

North York Moors National Park Authority

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

Present: J Bailey, M Bowes, Ms A Fisher, D C Jeffels, M Knaggs, P Lawson, Mrs J Mitchell, E Sanderson, A Scott, G H Simpson, B Suthers, Mrs H Swiers, R I Thompson, H Tindall

Apologies: Mrs V Arnold, B Briggs, Mrs J Frank, D Hugill, T Lawn, S Scoffin, Mrs C Seymour, P Wheeler.

Officers in Attendance: Andy Wilson (Chief Executive), Irene Brannon (Director of Corporate Services), Lisa Dixon (Monitoring Officer), Peter Barfoot (Director of Conservation), Richard Gunton (Director of Park Services), Michael Graham (Assistant Director of Park Services), Ian Nicholls (Assistant Director of Corporate Services), Andrea McMillan (Planning Policy Officer), Fiona Farnell (Committees Officer), Rob Davisworth (Principal Accountant), Alistair Lince (Audit Senior Manager – Deloitte) and Matt Smith (Manager – Deloitte)

Copies of All Documents Considered Are In The Minute Book

The Chair of the Authority presented Mr Thompson and Mr Bowes with their long service award. The Chair also welcomed Catherine Graham-Harrison to the meeting.

49/12 Minutes

Resolved:

That the public minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2012, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

50/12 Public Question Time

There were no questions from Members of the public.

51/12 Members Interests

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

52/12 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:

That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Item 25 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1, 2 & 3 of Part 1 Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

53/12 Statement of Final Accounts 2011/2012

Considered:

The report of the Principal Accountant

Mrs H Siwers declared a personal interest in this item as a Member of the North Yorkshire County Council Pension Fund Committee.

In answer to a question from a Member the Director of Corporate Services informed Members that the Authority's heritage assets had always been in the accounts, but previously classified as operational, The Old Vicarage remained as an operational asset as its primary use was for office accommodation.

Resolved:

That Members approved the Statement of Final Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2012 and the Chair of the Authority signed the Balance Sheet at page 23 and the Annual Governance Statement on pages 53-57.

54/12 Letter of Representation and External Audit Report

Considered:

The report of the Director of Corporate Services. This item was presented by the Director of Corporate Services, Alistair Lince (Audit Senior Manager – Deloitte) and Matt Smith (Manager – Deloitte)

Resolved:

That Members:

- a. Authorised the Director of Corporate Services to sign the letter of Representation at Appendix A without amendment, on behalf of the Authority.
- b. Noted the Auditor's Report on that 2011/12 Audit included as Appendix B to the report.

55/12 Appointment of S151 Officer and Deputy

Considered:

The report of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer)

Resolved:

Members approved that:

1. with effect from 1 October 2012:
 - a) **Peter Yates** is formally appointed as the **s151 Officer**
 - b) **Debbie Basset** is appointed to act as **Deputy s151 Officer**
2. the Chair of the Authority formally writes to John Moore to express appreciation for the excellent work undertaken by him and North Yorkshire County Council Finance and Central Services on behalf of the Authority.

56/12 Review of the Provision of Grant Aid by the Authority

Considered:

The report of the Director of Conservation and the Director of Corporate Services

The Director of Conservation noted that an amendment was needed to the recommendation to read 'parts 3, 4 & 5 of this report'.

Members made the following comments:

- Agree delivery of grants should be in house.
- Walling within the National Park needs attention
- Very worrying that Asulox had been withdrawn for bracken spraying.
- Need to enhance traditional skills within the Park
- Are community toilets still to be maintained and run?
- Unclear on the role of the Sustainable Development Fund panel or delivery of the fund
- Report does not refer to partnership funding
- Does heather harvesting still take place?
- Pleased to see that the community and parish forums would be consulted on their priorities for community sustainability.

The Director of Conservation answered Members questions as follows:

A simple boundary grant scheme with a fund of £100K is proposed to be set up with a maximum of £2k per holding per annum to assist with boundary walling; the Authority is lobbying the Government with regards to the withdrawal of Asulox; the Authority will assist with a small contribution to the running costs of community toilet blocks in conjunction with parish councils; officers need to look at the Sustainable Development Fund with possible streamlining of the process and reviewing the make-up of the panel; heather harvesting is unlikely to take place due to exporting no longer taking place; partnership funding will take place but is not covered by this report.

Recommendation:

1. That Members approve the proposals and budgets set out in parts 2, 3 and 4 of this report.
2. That Members approve the criteria set out in Appendices 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Resolved:

1. That the Authority should continue to deliver grants in-house.
2. That Members approved the proposals and budgets set out in parts 3, 4 and 5 of the report.
3. That Members approved the criteria set out in Appendices 1, 2, 3, and 4.
4. That Officers review the longer term role of the Sustainable Development Fund Panel and report back to Members
5. Members approved that Officers would return to Members with figures for the desired level of co-funding for the Authority's grants overall and for some individual ones.

57/12 Review of the Conservation Department

Considered:

The report of the Director of Conservation

Resolved:

That Members:

- i. Approved the proposals contained within Part 3 of the report.
- ii. Instructed the Chief Executive and Director of Conservation to fill vacant posts and make any further changes to the structure that they feel appropriate.

58/12 **Business Plan 2012-2015 and Medium Term Financial Strategy**

Considered:

The report of the Director of Corporate Services. A powerpoint presentation was shown, a copy of which appears in the minute book.

The Director of Corporate Services answered Members questions as follows:

- Over the next two years £187k would be top sliced from all budgets, with a higher percentage in the second year.
- Awaiting the judgement from HMRC with regards to the VAT on car parks, but could potentially be worth £70k a year.

The Director of Park Services confirmed that they would make contact with Northumbrian Water to ascertain that the public toilets and car park in its ownership at Scaling Dam would be remaining open and feedback to the Member.

Recommendation:

That Members approved the Business Plan, subject to any amendments as may be agreed.

Resolved:

That Members approved the Business Plan.

59/12 **Essential key points of new Members Code of Conduct (verbal presentation)**

A powerpoint presentation was given by the Monitoring Officer, a copy of which appears in the minute book.

60/12 **Interpretation Action Plan Review**

Considered:

The report of the Assistant Director Park Services. A powerpoint presentation was shown, a copy of which appears in the minute book.

A Member noted that they felt that it would not be difficult to recruit an additional 50 volunteers. A further Member noted that the report was short on numerical targets/numerical aspirations which they felt could easily be measured. Another Member asked Officers if they could provide a more prominent presence in Guisborough to help promote the Park more to its residents.

The Chair thanks Mrs Mitchell and Mr Scoffin for sitting on the review panel.

Resolved:

That Members approved the summarised proposed actions listed in section 13.

61/12 Leadership Development Programme including Members (verbal presentation)

The Assistant Director of Corporate Services gave a powerpoint presentation, a copy of which appears in the minute book.

Members asked if perhaps a half day training event could be facilitated for Members to attend if desired. The Officer agreed that options for small scale participation by Members would be circulated.

62/12 Authority Forums

Considered:

The report of the Committees Officer.

Some Members were concerned about losing one Parish Forum meeting a year. However the Officer explained that the forum members would be invited to the Community Forum and the Joint Parish forum meeting would remain unchanged. Members were happy for District/Borough and County Councillors to be invited to attend the Parish Forum meetings. The Chair noted that the Members of the two new Authority Forums – Awareness, Recreation and Business Forum and Conservation and Land Management Forum needed to meet prior to the forum to elect a Chair/Lead Member.

Recommendation:

That Members:

1. Views on proposals for the parish forums and the new community forum are sought.
2. Comments specifically on whether District/Borough Councillors and County Councillors should be invited to attend the Parish Forums.
3. Views on the two new Authority forums be sought.

Resolved:

That Members:

1. It was agreed that a Community Forum be held as a trial replacing for one year the normal Parish Forum meeting.
2. Members agreed that District/Borough and County Councillors should be invited to attend Parish Forum meetings.

63/12 York Potash – Pre-application presentation to Members

Considered:

The report of the Director of Planning

Members were reminded to seek advice from Anthony Winship at Ryedale District Council if required.

Members requested that given the size and complexity of the potential application, opportunities for Members to be briefed on the proposal before the decision day would be helpful. Members made clear their determination to retain open minds.

Resolved:

1. That Members approved the contents of the report.
2. That the Chair and Deputy Chair of the full Authority agreed to York Potash Ltd giving a pre-application presentation to Members on their development proposals.
3. That the Chair agreed to a site visit being included as part of the pre-application presentation and that audio and visual recording should not be permitted.
4. That the Authority attends a further set of public meetings arranged by relevant Parish Councils or itself following the pre-application presentation on 28 September 2012.

64/12 Presentation by Community Champions and report back by Authority

The Head of the Volunteer Service introduced Pari Holdway and Mustafa Othman to Members and informed Members of the outcomes from the last presentation given by Community Champions including the recruitment of a BME link officer Marieann Farahani.

Pari and Mustafa presented to Members ideas and ways of reaching BME communities:

- Target colleges
- Use modern technology more such as Facebook and Twitter
- Assist with transportation into the park
- Have a National Park open day, providing transport and showcase the Park to the BME community.

The Chair thanked Pari and Mustafa for attending and highlighting issues.

65/12 Catherine Graham-Harrison OBE - Natural England Board Member

Catherine Graham-Harrison thanked Members for the opportunity to see the Authority at work and informed Members that she had visited the park over the previous week and had been overwhelmed by its cultural heritage and beauty. Catherine's responsibility at Natural England is protected landscapes and confirmed that Natural England had also received funding cuts, restructuring and was about to undergo a triennial review with the Environment Agency.

66/12 On The Record

Considered:

The report of the Committees Officer

The Officer informed Members that a date had been missed from the list of dates at Appendix 5, which was the date of the Local Access Forum on the 11 June 2013.

Recommendation:

That Members agree membership of the Chief Executives Review Panel and appoint a Member to the vacancy.

Resolved:

That Members agreed that the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee be appointed to the vacancy on the Chief Executives Review Panel.

67/12 Reporting back from Chairs and Lead Members

No reports were given.

68/12 Reports from Members on Outside Bodies

Considered:

The report of the Committees Officer

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

69/12 National Park Management Plan Launch

Considered:

The report of the Policy Manager.

Resolved:

That Members noted the contents of the report.

70/12 Association of National Park Authorities (ANPA) Conference 2013

Considered:

The report of the Director of Corporate Services

Recommendation

1. That Members note the contents of this report in relation to the venue and theme.
2. That Members approve the proposal that the steering group be revived with either the same constitution or with alternative nominees if the original three nominees no longer wish to act.

Resolved:

1. That Members noted the contents of the report in relation to the venue and theme.
2. That Members approved the proposal that the steering group be revived with the same constitution; Chair, Deputy Chair, David Jeffels, Jane Mitchell and Janet Frank.

71/12 Parish Forum Update

Considered:

The report of the PA to the Chief Executive

Resolved:

That the issues raised at the Joint Parish Forums be noted.

**Public Summary of Items considered "in private"
at the meeting of the National Park Authority
on 24 September 2012**

Directors' Salaries

Recommendation:

That Members approved the change to the Directors' pay scale outlined in paragraph 3.5 in respect of the post of Director of Park Services.

Resolved

That Members approved the change to the Directors' pay scale outlined in paragraph 4.2 in respect of the post of Director of Park Services.