested strategic aim 3 would need re-examining for the next Business Plan, to ensure clarity on the roles of NPE and NPPL <p>The Chair congratulated PH and the NPE team for all that had been achieved, and wished MH well with her maternity leave. It was agreed that the Board meeting in April would include a substantial session to kick off the process of developing the next NPE Business Plan. It was agreed that to inform this, information about high-level NPA priorities would be supplied to PH so that it could be collated in advance.</p>	<p>PH</p> <p>ALL NPOs</p> <p>PH</p>
8.	<p>NPE accommodation and NPA subscriptions</p> <p>PHr and KB joined the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair explained that securing accommodation for NPE had become an urgent priority. PH introduced the paper and stated that staying at Local Government House was no longer a viable option. The following points were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The merits of a London base were discussed, recognising that while there would be cost savings to locating outside of London it could diminish the effectiveness of the organisation and would necessitate the recruitment of new staff • The NPE staff team were investigating a number of options for accommodation, including talking to a range of partner organisations to identify any opportunities for co-location • A central London location is advantageous in terms of perceptions of the organisation, and travel time for both NPE staff and also NPE Directors and NPOs • Longer term planning will need to be informed by discussions in April on NPE's Business Plan and staffing • The LGA subscription should be decided as a separate issue. The loss of a corporate subscription would still have a negative financial impact on any NPAs that chose to retain individual membership 	

Appendix 1

	<p>The following points were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPE should retain a London office base in order to maximise its effectiveness • The NPE team should press ahead to secure accommodation at CAN Mezzanine Borough (or an equivalent alternative) for an initial 12 month period • The collective subscription to LGA would be reviewed. It was recognised that the notice requirements may necessitate that this is done by write-around before the end of March 2016; and that NPAs are already committed to paying the coming year's subscriptions • In order to allow for the costs of accommodation, and due to the need for NPAs to pay an LGA subscription for the coming year, the NPE subscription for 2016/17 would be increased by £1,440 per NPA (a one-off increase for this year only) • While increasing capacity with a part-time Projects Officer was supported in principle, a more detailed business case was needed before a decision could be taken. This would be brought back to the Board meeting in April, recognising that a decision to recruit a Projects Officer would entail an increase in subscriptions 	<p>MH / PH</p> <p>TB / KB</p> <p>PH</p> <p>PH / TB</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Meeting with Rory Stewart: debrief and next steps</p> <p>There was some discussion around the balance between first and second purpose in the National Parks Plan. It was considered that the Minister is aware that the National Parks Plan is quite focused on second purpose activity, however he is likely viewing it as part of a wider picture that includes Defra's 25 Year Plan which will have more explicitly first purpose elements. The need to be aware of potential areas of overlap or duplication was noted. It was recognised that the development of the National Parks Plan was an opportunity to further cement the good advocacy and high level support National Parks are currently receiving.</p> <p>The Chair said that a letter would be sent to the Minister thanking him for the meeting and addressing the points on income generation and sponsorship that there had not been time to discuss.</p>	<p>PH / JB</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Joint Chairs' letter to the Minister: next steps</p> <p>The Chair noted that the analysis in the paper showed work being taken forward to further the ambitions in the Chairs' Joint letter. It would be helpful to incorporate this into the discussions the Board will be having on the NPE Business Plan in April.</p> <p>On the flood management review, a call for evidence had just been issued. SF and RL were working together to gather information from all NPAs on their activity in this area, and taking opportunities to influence the review. The Chair of the Environment Agency would be visiting the Peak District Moors for the Future project next Friday.</p> <p>JBu suggested more thinking be done around National Parks' volunteering offer, including how this operates alongside other organisations; the skills and capacities that volunteers gain; and the longer term need to diversify the volunteer base. PHr said that volunteering was high on the wish-lists of companies wanting to work with NPPL. PH noted that much sharing of information took place via the UK Volunteer Coordinators Group.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>National Parks Plan</p> <p>PH and TB introduced the paper, noting that the Secretary of State was known to be aiming for an ambitious plan likely to be published in March. The paper sought approval for the draft submission that had been prepared; and a steer on the priority commitments involving NPAs. The following points were made during discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and the environment do not feature strongly in the document, which is focused on second purpose activity. It was recognised that this reflects the priority steer coming from the Secretary of State; however it was agreed that some introductory text should be drafted which makes it clear that a healthy natural environment underpins these activities 	<p>JBu/ABa/PH</p>

Appendix 1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding outdoor learning in teacher training should be a fundamental ask • Some of the terminology could be confusing, for example the section on tourism is not headed as tourism. The way that the word communities is used (section 3) should be improved as it is currently unclear, for example referring to people living outside National Parks rather than the communities within. The wording that refers to attracting more visitors should be looked at again to place the focus on sustainable tourism and recognise that capacity varies between the Parks • It could be clearer on the point that not every Park is expected to do everything; rather it is a document that reflects a set of collective ambitions • The National Citizen Service is being promoted already via other routes, so we should consider what value would be added by NPAs doing the same • There are a number of different asks in the document and they would benefit from being prioritised <p>The Chair said that it was important to show ambition and positivity and be trusted partners for Defra in this. NPOs were commended for the work that had been put in. The draft submission was approved subject to the caveats and comments above being addressed.</p>	PH / TB
13.	<p>Secretary of State NPA appointments process</p> <p>MP initiated a discussion on the shortcomings of the current process and the problems being caused for NPAs. The following issues were identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The criteria against which candidates are judged are not felt to be appropriate, and it is unclear where these criteria stem from • The process and administration from Defra and Natural England are subject to confusion and mistakes, for example candidate details being sent to the incorrect NPAs • The constituency of the appointing Boards means that NPA Chairs can be overruled • NPA Chairs are not allowed to provide a steer when the list goes to Ministers as to which candidate(s) best meet the needs of the National Park, or to express concerns (for example around the distance at which a candidate lives and the resulting impact on travel expenses) • The limitations on the term that can be served by Secretary of State members continues to cause problems, leading to the loss of important skills and knowledge from Boards and effectively preventing these members from becoming Chairs • There is an alternative model within the Defra family in the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees, which SF has experience of <p>Tom Surrey (Defra) is working with Natural England to review the process and has offered to meet with a small number of NPE Directors to discuss this. It was agreed that PH would seek potential dates for this meeting, and that SF would be invited to attend. Following the meeting a report would be brought to the April Board meeting and avenues for pursuing further would be discussed if necessary.</p> <p>GS left the meeting.</p>	PH
14.	<p>Housing and Planning Bill: key issues for National Parks</p> <p>PH thanked Nigel Stone (Exmoor NPA) and Steve Avery (New Forest NPA) for their work on this. As set out in the paper, this was a wide-ranging Bill and a steer on priorities and tactics was needed. Opportunities for influence would be limited as the Bill had already passed through the Commons and the first of 7 days at committee stage in the Lords had been held the previous day.</p> <p>NPE Directors highlighted the pressure from housing targets and the conflation of 'affordable' and 'local needs' housing as key issues. PH would check whether there was wording in the Bill that addressed the affordable housing threshold figure that the Government had unsuccessfully tried to introduce for rural areas previously.</p>	PH

Appendix 1

	<p>It was recognised that others would be expressing concerns on the points in the Bill and agreed that NPE's engagement would take an opportunistic approach. PH would seek to circulate a list of Peers speaking on the Bill and NPE Directors would feed back on any links that they may have with these Peers. MM stated that he would speak with Lord Clark of Windermere and Lord Judd, both Vice Chairs of the APPG on National Parks.</p> <p>AD left the meeting.</p>	<p>PH Chairs</p> <p>MM</p>
15.	<p>Love Your National Parks and Taste National Parks evaluations</p> <p>ABa noted the Minister's interest in the National Parks brand and that this would be relevant for the future of Love Your National Parks. The Chair said that income generation and branding would be addressed in the follow-up letter to the Minister.</p>	<p>PH</p>
16.	<p>Notes of E-NPOG meeting 03.12.15</p> <p>The notes were received without discussion.</p>	
17.	<p>Notes of E-NPOG meeting 19.01.16</p> <p>The notes were received without discussion.</p>	
18.	<p>Any other business</p> <p><u>National Park boundaries</u> LR offered to circulate some information regarding case law on the depth to which National Park boundaries run.</p> <p><u>BIG Lottery bid</u> PHr requested an update on progress. PH explained that progress had been delayed due to the need to focus on the National Parks Plan. RL was facilitating discussion with the BIG Lottery Chair to establish whether an all Parks bid would be feasible. Public Health England may be able to provide support to any bid in principle. More broadly, the NPE Accord with Public Health England would be sent to NPE Directors soon. The Chair requested that an update on the BIG Lottery bid be brought to the next Board meeting.</p>	<p>LR</p> <p>PH</p> <p>PH</p>
19.	<p>Dates of future meetings</p> <p>The dates were noted as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) NP UK Meeting - Thursday 11th February (London) b) NPE Board - Wednesday 6th April (London) c) NPE Board - Wednesday 8th June (Broads) d) NPUK Meeting and AGM – Thursday 9th June (Broads) e) NPE Board and AGM - Wednesday 18th October (London) <p>PHr asked whether the dates of the June meetings could be reconsidered to facilitate his attendance. It was suggested that this be raised at the NPUK Board meeting. [<i>Post meeting note</i> – changing the week of the meeting was not found to be possible, although the NPE Board meeting has now been brought forward to 8th June]</p> <p>PHr reiterated NPE's thanks to MH ahead of her maternity leave. The Chair drew the meeting to a close.</p>	