

Dartmoor National Park Authority

Public Minutes of meeting held on 28 June 2024

Present: Jerry Brook, Andrew Cooper, Will Dracup, Peter Harper, Gay Hill, James McInnes, Sally Morgan, Caroline Mott, John Nutley, Guy Pannell, Mark Renders, Philip Sanders, Catherine Shewan (Independent Person), Peter Smerdon, Dan Thomas, Mark Williams, Pamela Woods (Chair)

Apologies: Mike Jeffery, Mark Owen, Lois Samuel

Officers in attendance: Kevin Bishop (Chief Executive (National Park Officer)), Richard Drysdale (Director of Conservation and Communities), Dean Kinsella (Director of Spatial Planning), Angela Stirland (Head of Business Support), Neil White (Head of Organisational Development), Penny Bailey (Business Support – Minutes)

3587 Declarations of Interest

None.

3588 Minutes

The public minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2024, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3589 Chair's Report

The Chair reported the following:

- She had joined, via Teams, the meeting of National Parks England (NPE) General Meeting. She reported that Vanessa Rowlands (Chair, South Downs National Park Authority) had been appointed Chair of NPE and Tiffany Hunt (Chair, Lake District National Park Authority) was elected as Deputy Chair of NPE.
- The Deputy Chair reported that Ten Tors had taken place; it was a great success.
- A Member reported that the recent visit to Exmoor National Park, meeting with Members of that Authority and looking at their business model had proved to be a good bonding day.
- The Chair and Chief Executive (National Park Officer) were in the process of arranging a meeting with Exmoor's Chair and Chief Executive (National Park Officer) to discuss future exchange visits and mutual co-operation.

On behalf of Members and Officers she thanked George Gribble and Andrew Cooper for their work as Members of the Authority, she noted that Mr Gribble had been 'replaced' by Mr Brook and that Mr Cooper was due to be 'replaced' on 1 July 2024 by Mrs Mary Seddon who was observing the meeting from the public gallery.

3590 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

None.

3591 Public Participation

None.

3592 Members Code of Conduct

Considered:

The report of the Head of Organisational Development (NPA/24/024).

In response to Member comments / queries, the Head of Organisation Development responded as follows:

- If adopted, all Members would be subject to the new Code of Conduct. This would apply to new Members from their commencement date.
- The Member Code of Conduct would be included as part of the new Member induction process.
- Members are not required to sign a declaration to confirm they have received and read the Code of Conduct.

Resolved: Members:

- (i) approved and adopted the Member Code of Conduct with effect from 28 June 2024; and
- (ii) noted the proposal regarding reporting of Member attendance.

3593 Revisions to Standing Orders and Appendices

Considered:

The report of the Head of Organisational Development (NPA/24/025). He advised that the revisions made mainly relate to the new Member Code of Conduct as approved above. The revised Standing Orders and Appendices, if approved, would also take effect from 28 June 2024.

Members noted that the proposed amendments to the documents had been highlighted and thanked the Officer for making the changes clear.

Resolved: Members approved the proposed revisions to the Authority's Standing Orders and Appendices to take effect at the conclusion of the meeting.

3594 Proposed Amendments to the Scheme of Delegation

Considered:

The report of the Head of Organisational Development (NPA/24/026).

Members commented:

A Member questioned bullet point 4 of paragraph 3.4 relating to limits on the delegation to the Development Management Committee.

The Chief Executive (National Park Officer) advised that paragraph 3.4 needed to be read in its entirety.

Resolved: Members approved the amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to take effect at the conclusion of this meeting.

Members agreed that a huge debt of gratitude was owed to the Head of Organisational Development for the work undertaken.

3595 Amendments to Fees and Charges 2024/25

Considered:

The report of the Head of Business Support (NPA/24/027).

Members commented:

- that the proposed fee (£100) is too low when compared to neighbouring local planning authorities for the provision of householder pre-application advice;
- that consideration be given to a two tier fee to cover the costs relating to a desktop exercise and where a site visit is required;
- that pre-application advice must be clear and a record of the advice provided made available to Members, should a planning application be presented to the Development Management Committee;
- that it is important to strike a balance between the reasonable recovery of costs and encouraging people to engage with the pre-application service;
- that this matter could be discussed further at the next Planning and Sustainable Development Working Panel in July;
- a Member asked what the cost of administering the fee is and that this needs to be taken into account.

In response, the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) proposed that the report be withdrawn to provide time for further consideration, with a revised proposal to be presented to the Authority on 26 July 2024.

The Chief Executive (National Park Officer) informed Members that if the report is withdrawn, the Authority would not provide householder pre-application advice until a decision on the fee to be charged is determined.

Resolved: Members agreed that report NPA/24/027 be withdrawn and noted that a revised proposal would be presented on 26 July 2024.

3596 Appointment to the Dartmoor Commoners' Council

Considered:

The report of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer (NPA/24/028).

Resolved: Members confirmed the appointment of Mrs Penny Warren as one of the two landowner representatives as required by the Dartmoor Commons Act 1985 section 3(2d) for a period of four years commencing 1 July 2024.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed by Members to move to Part II – items to be taken in the absence of the press and public on the grounds that exempt information may be disclosed.

Public Summary of Items considered "in private" at the meeting of the Dartmoor National Park Authority on 28 June 2024

3597 Establishment of Dartmoor Foundation

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) (NPA/24/029).

Resolved: Members noted the progress to date of the establishment of the Dartmoor Foundation and agreed the recommendations stated within the report.