

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE

Friday 21 November 2014

Present: P Harper, J Nutley (Chairman), P Sanders
Officers: C Walledge (Head of Legal and Democratic Services)
In attendance: R Woodall (Independent Person)

138 Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Vogel and Mr Blackshaw (Independent Person).

139 Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 16 May 2014

The Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 16 May 2014 were signed as a correct record.

140 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

141 Public Participation

None.

142 Member Code of Conduct – Notes of Guidance on Dispensations

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised Members that, under Section 33 of the Localism Act, a Member with a relevant interest may apply for a dispensation to be granted to enable them to speak. Under the Authority's Scheme of Delegation, the decision whether or not to grant a dispensation has been delegated to the Monitoring Officer.

It is believed that it would be good practice for the Sub-committee to consider and endorse a set of guidelines outlining the criteria to be used when determining whether to grant dispensation requests. These criteria are as follows:

1. Whether public confidence in the Authority's business would be compromised;
2. Whether the interest is common to a significant proportion of the general public;
3. Whether a Member has a particular role or expertise;

Signed 

Date 15-05-2015

4. Whether the request is for a dispensation to:
- a. Remain in the meeting room
 - b. Speak at the meeting
 - c. Participate fully in the debate and vote

RESOLVED: Members AGREED the Notes of Guidance on Dispensations, to be appended to the Member Code of Conduct.

143 Reporting and Filming by the Press and Public

Members received the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (NPA/SC/14/001).

Under new regulations, the Authority is now required to allow the press and public to report open meeting proceedings by way of filming, photographing, audio-recording or other means. The Authority must decide what will be allowed e.g filming from a single fixed position, no flash etc, and for this reason the proposed protocol has been drafted.

It is acknowledged that technology has moved on; some Members now use laptops, tablets etc to assist them during meetings. Members discussed the revised advice regarding the use of electronic devices in meetings.

- RESOLVED:** Members:
- (i) Agreed the publication of the draft Protocol for Filming and Reporting for consultation, and
 - (ii) Adopted the advice on use of public phones and electronic devices in meetings.

144 Observation Reports

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services circulated the observation reports from recent committee meetings to Members. He advised that no patterns or trends were identifiable from the reports. The only issue repeatedly reported related to the microphone system – which has been rectified with a new system now in place.

145 Arrangements for Independent Persons from July 2015

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services requested delegated authority to seek new Independent Persons to serve from July 2015 as, for legal reasons, Mr Blackshaw and Mr Woodall are not permitted to continue past that date.

RESOLVED: That delegated authority be given to the Chair of the Standards Sub-Committee, the Chair of Authority and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to seek new Independent Persons.

Signed 

Date 15-05-2015