

North York Moors National Park Authority

Public Minutes of the meeting held at The Old Vicarage, Helmsley on Monday 23 March 2020.

Due to COVID 19 – this meeting was held virtually, except for the Chair and a small number of Officers, as listed below, who were present at The Old Vicarage. Before commencement of the meeting, Jim Bailey (Chair) informed all present that Standing Orders had been checked and that the Chair considered all to be present, either in person, or via remote means.

Present in person:

Jim Bailey

Present remotely:

Peter Berry, Malcolm Bowes, Ena Dent, Alison Fisher, David Hugill, Patrick James, David Jeffels, Bob Marley, Heather Moorhouse, Sarah Oswald, Caroline Patmore, Clive Pearson, Andrew Scott, Subash Sharma, Jeremy Walker, Colin Williamson.

Apologies:

Janet Frank, Shaun Moody

Officers in Attendance in person:

Andy Wilson (Chief Executive), Chris France (Director of Planning), Ian Nicholls (Head of Corporate Services), Vanessa Burgess (Committees and Customer Services Officer)

Officers present remotely:

Briony Fox (Director of Conservation and Polyhalite Projects), Michael Graham (Director of Park Services), Mark Hill (Head of Development Management), Elizabeth Clements (Head of Natural Environment), Debbie Trafford (Head of Recreation and Ranger Services), Pete Williams (Head of Finance)

Copies of All Documents Considered Are In The Minute Book

01/20 One Minute's Silence for Herbert Tindall, former Deputy Chairman

A minute's silence was held. A brief time for all to reflect on the life and contribution made to our National Park by Herbert Tindall.

02/20 Minutes

Resolved:

That the public minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2019, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

03/20 **Public Question Time**

There were no questions from Members of the public.

04/20 **Members Interests**

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

05/20 **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
21	1,2, & 10
22	3
23	4 & 7
24	1 & 2

06/20 **Treasury Management and Prudential Code of Capital Finance**

Considered:

The report of the Chief Finance Officer

Pete Williams, Head of Finance reported that there were no substantial changes since the paper was approved via FRASC in February. Two things to note:

- The Authority was not anticipating any borrowing at the present time
- Currently large decreases in Interest rates

Given the current climate, Members and Officers agreed there may come a time when borrowing might become a good option.

Resolved: Members :

- (i) approved the Annual Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 as detailed in **Appendix B**, including the Prudential Indicators set out in Section 3, and the Minimum Revenue Provision policy set out in Section 9 of that Strategy;
- (ii) adopted the Annual Investment Strategy agreed by the County Council for 2020/21;
- (iii) approved the authorised borrowing limit of £427.7k for 2020/21, under section 3(i) of the Local Government Act 2003 as set out in **Appendix B**;
- (iv) confirmed the delegation to the Chief Finance Officer, as agreed in previous years, for the following matters:
 - (a) any need to effect changes between the separate agreed limits for borrowing and other long term liabilities (such as finance leases) in

accordance with option appraisal, value for money or other relevant factors. This applies to the Prudential Indicators in **Appendix B**;

(b) decisions to borrow from the PWLB and money markets at the most advantageous rate, as set out in **Appendix B**.

(v) approved the Capital Strategy as set out in **Appendix C**.

07/20 **Budget Estimate 2020/21**

Considered:

The report of the Chief Executive and Finance Officer

Andy Wilson advised the meeting of the need to revisit the budget on an urgent basis in due course, due to the current climate, but that there was no capacity to change it immediately and no solid basis on which to do so.

Members asked about:

- Officers powers to act in the event of urgent decision making being required
- Officers looking at ways to hold back on spend in line with priorities.
- The Authority's online sales presence

Andy Wilson informed members that Public and Staff safety had been the Authority's first priority, but that Officers were now looking at emergency measures in terms of spend. The Authority needed contingency plans in place by 1st April 2020. Regarding our online sales presence, Andy informed members that the Authority used to do online sales but most of this was stopped as being uneconomic, this is something we may consider expanding.

Resolved: Members approved the budget for 2020/21. Members noted year 2 and 3 of the indicative budget with further work required to bring the figures into balance. Members approved the allocation of the 19/20 planned underspend to cover the DEFRA grant freeze, the uncertainty on pay award, to fund a climate change post and disability access routes in 2020/21, as presented in section 11.

08/20 **Corporate Risk Register**

Considered:

The report of the Head of Corporate Services

Officers and Members agreed that COVID 19 should be added to the Authorities Risk Register as the biggest current risk.

Resolved: Members approved the contents of the report and the **Appendix** and agreed that COVID 19 be added to the Risk Register

09/20 **Periodic Review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation**

Considered:

The report of the Solicitor

Resolved: Members approved the proposals in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the report, for final approval by the Authority AGM on 22 June.

10/20 **Interest Group to Speak to Members – Livia Wright, Young Ranger Assistant Leader and Matthew Parker, Young Ranger**

This item was postponed due to the current COVID 19 restrictions

11/20 **Miles Without Stiles Route Grading System**

Considered:

The report of the Head of Recreation and Ranger Service

Members commented on:

- Considered it an excellent scheme
- Sensible to put a framework in place
- One member asked about the suitability for motorised scooters

Debbie Trafford informed the meeting that it wasn't common practice with accessible routes to specify the type of disability equipment which could be used, it was up to interpretation by the individuals concerned. The timing of the capital works would need rethinking due to current circumstances.

Resolved: Members approved the adoption of the 'Miles Without Stiles' approach to grading Easy Access routes and recording their fitness for purpose by showing a fall in category as a fail.

Members also agreed increasing the number of promoted routes as outlined in point 4.

Members approved the BVPI target of 85% for MWS routes; and approved the commitment to maintain 'Routes for all' at that standard.
Members noted the recommendation in the budget paper on this same agenda to ring-fence in reserves £8.1k from the 2019/20 planned underspend to fund the capital works.

12/20 **Dark Skies Reserve Status for the North York Moors National Park**

Considered:

The report of the Director of Park Services and Head of Polyhalite Projects

Michael Graham updated members, reminding them that the data collected was time critical to the submission of the application for Dark Skies Reserve Status.

Members commented on the following:

- Excellent work, The Authority should make sure RAF Fylingdales are kept on board, a great opportunity for joint working on an important issue

- Given the current situation, can the remaining application work still go ahead
- NYCC Lighting Accord – make sure that it's included in the application for Dark Skies status

Michael Graham informed members that the rest of the application work was desk based, so the application work could still go ahead.

Action: MG to make sure Light Management Plan to NYCC is included in the application

Resolved: Members instructed Officers to submit an application for Dark Skies Reserve Status for the National Park in 2020/21

13/20 **Reflections on the Protected Landscapes Review**

Considered:

The report of the Senior Management Team and Senior Team Leaders

Andy Wilson informed members that, as would be expected, much of the communication coming from Defra at present was in relation to COVID 19, so suggested that the Authority's latest response to the Protected Landscapes Review, should be held back from Defra for a week or two.

Members made the following comments:

- Current response document is very long
- The bulk of the document picks up on the main concerns, but the introduction and summary should be more "punchy" and the summary should be moved to the front of the document.
- Timing of when the response is sent to Defra was considered to be critical
- Need to share the response in a measured way, not promote too widely just yet
- Tone of document excellent, but perhaps a couple of illustrations could be included to the final version
- Members happy to delegate the documents amendment work to officers
- Jo Swiers to action suggested amends, before re-circulating the response to officers/members

Members thanked Jo Swiers for her work in preparing the current response.

Andy Wilson thanked members for their comments/suggestions

Action: Jo Swiers to rework the response

Resolved: Members approved the content of the response detailed at **Annex 1**, and agreed that Officers should amend the response as indicated by the members comments above.

14/20 **Preparing a New National Park Management Plan – Beyond 2020**

Considered:

The report of the Head of Strategic Policy

Officers and Members agreed to defer until resources allowed the Authority/Members to reconvene.

Resolved: Members agreed to defer to a later date

15/20 **Feedback from Lead Members on Forums – Verbal**

Action: Alison Fisher and Malcolm Bowes to e-mail info on recent CLM work and Trust work respectively over the coming days

16/20 **Providing Resilient Customer Service and a Cohesive Organisation – Update**

Considered:

The report of the Head of Corporate Services

Resolved: Members noted the contents of the report.

17/20 **Reports from Members on Outside Bodies**

Considered:

The report of the Committees Officer

David Jeffels informed the meeting that both CNP and W2Y have postponed forthcoming meetings due to the current COVID 19 situation

Resolved: The report was noted.

18/20 **On the Record**

Considered:

The report of the Committees Officer

Resolved: Members noted the report for information

19/20 **Other Business**

Jim Bailey, Chair raised the issue of the Authority's subscription to NPPL. After a brief discussion, members agreed to support for 1 year (£6K net contribution) if the financial situation allowed this.

Copies of any presentations can be found in the relevant e-file

.....(Chair)
27 July 2020

**Public Summary of Items considered "in private"
at the meeting of the Authority
on 23 March 2020**

Private Minutes

Members agreed that the private minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2019, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Draft Devolution Deal Prospectus for York and North Yorkshire

Members were updated on Devolution and more specifically on what was happening within our Region

Strategy for Car Parks

Members offered input to the Authority's proposed strategy for future car park management

Appointment of s151 Officer and Update on Financial Collaboration Agreement

Members approved the arrangements for the provision of the Authority's s151 Officer and noted the Authority's revised arrangements for the Financial Collaboration Agreement for 2020/21.