

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Friday 4 March 2015

Present: K Ball, S Barker, G Gribble, P Harper, S Hill,
P Hitchins, M Jeffery, J Kidner, D Lloyd, J McInnes,
I Mortimer, D Moyse, C Pannell, M Retallick, P Sanders,
D Webber.

Apologies: N Oakley, J Christophers, J Hockridge

3149 Minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2016

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

3150 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3151 Chairman's Report

National Parks Partnership - The Chairman reported that there will be a soft launch of the Partnership in London on 16 March 2016. It is hoped that there will coverage of the event by Radio 4's Today programme, as well as TV.

The Chairman invited the Deputy Chairman to provide Members with an update regarding the Hill Farm Project. He reported that, at the Farmers Forum meeting held at the end of last year, discussion took place to determine a way forward for the Project as the funding from the Prince's Countryside Fund was coming to an end. Further steering group meetings have since taken place and there is agreement that the project should introduce a Membership Fee.

The Chairman invited the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) to report on the Environment Strategy. He reminded Members that the Government is committed to developing a 25 year Environment Strategy. A high level framework is expected in the Spring, with the full document being published by the end of the calendar year.

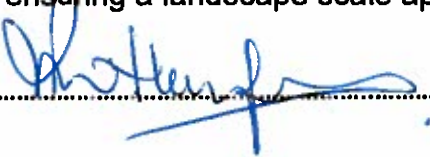
Members were advised that National Parks UK has cancelled the 2016 Annual Member Workshop. Exmoor has offered to host an event, later this year, to include Dartmoor, the New Forest and South Downs National Parks.

3152 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

The Chairman invited The Director of Conservation and Communities to address the Members regarding facilitation funding.

The Director of Conservation and Communities advised Members that there is an action within the Draft Business Plan to sustain the Hill Farm Project (Key Action No. 6) and also an action to promote sustainable land management through ensuring a landscape scale approach to delivery of agri-environment schemes (Key

Signed



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Action No. 7). Natural England has opened its Facilitation grant for the second year and this provides an opportunity to deliver both of these actions.

Discussions have taken place between the Authority, the Duchy of Cornwall, Natural England and Commoners with a view to submitting an application to the fund. There is a tight deadline; bids have to be submitted by 18 March 2016. No financial contribution would be required from the Authority. Currently 17 farmers have signed up but it is expected that more will join. The grant application requires that the Authority formally agrees to apply for the fund.

The Fund provides £12,000 a year if four farmers are signed up and an additional £500 for each farmer signed up to the scheme. There is no need for match funding and the grant would be available for five years.

If successful with the grant the Hill Farm Project (HFP) would aim to maximise the number of farms that benefit from Mid-Tier and Higher Tier CS grants. The successful outcomes based approach, as delivered by farming Futures to groups of farms, would also be adopted; it is hoped that this will also help influence the next round of CAP and possibly support other funding bids.

Mr Lloyd proposed that the Authority should submit the application to Natural England, which was seconded by Mr Hitchins.

RESOLVED: Members AGREED that the Authority should submit the application to Natural England.

3153 Public Participation

None.

3154 Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2016/17

Members received the report of the Head of Business Support (NPA/16/008).

The Authority is required to consider a Treasury Strategy report, which sets out the strategy and plans to be followed in the new financial year, as part of the budget process.

The 2016/17 Investment Strategy includes two amendments regarding changes to the Counterparty list which were agreed by the Authority in December 2015. No amendments or changes have been required by CIPFA. The Head of Business Support confirmed continued consultation with the S151 Officer and Investment Manager at Devon County Council.

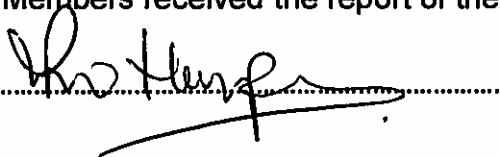
Mr Retallick proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mr Sanders.

RESOLVED: Members approved and adopted the 2016/17 Treasury Management and Investment Strategy.

3155 2016/17 Net Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Budget

Members received the report of the Head of Business Support (NPA/16/009).

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Over the term of the last parliament the Authority's income reduced by 40%; staffing levels fell by 25%. In January 2016 Defra confirmed the level of National Park Grant (NPG) for the financial years 2016/17 to 2019/20. This means that the Authority can now plan ahead and undertake a review and reallocation of reserve balances.

A three year Medium Term Financial Plan will now be prepared and presented to Authority in the early part of the financial year. Members encouraged officers to use this opportunity to investigate and diversify the Authority's income base, but noted that competition to access external funding will be a challenge especially as other local authorities are facing further cuts.

The Head of Business Support confirmed the contributions for the 2016/17 Communities Fund Grant Scheme as follows:

Teignbridge District Council:	£25,000
South Hams District Council:	£24,606
West Devon Borough Council:	£24,136

RESOLVED: Members:

- (i) Approved the Net Revenue Budget of £3,671,177 for the 2016/17 financial year;
- (ii) Noted the need to commence work on producing a detailed Medium Term Financial plan for the following three years;
- (iii) Agreed an increase in the General Reserve (unallocated/contingency) to £450,000 and the creation of a new "Invest and Save and/or Generate" Earmarked Reserve from within current reserve balances held.

3156 2016/17 Draft Business Plan

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) (NPA/16/010).

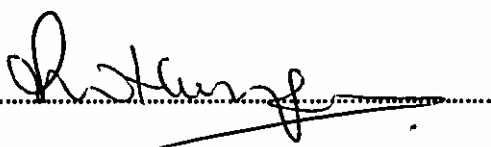
The Business Plan sets the strategic direction of the Authority for the next 12 months, based on the priorities which were set by Members in October 2015. The Plan identifies key actions to help deliver those priorities; the actions reflect the desire of Members for the Authority's work programmes to have a clear focus on *engagement, communication, evidence and funding*, as well as investigating additional income streams.

The Business Plan has a strong link with the National Park Management Plan and therefore carries the same headline themes of *Sustain, Enjoy and Prosper*.

RESOLVED: Members:

- (i) Reviewed the draft Business Plan for 2016/17;
- (ii) Delegated authority to the Chief Executive (National Park Officer), in consultation with the Chairman, to agree the final version.

Signed



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11/4/16

3157 Your Dartmoor – National Park Management Plan 2014-2019 – 2015 Progress Report

Members received the report of the Outreach Officer and Chief Executive (National Park Officer (NPA/16/011)).

The National Park Management Plan (NPMP) is a statutory document; it is the strategic plan for the National Park as a whole, not just for the Authority. In November 2013 the NPMP was reviewed and a revised version was approved by Members. The Steering Group met in December 2015 when the Plan was reviewed and revised.

Of the 149 actions, 20 have been completed and 102 are in progress and on time.

The Chief Executive (National Park Officer) expressed thanks to the Outreach Officer for her hard work.

RESOLVED: Members noted the progress with delivering the National Park Management Plan 2014-2019.

3158 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/16/012).

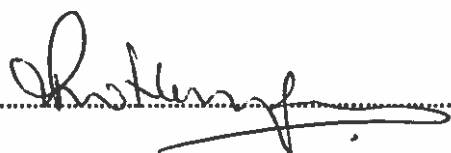
RESOLVED: Members noted the content of the report.

3159 Draft Audit and Governance Committee meeting minutes from the meeting held on 5 February 2016

Members received the Draft Audit and Governance Committee Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 5 February 2016.

RESOLVED: Members noted the content of the Minutes.

Signed



Date

11/4/16