

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Friday 10 January 2020

Present: K Ball, A Cooper, G Gribble, P Harper, G Hill, S Morgan, D Moyle, J McInnes, J Nutley, N Oakley, C Pannell, R Parkinson, M Renders, P Sanders, P Smerdon, P Vogel, D Webber, P Woods

Apologies: S Barker

3495 Minutes of the Authority Meetings held on 6 December 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on the 6 December 2019 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

3496 Declarations of Interest

None

3497 Chair's Report

The Chair reported that:

- The Lunch and Learn session on Climate Change issues was well attended by staff and Members and the information was interesting and well presented.
- Moor than Meets the Eye project board held their last meeting as the project is coming to an end. The project has achieved all that it was set out to do. The Chair expressed her thanks to the Director of Conservation and Communities and to the Moor than Meets the Eye team. It was noted that the National Lottery Heritage Fund was encouraging the Authority to lead another partnership bid for lottery funding.
- The Chair expressed her thanks to the staff involved with the Christmas party. It was a great success and enjoyed by all.

3498 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP) – Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Consultation.

Mr Sanders declared a personal interest due to being a member of TECF (Tamar Estuaries Consultative Forum), Mr Smerdon declared a personal interest due to being a Member of South Hams District Council and Mr Ball declared a personal interest due to being a County and West Devon Borough Council Member.

Members received the report of the Head of Forward Planning and Economy (NPA/20/003).

The Head of Forward Planning and Economy stated to Members that the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan Authorities are consulting on a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which has implications for part of the National Park and potentially, the Dartmoor Local Plan. The key area of interest for Dartmoor National Park Authority relates to the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Tamar Estuaries Complex Special Protection Areas (SPA). The settlements of Mary Tavy, Brentor, Horrabridge, Yelverton, Dousland, Shaugh Prior, Cornwood and Bittaford are included in the proposed Zone of Influence (Zol). A study has been carried out which aims to identify the impact of recreational assets on the area; the Zol is the area that those people may travel from to visit the site.

DNPA Officers expressed concerns as the Authority has not been involved in the study. It is unclear from the SPD why the 12.3 km Zol has been chosen, over other options recommended in the study. It is also unclear at this point what effect developmental contributions would have on the Authority's ability to deliver priorities identified in the DNPA Local Plan.

The Head of Forward Planning and Economy reassured Members that dialogue has been had with Plymouth City Council, West Devon Borough Council and South Hams District Council to deal with issues highlighted in the report and the letter (appendix 1) has been sent, indicating DNPA's wish to engage positively and constructively on this SPD regarding amendments to the document.

Members agreed that the Authority should have been consulted as it will impact on the Local Plan and on land management. Questions were raised regarding the Zol and how that was decided on.

Mr Vogel proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mr Cooper.

RESOLVED: Members endorsed the response, submitted 6 January 2022, to the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP) – Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Consultation (appendix 1).

Mr Sanders and Mr Smerdon requested for their abstention to be noted.

Members requested for their concern that the Authority was not consulted to be noted. The Head of Forward Planning and Economy will inform Members of any updates.

3499 Public Participation

None.

3500 Draft Management Plan

Members received the report of the Strategic Planning and Projects Manager, and the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) (NPA/20/001).

The Strategic Planning and Projects Manager introduced the management plan and informed Members that the draft Management Plan is a strategic document for Dartmoor as a whole, not just the Authority. The Management Plan team have worked closely with partners and different user groups in order to decide what the future plan should focus on. A clear message from consultation to-date is that the Management Plan should be bold, clear and ambitious. The seven themes have been prepared by officers building on the feedback from the Dartmoor Debates and the working groups. The seven themes are:

- Climate change
- Better for the Next Generation
- Better for Nature and Natural Beauty
- Better for Cultural Heritage
- Better for People
- Better for Farming and Forestry
- Better for Communities and Business

Many of the themes have overlaps and links, for example climate change is integrated through the themes, other themes may have conflicting or competing aim for example tensions between landscape management, nature recovery and cultural heritage; the debate around more trees in the landscape; and also the pressures arising from more visitors. These are explored in the 'key challenges' section which includes a proposed response and some principles for decision making.

The Strategic Planning and Projects Manager stated to Members that it will require collective action to deliver the vision and aspirations of the Plan, and it is possible that not everything will be achieved.

The results of an independent assessment of the draft Plan against sustainable development objectives, equality requirements; and its impact on protected wildlife designations were reported to Members. Overall, the implementation of the Management Plan was found to have likely positive or neutral effects; no negative effects were identified. However, further assessment of more specific projects and strategies emerging from delivery of the Plan may be required to consider the effects on designated nature conservation sites (through Habitats Regulation Assessment).

The Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) found that the Management Plan is unlikely to have negative effects on protected characteristics or persons identified under the Equality Act 2010. Overall, effects were compatible and positive, or not applicable. The EqIA recommended some minor amendments to strengthen the Plan in relation to:

- Welcoming and including people of all backgrounds *and abilities*
- Adding explicit reference to considering mental disability as part of the proposed Strategy for Outreach & Understanding to more explicitly include all people from this protected group; and

- To give particular attention to increase the ethnic diversity of visitors as far as possible within the likely demographics of Dartmoor & surrounding areas (Glover)

Officers propose to make these minor amendments under delegated responsibility following Members' decision on the recommendations before them. The detailed reports of the sustainability, equalities and Habitats Regulations assessments will be available as part of the consultation for people to comment on.

Presentations on each theme of the draft Plan were then given by Officers, including how climate change has been integrated throughout the Plan.

The Recreation Strategic Development Officer summarised the "Better for the next generation" and the Next Generation Manifesto section to the Members. In response to Members questions the Recreation Strategy Officer stated that the focus group has been made up of 18-30 year olds who are young farmers, recreation users and people who live and work on Dartmoor.

Members commented that the language used in the Draft Management Plan does not celebrate what a fantastic place Dartmoor is – more visionary language should be used. Members also expressed concerns regarding the Authority's resources to meet the objectives. The Chief Executive (NPO) reminded Members that the other Management Plan is a partnership document for the whole of the National Park and not just the Authority; thus it should influence the allocation and use of resources by partners. Bodies can help and their resources can be used as it is a plan for Dartmoor the place not just the Authority.

The Director of Conservation and Communities summarised "Better for Nature and Natural Beauty", "Better for Cultural Heritage" and "Better for People". In response to the presentation a Member suggested that better education regarding access could be done through social media, they stated that it is incredibly important for the next generation to understand the moor.

The Chief Executive summarised "Better for Farming and Forestry" and the Head of Forward Planning summarised "Better for Communities and Business". In response to the presentations, members stated that the green transport strategy is important and pressure should be put on partners to ensure this happens. Transport is key – linking with accessibility and climate change action.

In response to Members comments regarding the formatting and lack of images to engage people with the document, officers reminded Members that it is a draft document at this stage. It will be an online document, which could include videos and engaging images.

Mr Smerdon left the meeting.

Members indicated that more could be communicated through social media to ensure the younger generation are involved and engaged with the messages.

Public transport has been highlighted in multiple parts of the draft plan, Members supported the Green Transport Proposals and agreed that it is important for partners such as Devon County Council to take action and provide sustainable transport options. Members supported the idea of gateway towns being used as hubs to visit the park using different forms of public transport and sustainable modes such as electric bikes or electric car charging points.

Mr Smerdon re-joined the meeting.

A Member stated that it is an ambitious plan, it needs to be stated that we will “work with” partners to meet the visions. Members agreed that the online document should have a key word search to make the document easy to navigate. It should also be promoted on social media to encourage the “next generation” to be involved in the consultation. Members also agreed that people such as the youth and junior rangers could be used in video footage to help with the level of engagement. There also needs to be a clear statement on how the Next Generation will engage with climate change as this is not clear in the Manifesto.

Members stated that they would like the draft plan to strengthen the focus on existing species, not just the reintroduction of new species.

Concerns were raised regarding the monitoring of success and the setting of targets. A Member questioned how much of the draft plans aspirations are in line with other partners’ plans. Officers informed Members that the draft plan reflects discussions at the Dartmoor Debates, key partners will have an opportunity to comment during the consultation.

In response to the discussion, Members agreed the following key comments and points to be reviewed:

- Climate change and visitor influence
- The vision and how this can be made exciting
- Strengthen the link between moorland and farmland, and add reference to common land
- Gateway hubs
- The format of the consultation document including images
- A key word search
- An A4 summary to be available
- Films to be part of the online document
- Monitoring and targets

In response to a Members proposal for the document to be deferred for one month for changes to be seen by Members at the next Authority meeting, the Chair held a vote and the majority abstained. It was agreed that Members could be emailed a copy of the document with track changes. Members were reminded that they are entitled to put their views in writing during the consultation process. The Officers informed Members that the consultation

process will be promoted through the press, notification to the stakeholders and partners (including Parish and Town Councils, local authorities etc.), through social media and partners will be asked to promote it through their social media campaigns, members and networks. The document will be available in libraries if people are unable to access it online.

Mr Harper proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mr Gribble.

RESOLVED: Members

- (i) Approved the draft Management Plan for consultation (Appendix 1);
- (ii) Endorsed the Next Generation Manifesto (Appendix 2)
- (iii) Delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair, any final amendments including changes recommended by the Sustainability Appraisal or Habitats Regulation Assessment.

3501 Climate Change Action Plan for DNPA

Mr McInnes left the meeting.

The Chief Executive (NPO) reported to Members that work on the draft Climate Change Action Plan in response to the emergency declared at the Joint Authority meeting was making good progress and would be presented for consideration at the March 2020 Authority meeting. Alex Gandy, Forward Planning Officer, was leading this work. The Chief Executive (NPO) thanked the Members who had attended the "Lunch and Learn" Session before Christmas and reminded Members about the internal workshop on 20 January 2020.

Mr McInnes rejoined the meeting.

RESOLVED: Members NOTED the report

3502 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/20/002).

RESOLVED: Members NOTED the content of the report.