

**DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

**Friday 4 December 2015**

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

**Apologies:** None

**3126 Minutes of the Authority Meetings**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

**3127 Declarations of Interest**

Mr Lloyd and Mr Retallick both declared a personal interest in Item 8, All the Moor Butterflies.

**3128 Chairman's Report**

The Chairman advised Members that the 2015 UK National Parks Conference was the cheapest for at least the last ten years and the Authority would be able to offer all National Park Authorities a 41% reduction on the agreed cost.

Mr Retallick informed Members that the Farmers Forum, held in Princetown, was well attended. The Forum included speakers from Cumbrian Farmers, a presentation from the Senior Forward Planner regarding the Local Plan and a presentation about the rollout of superfast broadband across the National Park. Mr Retallick offered his thanks to the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project staff for the organisation of the event.

The Chairman advised Members that National Parks Partnerships are in discussions with two leading brands regarding potential sponsorship.

**3129 Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

None

**3130 Public Participation**

None

**3131 Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2015/16**

The Head of Business Support presented a report about reviewing the Authority's current treasury management and investment strategy arrangements, in light of changes in the operation of financial markets and the new regulatory environment imposed by Government. Barclays Bank Plc, the Authority's banker and main

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Date 11/1/16 .....

counterparty had suffered a ratings down grade by one of the three credit rating agencies, which meant that the short-term credit rating no longer satisfied the Authority's lending criteria.

After discussion with the S151 Officer and considering other external advice and the rating issued by the other 2 credit reference agencies, it was proposed that an amendment should be made to the Treasury Management Strategy to allow Barclays to remain on the counterparty list.

A Member suggested that the investment strategy should be discussed at a future Audit and Governance Committee.

Mr Hitchins proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Mr Barker.

**RESOLVED:**

Members authorised the recommendation of the report that:

- i) The Treasury Management Strategy be amended as outlined in Paragraph 2.5 in the report
- ii) Barclays Bank remains on the approved counterparty list.

**3132 All the Moor Butterflies**

The Senior Ecologist informed Members that the All the Moor Butterflies project is a potential extension of the Two Moors Threatened Butterfly Project, which began in 2005 and has received an annual contribution of £5000 from the Authority. The Two Moors Threatened Butterfly project has increased and stabilised the levels of the high brown and pearl boarder marsh fritillary. The project has been used by Butterfly Conservation and other conservation organisations as one of the best examples in the country, not only for restoring butterfly numbers but also working with farmers and applications for agri-environment schemes, giving site advice, getting volunteers involved in habitat management and the monitoring of the butterflies and providing guided walks and training workshops.

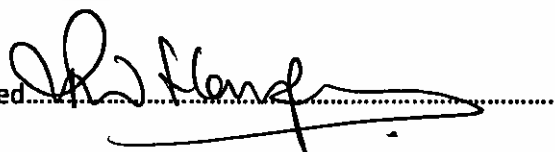
Butterfly Conservation has submitted a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to develop the work of the Two Moors project with the All the Moor Butterflies. If the bid proves successful the project will commence in September 2016 and the project will cover Bodmin Moor as well as Dartmoor and Exmoor, it will also incorporate a wider range of butterflies and moths.

Mrs Pannell left the Meeting.

Members stated that this is a good news story which should be celebrated, although some of the work carried out previously with the Two Moors Project may have been seen as unsympathetic on the landscape, so this should be taken in to consideration with the All the Moor Butterflies project.

Mrs Oakley stated that it was a good project and she had received great advice which was of massive value for wider landscape management and a tool for mid-tier Countryside Stewardship. Due to Mrs Oakley's receiving advice from the Two Moor Butterfly project, she declared a personal interested in the project.

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Members questioned the likelihood of success of the HLF bid, the Senior Ecologist informed them that it has looked very positive through the stage 1 process.

Mr Kidner proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mr Hitchins.

**RESOLVED:** Members agreed to

- i) Support Butterfly Conservation in its new project to conserve rare butterflies and increase public engagement and awareness across Dartmoor, Exmoor and Bodmin Moor.
- ii) Note the agreed outcomes as listed in the report.
- iii) Approve the contribution of £17,500 as match funding for All the Moor Butterflies subject to continued recognition of the Authority's contribution to the project.

### **3133 Tree Preservation Order: War Memorial Recreation Ground, Yelverton**

The Trees and Landscape Officer reported to Members that a Tree Preservation Order was made on 22 July 2015, under delegated powers, to protect trees standing along the boundary of Yelverton Recreation Ground. An objection was received from Maristow Estate.

The request for the TPO came from the Chairman of the recreation ground as he felt the trees were under threat as the adjacent land owner, Maristow Estate, had put the land forward as a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment site, but the proposal was rejected by the Authority.

The row of trees is made up of mix species and a variety of ages but all of good health. The tree assessment was carried out in line with Planning Practice Guidance. The trees would still need to be managed, but they would be controlled by the Authority.

The Trees and Landscape Officer informed the Members there were three choices:

- i) To confirm the Order
- ii) Not to confirm the Order
- iii) Modify the Order and confirm the modified Order.

One Member raised concerns about protecting a group of trees due to one letter indicating a potential threat, that will be unlikely to materialise due to the lack of access to the site. The Member was concerned that TPO's will be placed randomly in reaction to individuals concerns.

Members expressed concern with the letter received from Mr Hess of Maristow Estate, and agreed that the trees should be protected as precedent for future cases.

Some Members questioned protecting sycamore trees, the Trees and Landscape officer stated that sycamores are important in the landscape, especially since losing a large number of larch trees in the last few years. The sycamore in this row provide screening and are a distinctive feature in the landscape.

Dr Mortimer proposed the recommendation to confirm the order, which was seconded by Mr Ball.

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Date.....11/1/16.....

**RESOLVED:** Members agreed to confirm the order.

Mr Sanders and Mr Webber requested that their vote against the recommendation be recorded.

**3134 Moor Than Meets the Eye (MTMTE) Landscape Partnership Scheme Year 1 Progress Report**

The Moor Than Meets The Eye (MTMTE) Scheme Manager advised the Members that the MTMTE project team has now been in place for 11 months and consists of 5 staff. The Scheme is now supporting 34 projects, which will be delivered over five years. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) have granted £1.9 million towards the Scheme's total budget of £3,843,183.

The MTMTE Scheme Manager stated that although some projects, such as the Wray Valley Trail are behind on the target but the HLF have indicated that this is typical of the majority of Landscape Partnership Schemes at the start of their delivery stage. There is currently an underspend due to the later delivery of the Wray Valley Trail.

It will be a continuing challenge for the MTMTE team to ensure accurate reporting and meeting attendance from the project leaders as the projects gather pace.

Mr Webber left the meeting.

The Members discussed the amber status for the projects in Appendix 1 of the report. The MTMTE Scheme Manager reassured Members that projects are due to catch up over the five year period. The chart is constantly changing as proposals change slightly.

Mr Webber rejoined the meeting.

Mrs Oakley left the meeting.

The Chief Executive (NPO) highlighted to Members that PC8 directly relates to the Authority, as the project concerns the proposal to extend the Postbridge National Park Visitors Centre to house the Whitehorse Hill exhibition. This project was currently delayed and the Authority was in discussions with the landowner regarding other options in terms of design and operating models.

Mr Kidner left the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** Members noted the report

**3135 Tree Preservation Orders, Section 211 Notifications (Works to Trees in Conservation Areas) and Hedgerow Removal Notices, Determined under Delegated Powers**

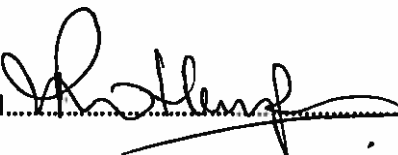
Members noted the content of report

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Date.....11/1/16.....

3136 AOB

Mr Hitchins and the Chairman offered the Members thanks to Mr Sanders for his work as the Chairman for the Dartmoor Trust for the past 17 years.

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Date.....11/1/18.....