

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Friday 7 February 2014

Present: Mr S Barker, Mr Gribble, Mr Harper, Mr P Hitchins (Chairman),
Mr J Hockridge, Mr M Jeffery, Miss H Jenny, Mr J Kidner, Mr D Lloyd,
Mrs C Marsh, Mr J McInnes, Dr I Mortimer, Miss D Moyse, Mr J Nutley,
Mr M Retallick (Deputy Chairman), Mr P Sanders, Mr P Vogel, Mr D Webber

Apologies: Mr K Ball, Mr J Shears, Mr N Way

Non – attendance: Mrs N Oakley

3017 Minutes of the meeting held on

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2014 were signed as a correct record.

3018 Declarations of Interest

Mr Retallick declared an interest in Dartmoor Hill Farm Project Review 2003-2013 (NPA/14/015) due to being the Chairman of the DHFP steering group.

Mr McInnes declared an interest in The Devon Waste Plan (NPA/14/013) due to his role at Devon County Council.

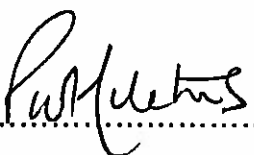
Mr Vogel declared an interest in Development Brief for Proposal Ash1, land at Longstone Cross, Ashburton due to being involved with his role at Teignbridge District Council.

3019 Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that the visit from the Chinese delegation was successful and the hospitality was well received. There was discussion regarding potential further visits.

With regards to the proposed relaxation of controls over the conversion of agricultural buildings; the Chairman of National Parks England has written to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs expressing concerns; the Authority has contacted local MPs to brief them again about our concerns; and the Members of Dartmoor and Exmoor National Park Authorities appointed by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in the national interest have all signed a letter to the Secretary of State setting out their concerns about the proposed changes and potential harm to National Park purposes.

The programme "Mystery of the Moor" about the Whitehorse Hill findings was to be shown on BBC 1 on Friday 7 February. The exhibition will be in Plymouth Museum in September.

Signed 

Date 4.4.14

There will be governance changes after 5 May 2014, which will mean a reduction in Members from 22 to 19

3020 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

None

3021 Public Participation

Item 9 – NPA/14/009 Mobile Vending – Tim Warner

Item 11 – NPA/14/011 Fairfield, South Brent – Penny Wainwright for Sustainable South Brent & Elliot Jones for Cavanna Homes

Item 12 – NPA14/012 Longstone Cross, Ashburton – Ed Perse

3022 Mobile Vending 2014-2016

Speaker: Mr Warner

Members received a short presentation from Mr Tim Warner, owner of one of the companies who put in a Tender for Mobile Vending in the Haytor car park, and also a brief presentation from the Director of Conservation and Communities (NPA/14/009).

Members had concerns and agreed to defer the item with consideration given to whether it should be a Part II report.

Mr Hitchins proposed the recommendation to defer the item, which was seconded by Mrs Marsh.


RESOLVED:

Members agreed that this item be DEFERRED.

3023 Development Brief for Proposal SBR1, Land at Fairfield, South Brent

Speakers: Penny Wainwright, Sustainable South Brent.
Michael Newman, Cavanna Homes

Mrs Wainwright informed Members that Sustainable South Brent had been encouraged by the opportunities the community had had to engage with the planning process. She stated that the community has appealed for the new development to provide truly sustainable, affordable and future proofed housing which will maximise energy efficiency and combat fuel poverty. She stated that the Authority should insist that Code 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes ("CSH4") be a minimum level and the National Park Authority should aspire to have developments reaching the highest code.

Signed 
Date 4.4.14

Mr Newman informed the Members that Cavanna Homes approached the Parish Council in Early 2013. The public consultation with the community highlighted the need to assess sustainability, but the development brief is not the right document to assess the code.

A Member asked if there would be any adverse impact on affordable housing if the code is set too high. Mr Newman confirmed that it would and the impact is written in the development brief.

Members received the report of the Forward Planner (NPA/14/011). He commended the collaborative approach between Cavanna Homes and Trand, who had produced a good quality brief. The community engagement had highlighted the desire for sustainable housing in South Brent. He informed Members that the Planning Authority cannot demand the Code levels, but the design would aim to meet CSH4 across the site. The quality of design of both the buildings and the landscaping and boundary treatment are important features. The pedestrian connectivity, with a crossing over Exeter Road will be carefully assessed along side the highways access.

There are still issues to overcome including the housing need and detailed design, sustainability and viability. The S106 agreement that will have to cover affordable housing, off site highways works and public open spaces within the development site. The S106 will be discussed when the stakeholders group reconvenes.

The Members discussed the issues regarding the challenges produced by increasing the specification of the development and the details of the S106. The Officer stated that part of the community engagement with the development plan could include involving them with the S106 decisions, which could also advise them on how development works. He did remind Members that too many burdens on a development site will put developers off as it will no longer be viable.

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

RESOLVED:

The Members approved the Development Brief.

3024 Development Brief for Proposal Ash1, Land at Longstone Cross, Ashburton

Mr Persse was available for questions.

Members received the report of the Forward Planner (NPA/14/012).

Members were advised that this site, which is allocated for affordable housing, is set on the edge of Ashburton and is a relatively small site, measuring 1.1ha, it will deliver approximately 36 houses. The Officer commended the collaborative

approach between the three land owners - Hastoe, Trand and Teign housing. There has not been a formal steering group, as it is a relatively light touch brief, instead there have been a couple of stages of public consultation.

Signed 
Date 4.4.14

The key issues highlighted in the brief are the layout relating to the front and rear boundaries with current housing, the highway access and the access to retained land and the off site highway works.

The Officer informed Members that topics still to be discussed are the detailed design, the housing type/tenure and the S106 details.

Mr Harper left the meeting.

Members raised concerns regarding pedestrian safety. The Officer confirmed that safety has been considered by the highways officer and a safety barrier would be in place on the exit to the main road. The Director of Planning reminded Members that the details will be dealt with when the planning application is submitted.

Mr Harper rejoined the meeting.

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

RESOLVED:

Members approved the Development Brief.

Mr Jeffery left the Meeting.

3025 Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2014/15

Members received the report of the Head of Resources (NPA/14/007).

The Members were informed that Dartmoor National Park Authority undertakes a formal review of the Treasury Management Strategy as part of the budget process, with close consultation with the S151 Officer and the Investment Manager at Devon County Council.

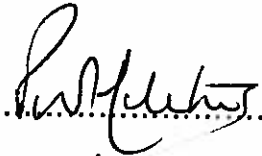
No changes have been made to the CIPFA Code of Practice this year therefore there are no proposed changes to the policies and procedures.

The current schedule of investments and anticipated amount of interest to be received by 31 March 2014 was shown in the report. Interest rates are still at an all time low but there are indications that they may change within the next 12 months. The Authority's cash balances remain on short term deposit with Barclays Bank. The Treasury Management arrangements are maintained to a high standard, no losses have been incurred and funds are available to meet cash flow requirements.

Mr McInnes proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mrs Marsh.

RESOLVED:

The Members approved the 2014/15 Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for adoption.

Signed 

Date 4.4.14

3026 2014/15 Net Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Budget

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) (NPA/14/008).

The Chief Executive (NPO) gave his thanks to the Head of Resources and the Director of Communications and Business Support for their hard work on the budget.

The Chief Executive advised Members that by the end of this Parliament, central government funding for the National Park Authority will have reduced in real terms by in excess of 40%. The Authority was already predicting a cut of 6.4% in NPG for 2014/15, in December the announcement confirmed an 8.51% cut for 2014/15 and an indicative cut of 1.74% in 2015/16. There is no indication of grant for 2016/17.

The Leadership Team have constructed the budget taking in to account the priorities discussed and identified by Members at the workshop in July, and reflected in the Business Plan approved by Members in January 2014 and also the residents survey and the review of the National Park Management Plan.

Some issues have been highlighted in the report including The National Park Visitor Centre, Princetown and the future of the Sustainable Development Fund.

There are also works required for the properties at Parke and Princetown. There is proposed staff reduction for the Historic Environment Record from 1FTE to 0.5 FTE and the project fund will reduce to £85k in 2014/15.

In respect of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) the Chief Executive (NPO) advised Members that it is difficult to plan with a lack of financial certainty, including potential financial pressures (further reductions in National Park Grant) and possible changes to national insurance contribution rates. The MTFP indicates a deficit in years 2 and 3, the biggest cost being the staff the Authority employs. A limited staffing review is planned in 2014/15 to reduce staff costs.


The focus is not only on cutting costs but also increasing revenue through external grant aid, charging for services and commercial sponsorship.

The Members were requested consider the bi-annual conference of the UK National Parks which Dartmoor is due to host in 2015. It would be a significant draw on staff resources but would provide an opportunity to showcase our work. A sum of £30k has been earmarked in the MTFP for the conference.

Two Members should be appointed to sit on an organising group for the conference.

Members had a discussion regarding the conference in 2015, Members agreed that it would be a good focus for staff in hard times and a good opportunity to increase our profile and show Dartmoor's story to the other National Parks.

Mr Harper proposed the first 5 recommendations, which was seconded by Mr Sanders.

Signed 

Date 4.4.14

RESOLVED: Members:

- (i) Approved the net budget of £3,705,543 for the 2014/2015 financial year.
- (ii) Approved that £68,708 is appropriated from the reserves to balance the budget.
- (iii) Approved the Medium Term Financial Plan for the year 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- (iv) Approved the capital programme and the Prudential Indicators for 2014/15.
- (v) Noted the need for a staffing and structure review in 2014/15 (due to reductions in funding from Defra) to reduce staffing costs.

Members agreed that the Conference should proceed in 2015 with DNPA as hosts and Mr McInnes and Dr Mortimer volunteered to sit on the organisation group subject to further cuts in National Park funding.

3027 Enforcement Policy

Members received the report of the Planning Team Manager (NPA/14/010).

The Director of Planning informed the Members that the Draft version of the Enforcement Policy was presented to them in September 2013, this version is for formal adoption. The policy covers basic information regarding how the Authority deals with breaches of planning, what powers the Authority has and the scheme of delegation for enforcement. The document will be published on the Authority's website. The Director of Planning gave his thanks to the Planning Team Manager and the two Enforcement Officers involved in the development of the policy.

Members had a brief discussion and agreed that before formal adoption the wording be changed from "encourage the submission of a retrospective application..." to "where appropriate request the submission of a retrospective application...".

Members also requested that the policy and accompanying guidelines be kept under active review.

Miss Jenny requested that the Members thanks to the staff involved be recorded.

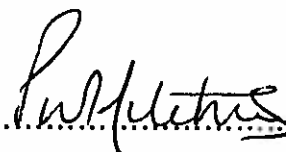
RESOLVED: Members:

- (i) Noted the report
- (ii) To formally adopt the draft Enforcement Policy with the wording changes from "encourage the submission of a retrospective application..." to "where appropriate request the submission of a retrospective application...".

3028 The Devon Waste Plan: Pre-Submission Consultation

Members received the report of the Forward Planner (NPA/14/013).

The Members were informed that Devon County Council are in the process of preparing the Devon Waste Plan. The plan pushes to reuse and recycle and more energy will be produced from waste plants. The Officer commended Devon County Council on a good local plan.

Signed 
Date 4.4.14

Members had a brief discussion regarding the importance of a waste plan.

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

RESOLVED: Members:

- (i) Offered their support for the objectives and policies of the Pre-Submission consultation version of the Devon Waste Plan to Devon County Council
- (ii) Agreed to submit a representation regarding the application of the National Planning Policy Framework nationally designated landscapes major development test, as set out in paragraph 2.4 of the report.

3029 Residents Survey 2013

Members received the report of the Director of Communications and Business Support (NPA/14/014).

Members were advised that the residents survey was conducted in September and October 2013. It produced a comprehensive view on how the public see the Authority. 1000 people were interviewed and there were some positive results regarding the services provided by the National Park Authority. The biggest concern was in regards to engagement, with only 15% of people stating they wished to be involved in the issues where they lived and only 4% of residents interviewed wanted to be involved with volunteering.

Members discussed the cost of the process but agreed it was money well spent. Future surveys will probably be conducted on line rather than the face to face process, which will reduce costs dramatically, but may not achieve such a high response rate.

RESOLVED: Members noted the report.

3030 Dartmoor Hill Farm Project Review 2003 – 2013

Members received the report of the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project Officer (NPA/14/015)

Members were advised that the review was produced at the end 2013 and was circulated to many other organisations. The Hill Farm Project has helped many farming families involve the different generations, involve the communities and help farmers in applying for grants over the last 10 years.

A Member commended the Hill Farm Project team for their hard work over the 10 years the project has been running. The Hill Farm Project has recently been giving more advice and assistance to Hill Farmers than the NFU. It has been a great asset particularly to women and youngsters in farming. The transitional funding that the Hill farm project has received has only been given to 11 other projects in the whole country.

RESOLVED: Members noted the report and thanked the staff for their hard work.

Signed *P. W. Hitchins*

Date *4.4.14*

3031 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/14/16)

RESOLVED: Members noted the content of the report.

It was duly proposed and seconded that in accordance with s. 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended, the following report NPA/14/017 should be taken in the absence of the Press and public, on the grounds that exempt information within the meaning of Part 1 Paragraph 1 & 2 to schedule 12A of the 1972 Act (as amended) will be discussed, namely:-

1. *Information relating to any individual.*
2. *Information which is likely to reveal the identify of an individual.*

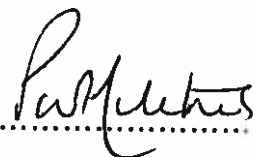
RESOLVED:

Members resolved to move into Part II private session.

3032 Report of the Performance Review Group

A report of the Performance Review Group was presented by the Chairman, Mr Hitchins.

RESOLVED: Members approved an increase in salary for the Chief Executive (NPO) of 1% effective from 1 April 2013. Members noted this was the first cost of living increase since 2008/2009.

Signed 

Date 4.4.14