

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Friday 2 October 2020

Present: S Barker, A Cooper, W Dracup, G Gribble, P Harper, G Hill, J McInnes, S Morgan, D Moyse, J Nutley, N Oakley, M Renders, P Sanders, P Smerdon, P Vogel, P Woods

Apologies: K Ball, C Pannell, D Webber

3266 Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2020 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

3267 Declarations of Interest

None.

3268 Chair's Report

The Chair reported that she and the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) had a video meeting with Mel Stride MP. Mr Stride was briefed on our funding position and our response to the Landscapes Review. He agreed to raise our concerns with the Secretary of State and Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

The Chair attended a meeting of Defra Arms Length Body Chairs focused on the future of farming.

Mr Harper was elected to be deputy Chair of National Parks Partnership.

At the National Parks England Board meeting (held via video conference), Directors of the Company (i.e. Chairs of the English National park Authorities) discussed the forthcoming Spending review and work on the implementation of the Glover Review. Directors also received updates from the task and finish groups on climate change and wellbeing.

Mr Harper gave the Members an update from the National Park Partnership. The Partnership is reviewing its business plan and in the process of recruiting new directors. Mr Harper reported that there were two potential new partnerships being worked on that might provide additional funding for National Parks in due course.

The Chair reported that The Western Morning News ran a front page item "Time to invest in the great outdoors", highlighting the increase in demand and the decrease in resources. National Parks England sent a letter to the national papers regarding the same issues – nothing has been published.

3269 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

Item 1 – NPA/20/025 – Changing Lives, Nurturing Nature

The Director of Conservation and Communities reported that the wording for the Equality and Sustainability Impact should read as follows:

Equality and Sustainability Impact

“This project aims to reconnect people from all backgrounds with nature, which takes into consideration in the exercise of the Authority’s functions, the public sector duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and promotes sustainable use of the National Park”

Officers have been working with the National Trust, Woodland Trust and SW Lakes Trust to develop a bid to the Green Recovery Challenge Fund. The Fund is a short-term competitive fund to kick-start environmental renewal whilst creating and retaining a range of jobs. It is open to environmental charities and their partners to deliver projects in England.

The NPA has offered to lead the bid given that the focus is on Dartmoor and partners are likely to be submitting other bids at a national or regional level. DNPA is in the best position to appoint the new staff.

Our bid is called **Changing Lives, Nurturing Nature**. There is a focus on **new jobs** which **support nature conservation and restoration** and **connect more people** with nature – two of the GRCF themes. We have a particular emphasis on helping **young people** into employment, this is very relevant as we know that this group are disproportionately impacted by the COVID19. Our Project builds on innovation, good practice and partnerships developed through Moor than meets the eye and on increased partnership working developed through the NPMP review process and through visitor management this summer. We see this project developing working practices that enable future collaboration, resilience and effectiveness in this area.

If successful with the Expression of Interest, a full application to the fund will need to be submitted by 26 October 2020 and the project delivered by 31 March 2022. The total value of the proposal, submitted to the NHLF as an EoI, is £552,200 and the Authority has committed £25,000 of match funding.

Members recognized the amount of work required and achievement of staff so far, especially in the current climate.

Mr Gribble proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Miss Moyse.

RESOLVED: Member NOTED the submission of an Expression of Interest (EoI) to the Green Recovery Challenge Fund (GRCF) and supported the development and submission of a full application to the National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF) if invited to apply.

Mr Renders left the meeting.

3270 Consultation response: Planning for the Future UK Government White Paper, August 2020

The Head of Forward Planning and Economy informed Members that his report introduces the Government’s White Paper on Planning reform published in August. The Members are being asked to endorse some of the key principles proposed for the formal response.

The purpose of a White Paper is to set out the Government's proposals for future legislation. As such there is an absence of detail in a lot of areas, and questions we may not be able to answer at this point in time. It is, though, important we identify the areas where we would wish to engage with Government as legislation, guidance and regulations are developed.

The aim of the White Paper is to modernise the planning process. The paper identifies three 'Pillars' of reform:

- Pillar one: Planning for development
- Pillar two: Planning for beautiful and sustainable places.
- Pillar three: Planning for infrastructure and connected places.

The Head of Forward Planning and Economy guided Members to think about:

- What the reforms are seeking to do
- Whether, with the information provided we consider they will achieve those aims
- The implications for the National Park and its communities
- The organisational implications in respect of resources and decision making
- The areas we would wish to engage with and influence as legislation and accompanying policy is developed.

He stated that it is important to remember the reason for having a planning system, and the role this plays in delivering sustainable development, supporting our communities and protected the environment in a transparent, unbiased and equitable way.

There are key messages the Authority may wish to emphasise, including; our successful local approach for delivering affordable housing, a strong and consistent message on climate change and nature recovery, and links with other regulatory areas, and the supporting the outcomes of the Glover review. It is also critical that the public have the opportunity to be engaged and be part of the planning decision making process and have a genuine opportunity to influence outcomes.

Mr Renders rejoined the meeting.

The White Paper proposes a zonal planning approach:

- Growth Areas
- Renewal Areas
- Protected Areas – the paper has highlighted Green belts and AoNB but not National Parks.

Members discussed the content of the report and the White Paper. Members agreed they were disappointed in the lack of detail regarding National Parks. Members expressed their concerns regarding the emphasis on home ownership, it was stated that the need for rental properties should be highlighted, and in particular, social affordable rented needs. Members expressed concern that it seemed to be a step back in respect of public engagement with planning decision, and highlighted a 'democratic deficit' in the proposals. Members expressed concerns regarding increased age profile pushing up the cost of housing and driving

many people out of the rural market and that the approach of building more, is not an appropriate solution to affordability in a National Park. It was raised that land values are still a key factor which are not addressed through this proposed reform. There was a query around the availability of 'data' and our ability to understand demographics, changing market trends, and to engage with our adjoining authorities. Members agreed that the consideration of the final draft response should include consultation with the Chair of the Development Management Committee.

Members expressed their thanks to the Forward Planning team for their hard work in putting together the report and response.

The Head of Forward Planning and Economy concluded that the response would include the 12 points detailed in the report, leading with the key threads discussed by Members, namely concern around the 'democratic deficit, a greater emphasis on climate change, and a need for robust rural proofing.

RESOLVED: Members endorsed the key elements of the consultation response and delegate authority to approve the final response to the Chief Executive (NPO) in consultation with the Chair and Chair of the Development Management Committee."

3272 Tree Preservation Orders, Section 211 Notifications (Works to Trees in Conservation Areas) and Hedgerow Removal Notices Determined Under Delegated Powers

Members received the report of the Trees and Landscape Officer (NPA/20/021).

RESOLVED: Members NOTED the content of the report.