

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Friday 1 April 2016

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

Apologies: J Kidner; D Lloyd

3160 Minutes of the Authority Meeting held on 4 March 2016

The Minutes of the meeting on 4 March 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

3161 Declarations of Interest

Mrs Pannell stated that, as a working member of the South Devon Railway, she would take no part in the discussions regarding Ashburton Masterplan.

Mr Barker & Mr Christophers stated that they had both been contacted by various people with regards the Ashburton Masterplan.

3162 Chairman's Report

The Chairman announced that Mr Andrew Cooper had been selected as the new Secretary of State Member and would be joining the Authority in July.

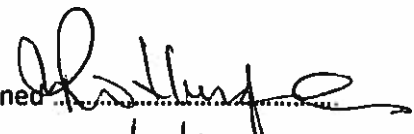
He and Dr Bishop had attended a meeting with the Country Land and Business Association in London, which had been very interesting and extremely useful. He had also attended the National Parks UK new Member Induction Course at Two Bridges and had seen some excellent presentations from our staff, and had met Naomi Conway, Development Director; National Parks Partnerships.

The Chairman referred to the new National Parks Plan, launched by the Secretary of State the previous week.

Members were advised that there would be no Part II item.

3163 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

None

Signed 
Date 3/6/16

3164 Public Participation

None

3165 Dartmoor Communities Fund

Members received the report of the Communities Officer (NPA/16/013) In recognition of the housing delivery role of the National Park Authority (NPA) as a local planning authority, West Devon Borough, South Hams & Teignbridge District Councils transferred a proportion of its "New Homes Bonus" money (a Government scheme encouraging local authorities to grant planning permission for the building of new houses, in return for additional revenue) accrued through new housing development on Dartmoor, to the NPA to support the 2015/16 Dartmoor Communities Fund. The Fund covered all of Dartmoor (with the exception of Mid Devon).

Over £32,000 was allocated to 9 successful projects, including the extension of the South Brent Bike Bank; the restoration and enhancement of the medieval rood screen at St Peter's Church, Buckland in the Moor; and the provision of new hot showers for the open air Chagford Community Swimming. The residual underspend will be taken forward to the 2016/17 fund.

The Borough & District Councils commitment to continue supporting the Dartmoor Communities Fund programme in 2016/17 is welcomed and it is proposed to be open to applications in early summer, thus allowing sufficient time for a second round of applications in the autumn, subject to funding availability.

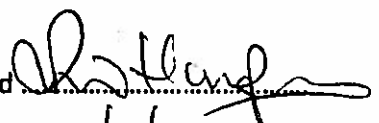
It is also proposed to establish a quick access small grants "Community Action" pot within the Fund, to support capital spend associated with environmental projects undertaken by local community action on publicly accessible land. The 'pot' will not exceed 10% of each Districts fund allocation, and any award will not exceed £500. Awards will need to be equally matched with cash or with an 'in kind' contribution of volunteer labour, provided by the community, or other organisations and must have the support of their town/parish council and Ward Councillor.

RESOLVED: Members noted the contents of the report and welcomed the commitment of West Devon Borough, South Hams District and Teignbridge District Councils to continue to support the Dartmoor Community Fund in 2016/17.

3166 Ashburton Masterplan

Members received the report of the Senior Forward Planner (NPA/16/014)

The Masterplan was first discussed with the community in 2012 following identification in the local plan of an area at Chuley Road, for mixed use development. The aim was to achieve a co-ordinated scheme providing improvement far better than individual applications could; to work with the community in identifying what was wanted, and then develop a framework to make that happen.

Signed 
Date 3/6/16

Following a series of community events a draft Masterplan was published in spring 2014. The initial response was good, but that it could go further in considering and delivering on highway, parking and flood risk issues. A second draft was published in autumn 2014. It was at this stage that the Authority was approached regarding the potential reinstatement of the use of the rail line to the site which, although appeared to be driven by the misinformation that the station building was to be demolished, did raise the matter of protecting the former route of the track through the site.

DNPA agreed to a pause in the consideration of the Masterplan to allow the Friends of Ashburton Station & South Devon Railway to present its case. The ensuing information was well presented and received support in principle from enthusiasts and interest from elected Members. However, the weakness presented when balanced against the evidence already in support of the current strategy, left DNPA little option but to progress with the Masterplan. A report was presented to Members in July 2015 for approval, rather than formal adoption.

However, upon receipt of a threat of a legal challenge regarding the approval process, DNPA sought its own legal advice and the decision to approve was rescinded in September 2015.

DNPA must now consider its position in respect of the Masterplan and the significant resource that has gone into the project so far. The Senior Forward Planner offered four options for Members to consider.

A Member stated that he was happy to go along with the officer recommendation but could not imagine the processes involved if, and when, applications for part of the site were forthcoming, and wondered how it could work without a Masterplan.

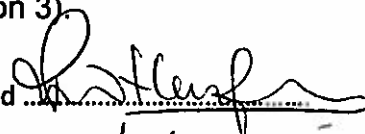
He was assured that any forthcoming applications would be judged on the criteria of the Local Plan. The Senior Forward Planner referred Members to proposal ASH2 of the Local Plan.

On behalf of the people of Ashburton, a Member wanted to thank the Senior Forward Planner for his work on the Masterplan over the years, however, he felt that the community had reached "consultation overload" and would be expecting the Authority to make its decision today; parking, flooding and housing are major issues within the town.

A Member also wanted to express his thanks to the Senior Forward Planner for the amount of work undertaken by him over the last four years. The Railway Group had highlighted some issues that previously the Authority had been unaware of. He felt that option three would be the most pragmatic way forward and was fully in support of the officer recommendation.

Mr Sanders proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Mr McInnes.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to cease further work on the Ashburton Masterplan, and to review the position within 12 months (Option 3)

Signed 
Date 3/6/16

3167 Local Plan Preparation – Joint Local Plans

Members received the report of the Senior Forward Planner (NPA/16/015)

The Local Plan is the statutory development plan for the National Park and plays a critical role in delivering national park purposes through the Authority's planning function. Work on reviewing the Local Plan has now commenced and in line with the drive for public sector efficiency savings, the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) encourages joint working across local planning authorities (LPAs).

Dartmoor National Park forms part of two Housing Market Areas (HMAs), Exeter HMA and Plymouth HMA. Plymouth HMA local authorities consist of Plymouth, South Hams, West Devon and part of Dartmoor National Park. Exeter HMA local authorities consist of Exeter, Teignbridge, East Devon, Mid Devon and part of Dartmoor National Park.

Officers from each LPA have been involved in discussions around how joint local plans might work. In respect of DNPA's involvement there are three principal options:

- 1 Enter into a joint local plan arrangement for the Plymouth HMA, and parts of DNPA; or similarly the Exeter HMA;
- 2 Enter into a joint local plan arrangement for the Plymouth HMA with the whole of the National Park; or similarly with the Exeter HMA;
- 3 Identify opportunities for joint evidence & collaborative work, but do not enter into a formal joint local plan.

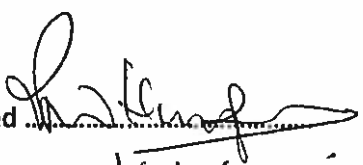
RESOLVED: Members

- (i) Noted the opportunities for joint evidence gathering with adjoining local planning authorities
- (ii) Agreed to continue with a single local plan for the whole of Dartmoor National Park

3168 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/16/007).

RESOLVED: Members noted the content of the report

Signed 
Date 3/6/16