

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Friday 7 April 2017

Present: S Barker, A Cooper, S Hill, M Jeffery, D Lloyd, J McInnes,
I Mortimer, D Moyse, N Oakley, C Pannell, M Retallick, P Sanders,
D Webber, P Woods

Apologies: K Ball, W Cann, J Christophers, G Gribble, P W Hitchins

3235 Minutes of the Authority Meeting held on 3 March 2017

The Minutes of the meeting on 3 March 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

3236 Declarations of Interest

Mr Retallick declared a personal interest in Item 9 – Car Park Charges, due to his being Chairman of Haytor Down Commoners.

3237 Chairman's Report

Mr Retallick advised Members that he had recently attended the Westminster Food Forum and a workshop organised by the Uplands Alliance. One of the items discussed was whether uplands farming would survive after the UK's departure from the European Union. He added that he would circulate the report as soon as he received it.

3238 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

None

3239 Public Participation

None

3240 Governance Policies Review

Members received the report of the Head of Business Support (NPA/17/011).

In order to ensure appropriate levels of delegation, clear accountability, business continuity and resilience, core governance documents are kept under continuous review; minor changes to four of those documents are as follows:

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(i) **Financial Regulations** and (ii) **Procurement Procedures** – the removal of all references to Devon County Council holding the post of Chief Financial Officer as this role is now undertaken by the Head of Business Support, following her appointment in July 2016.

(iii) **Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy** and (iv) **Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy** – minor amendments to job titles and reporting lines to reflect the current staffing structure.

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

RESOLVED: Members approved the minor changes to Financial Regulations, Procurement Procedures, Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy and Confidential Reporting (*Whistleblowing*) Policy as outlined within the report.

3241 Local Code of Corporate Governance & Annual Governance Statement 2016/17

Members received the report of the Head of Business Support (NPA/17/012).

The Authority's corporate governance arrangements are based on the framework "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government", produced by The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives. A review of the Framework was undertaken in April 2016 and changes made meant that the Authority's Local Code of Governance needed to be reviewed and updated. Section 2.3 of the report shows the previous principles and those to be adopted.

The Framework also applies to the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for the 2016/17 financial year. The AGS is prepared each year and must accompany the annual Statement of Accounts. It is the culmination of a year-long review process of systems and internal controls; the most significant work undertaken during the year is detailed within the report.

A Member commented that, following the review, the Authority's Code of Corporate Governance appeared to have lost any reference to the National Park Authority's First Purpose. He felt that implementation of the vision for the National Park was most important and should be featured within the Code. The Head of Business Support explained that the framework covers all Local Government Bodies and so the principles set out in the framework would never be National Park specific.

Another Member asked for clarification regarding the opportunities to test the principles of the Code. The Head of Business Support advised that the Authority's Auditors would undertake this, having first considered all of the evidence provided by the Authority; the Audit and Governance Committee could also choose to do this as part of its work programme.

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Mr McInnes proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by Mr Sanders.

RESOLVED: Members:

- (i) Adopted the revised Local Code of Corporate Governance;
- (ii) Adopted the assessment of the Authority's governance arrangements set out in the revised Local Code of Corporate Governance; and
- (iii) Approved the 2016/17 Annual Governance Statement

3242 Car Park Charges

Members received the report of the Head of Recreation, Access and Estates (NPA/17/013).

It is proposed to introduce formal car park charging at Haytor, Postbridge, Meldon and Newbridge. Charges would be in line with those currently made at Princetown, and hours of operation would be between 10.00am and 6.00pm every day. He added that visitors expect to pay for parking; it is intended to make sure that they are made aware of the fact that their parking fees would contribute towards work needed to look after Dartmoor.

At Princetown, income received has increased from an average of £5,000 in donations to around £23,000 per annum since the introduction of charging in 2013.

With regard to Postbridge, the Authority is currently working with the Forestry Commission (FC) to deliver the Postbridge and Bellever Trails project as part of the Moor than meets the Eye Heritage Lottery Scheme. There are also plans to improve both FC and Authority car parks. One idea mooted is for short stay parking at the Authority's car park, with long term parking opposite at the FC site.

With regard to Member queries, the Head of Recreation, Access and Estates responded as follows:

- Displaced parking on the grass verges, especially at Haytor, is a risk. Additional Ranger/ volunteer patrols could be put in place at busy times;
- Minibus parking at Postbridge, particularly for Ten Tors training and Duke of Edinburgh training – further consultation and discussion needed. Would be helpful to work with the Forestry Commission on this issue;
- Charges for Blue Badge holders – for final decision by Members but aware that other authorities now charge; some offer a concession
- Collection of cash – third party company to be used;
- Insurance – companies will insure against theft of the cash within the ticket machine. However, if the whole meter was stolen this would not be covered;

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- Cashless payment systems – would be possible, subject to good mobile signal at each location. However, transaction costs incurred for each payment mean that this is not a viable option at present.

RESOLVED: Members:

- (i) Approved the principle of implementing formal car parking charges as outlined in the report;
- (ii) authorised officers to undertake a full public consultation on the proposed implementation of formal car park charges at the sites included in the report; and
- (iii) requested a report and recommendations be brought to a future Authority meeting following completion of the public consultation.

3243 Identifying and Recording Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Members received the report of the Building Conservation Officer (NPA/17/014).

Within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), non-designated heritage assets are defined as *'buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated.'*

The values – Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic, Communal, are set out in the Historic England 'Conservation Principles' (2008) document and adoption of these is well established within the Heritage Sector. Members are asked to formally adopt the procedure for the identification of non-designated heritage assets which will reduce the potential for challenge e.g. from planning appeals.

In response to a Member suggestion that local community knowledge i.e., Parish Council/History Society level should be included, the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) advised that costs could be excessive with regard to officer time if this were to be agreed.

The Member cautioned against purely a 'Yes' or 'No' choice with regard to heritage value. Another Member suggested that a mid-way point could be adopted to include another option - *'Yes / No / Further information required'*.

RESOLVED: Subject to the template amendment as detailed above, Members:

- (i) Approved the procedure for the identification of Non-designated Heritage Assets; and
- (ii) Approved the inclusion of explicitly identified Non-designated Heritage Assets on the Historic Environment Record.

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3244 Heart of the South West Devolution Bid

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) (NPA/17/015).

Following the Authority's support, in July 2016, of a potential combined authority to deliver a devolution deal for the Heart of the South West (HotSW) area, there has been a change in the government's leadership, as well as the result of the EU Referendum to leave the European Union. The new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has indicated that a Mayoral Combined Authority is required to achieve a significant devolution deal. Previously this was not imposed as a pre-condition to any devolution deal.

Pending on any progress on any devolution deal, Leaders are recommending that a HotSW Productivity Plan be drawn up, together with consideration being given to the creation of a Joint Committee to drive the delivery of the Productivity Plan. A formal public consultation will take place in May 2017, following the County Council elections.

RESOLVED: Members:

- (i) Noted the update regarding the Heart of the South West devolution deal and the proposal to establish a Joint Committee;
- (ii) Agreed:
 - (a) in principle to the establishment of a Heart of the South West Joint Committee with a commencement date of Friday 1 September 2017 in accordance with the summary proposals set out in the report; and
 - (b) that the 'in principle' decision at (a) is subject to further recommendation and report to the constituent authorities after the County Council elections in May 2017. The report will seek formal approval for the establishment of the Joint Committee and detail constitutional arrangements, the inter-Authority agreement for support arrangements, process for appointing representatives to the Joint Committee and arrangements for an Administering Authority to support the work of the Committee.

3245 Tree Preservation Orders, Section 211 Notifications (Works to Trees in Conservation Areas) and Hedgerow Removal Notices Determined Under Delegated Powers

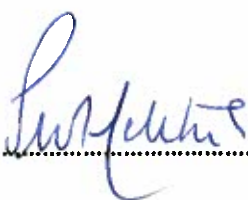
Members received the report of the Trees and Landscape Officer (NPA/17/016).

RESOLVED: Members NOTED the content of the report.

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3246 Draft Audit and Governance Committee Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 February 2017

Members NOTED the draft Minutes.

Signed  Date 1.9.17