

# DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Friday 11 January 2019

**Present:** W Cann; A Cooper; G Gribble P Harper; S, Hill;  
P W Hitchins; M Jeffery; J McInnes; D Moyse; N Oakley;  
C Pannell; M Retallick; P Sanders; M Simpson; P Woods

**Apologies:** K Ball; S Barker; J Christophers; D Webber

## **3412 Minutes of the Authority Meeting held on 7 December 2018**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2018 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

## **3413 Declarations of Interest**

Messrs Sanders; McInnes; Hitchins; Cann; Gribble & Miss Moyse declared a personal interest in Item 8, Procurement Procedures.

## **3414 Chairman's Report**

On behalf of those Members who had attended, the Chairman thanked the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) and staff, for the Christmas party. He thought it a very good event and a worthwhile exercise.

He had attended the 'drop in' consultation event at Postbridge on 10 January and Members would be receiving more details from the Head of Communications and Fundraising and the Director of Conservation & Communities.

## **3415 Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

None.

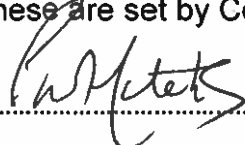
## **3416 Fees and Charges 2019/20**

Members received the report of the Head of Business Support (NPA/19/001)

The Authority is responsible for a number of services for which charges are permitted to be made to offset costs involved. Central Government requires that, wherever possible, all Local Authorities raise revenue to cover costs. This means that during the budget setting process for the forthcoming financial year, fees and charges are reviewed, and approved. Although they may not be considered a major source of income, they do contribute towards the costs of delivering some services, and may be the difference between that service being provided, or withdrawn.

The current year's fees and charges were approved by the Authority in January 2018. Information on the budgeted level of income expected from fees and charges for 2018/19, ie the level achieved for the first eight months; were shown at Appendix 1 of report (NPA/19/001) however, this did not include Planning Application Fees, as these are set by Central Government.

Signed .....



Date 11-3-19 .....

The Authority's fees and charges (excluding planning fees) are not a major income source for the Authority and the forecasted income for the end of the current financial year is likely to be circa £96,000; which is approximately £17,000 more than 2017/18. The introduction of car parking charges at Postbridge, Haytor and Meldon has provided an increase in revenue, which helped to offset the loss of income experienced from the temporary suspension of the Pre-Application Planning advice service.

The schedule of fees and charges will be incorporated into the 2019/20 Revenue Budget, which will be presented for approval in March.

Members were pleased to hear from the Chief Executive (NPO) that the suspension of pre-application planning advice would soon be lifted.

A Member queried whether the Authority had received any feedback, or backlash, regarding car parking charges. The Chief Executive (NPO) advised that there had been both negative and positive comments on the introduction of the car park charges. This was most obvious on social media where comments complaining about the introduction of the charges were often balanced by other comments asking how else car parks, toilets etc would be funded most people, and user groups, were supportive.

In discussion, there were also questions about the social impact of various charges; how this was assessed and the appropriateness of other charges.

**RESOLVED:** Members APPROVED the recommendations made in section 3 of report (NPA/19/001); and the 2019/20 schedule of fees and charges, as set out in Appendix 2 of that report

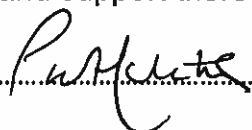
### **3417 Procurement Procedures**

Members received the report of the Head of Business Support (NPA/19/002)

The Head of Business Support reminded Members that Procurement Procedures are part of the Authority's core governance documents. Revisions were approved in April 2015 and further minor amendments sanctioned in April 2017. On 1 September 2018, the Authority entered into a new Service Level Agreement with Devon County Council's Procurement Service (DPS). They appreciate the often "unique nature" of the Authority's work and have demonstrated a pragmatic and proportionate approach in working to modernise, and update, our procurement systems and processes. The work undertaken thus far ensures we can have confidence in our ability to run robust, compliant, open and transparent procurements with documentation, that is relevant, proportionate, and easy to use.

Financial thresholds for quotations and tenders have been revised, as these had not been reviewed since 2012. Having consulted with DPS, and undertaking a comparison with other local authorities, the revised thresholds are now considered appropriate. The Authority will become a member of the 'Supplying the South West Procurement Portal'; thus providing us with a fully compliant e-procurement system, ensuring our suppliers are registered in advance of procurements. DPS has committed to undertake the setting-up of the system free of charge, and to provide training and support thereafter.

Signed .....



Date ..... 1.3.19 .....

Updating our Procurement Procedure documents is a first step in revising the way we work and in ensuring full compliance (with legislation). The new documents, templates, and tools will be efficient, effective, and proportionate, and will give staff confidence and assurance when undertaking procurements at all levels.

A Member asked how rigid the regulations were as, with Brexit looming, EU thresholds may not exist in 12 months-time; and was informed that any changes in legislation are, and always would be, brought back to Members.

Mr Sanders abstained from voting

**RESOLVED:** Members NOTED and APPROVED the Authority's revised Procurement Procedures and Minimum Standards, to take effect from the end of the meeting.

**3418 Update on the Review of 'Your Dartmoor' - The National Park Management Plan**

Members received the report of the Project Development Manager and the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) (NPA/019/003)

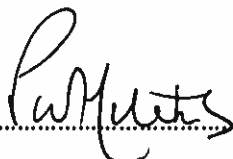
Under section 66(1) of the Environment Act 1995, each National Park Authority is required to prepare, and publish, a National Park Management Plan for its Park and review it every five years. Although the Plan is the prime responsibility of the individual Authority, its preparation needs to engage with, and gain the support of, all key stakeholders. Dartmoor's current Management Plan "Your Dartmoor" was approved by Members in November 2013 and in May 2018 they agreed the commencement of a review process to begin development of the next Management Plan. During initial stages the priority was to look at the 'Vision for Dartmoor' to ensure there was a clear vision of how we want Dartmoor to look, and the public benefits we want to sustain, and enhance, the National Park over the next 30 years.

An important element of the review process is to develop a shared sense of ownership of the Plan, and the future Vision for Dartmoor which, it is hoped, will lead to shared responsibility for its delivery. Over the last six months, a series of five Dartmoor Debates and two workshops have been held engaging a wide range of key partners and organisations: Around 185 people from 80 different organisations, groups and businesses attended the seminars

The Debates and workshops were informed by topic papers, setting out background evidence and policy drivers relating to their themes, highlighting key issues and challenges facing Dartmoor. Following the Debates the papers have been updated and will form part of the evidence base for the Management Plan, and will be available for comment as part of the future consultation on a draft vision/plan.

A public opinion survey was also undertaken to gather views from local communities; users of the National Park; and others with an interest in its future. A total of 654 responses were received, the majority of which were from Dartmoor and the surrounding area. The survey results will be made available in the spring.

Signed .....



Date ..... 1 - 3 - 19 .....

In spring 2019, and based on the outcomes of the Debates, a draft Vision will be developed and discussed with the Management Plan Steering Group (including debate participants); the Delivery Board; and DNPA Members.

Work to review the Management Plan itself will take place during the rest of 2019, including public consultation. An updated Management Plan will be completed in 2020.

Following discussion it was agreed that the future vision would be discussed at the next meeting of the Park Management Working Panel.

**RESOLVED:** Members NOTED progress with the Management Plan review, including the Dartmoor Debates and public opinion survey; and the next steps and timetable for the Management Plan review.

**3419 Tree Preservation Orders and Section 211 Notifications (Works to Trees in Conservation Areas) Determined Under Delegated Powers**

Members received the report of the Trees and Landscape Officer (NPA/19/004)

**RESOLVED:** Members noted the content of the report.

Signed .....  .....

Date ..... 1-3-19 .....