

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Friday 05 June 2015

Present: Mr K Ball, Mr G Gribble, Mr Harper, Mr P Hitchins, Mr M Jeffery,
Mr D Lloyd, Mr J McInnes, Dr I Mortimer, Miss D Moyse, Mr J Nutley,
Mrs N Oakley, Mr M Retallick (Deputy Chairman), Mr P Sanders,
Mr D Webber

Apologies: Mr Barker, Mr Kidner, Mr Vogel, Mr Hockridge

3081 Minutes of the meeting held on 1 May 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 May 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

3082 Declarations of Interest

Mr Nutley declared a personal interest in The Ashburton Masterplan (NPA/15/021) as a Councillor on Ashburton Town Council.

The Chairman stated that all Members had received a number of emails regarding the Ashburton Masterplan

3083 Ashburton Masterplan

Speakers: Mr Kemp, Ashburton Resident - Objector
Vernon Coon, Friends of Ashburton Station – Objector
Mike Churchward, Edwin Tucker –Support
Cllr Khan, Ashburton Town Council – Support

The Head of Planning informed Members that Ashburton Town Council was not able to confirm the resolution of their Planning Committee to support the Masterplan until the Town Council meeting on 9 June 2015. Officers therefore asked to defer the item until the Authority Meeting held in July. Mr Gribble proposed the recommendation to defer until the next Authority meeting, which was seconded by Mr Ball and carried unanimously.

The Chairman informed the public speakers that they were still welcome to speak at the meeting and/or postpone their presentation to the meeting in July. Mr Coon and Cllr Khan opted to wait until the July meeting, Mr Kemp and Mr Churchward opted to speak.

Mr Kemp informed the Members that, in his opinion the Masterplan has too many problems, including the lack of new access. The increased traffic by the school is on a substandard road and he felt that Officers had failed to address fundamental issues brought up by the town plan and local residents.

Mr Churchward asked members to adopt the Masterplan. He noted that the Masterplan has been in progress since 2012 and the lengthy decision making is

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causing a delay in the planning permission for the development of new housing in Chuley Road, which is having a knock on effect to the planning permission granted for the re-location of Tuckers to Peartree, Ashburton.

RESOLVED:

Members agreed to defer the item to the Authority meeting to be held on the 3 July 2015.

3084 Chairman's Report Items Requiring Urgent Attention

The Chairman welcomed the returning Members back after the local elections. He congratulated Mr Retallick on the award he had received for an outstanding contribution to the Devon County Show. The Chairman announced that the Chief Executive (NPO) has been invited as an international lecturer for a European Commission funded workshop in Milan. The Chairman and the Chief Executive (NPO) had a successful meeting their counterparts for Exmoor National Park and the Heart of the South West local Enterprise Partnership. The new Becka bridge has been opened with help from the Holiday Fellowship and the Ramblers Association. The Chairman attended the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust's 10 year anniversary, and attended two useful meetings with the NFU and Natural England. The Chairman and Mr Retallick both attended the Ten Tors.

3085 Public Participation

As above in the Ashburton Masterplan.

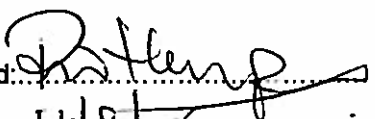
3086 Financial Outturn

The Chief Executive (NPO) presented the report on behalf of the Head of Business Support.

He informed the Members that the revenue surplus of £210,184 that is proposed to be put in to Reserves was mainly due to increased income (from retail sales, planning fees etc) and further efficiency savings.

The Landscape Partnership Scheme has not been included as part of the Statement of Accounts and will be subject to separate accounts and progress reported to the Audit and Governance Committee.

The Authority received £150,000 one off payment in March 2014 from DEFRA to repair storm and flood damage to Public Rights of Way within the park. It was carried forward in to 2014/15, and the remaining balance will be used in 2015/16, for projects such as the footbridge at Swincombe and repairs to Nun's Cross Path. The money has now been fully committed to projects. Natural England have confirmed that the money held in reserves for the Farming Futures project can be used to recruit on internship to held evaluate tin pioneering scheme. The Postbridge Visitor Centre project is still in discussion between the Authority and Duchy of Cornwall, Members will be kept inform.

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The Chief Executive drew attention to the £10,00 allocation in reserves for superfast broadband and informed Members that there may be a requirement to consider further match funding and that he would keep them informed.

Attention was drawn to the state aid issue regarding historical management agreement payments, and the advice of the Section 151 Officer that a contingent liability note in respect of this issue should not be included in the 2014/15 accounts. A Member queried the £15,000 cost of the Microphones, but the Head of Legal Services informed them that a tender process was held and 3 quotes were compared. The mid price quote was chosen as the equipment was the most flexible for the Authority's needs and the cost was deemed acceptable for a system which should last 10-15 years.

Dr Mortimer proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mr Sanders.

RESOLVED:

Members:

- i) Noted the content of the report.
- ii) Approved the transfer of the 2014/15 revenue surplus of £210,184 into reserves
- iii) Approved the transfers into earmarked reserves, for specific grant income and projects, as set out in section 3.4 of the report
- iv) Agreed that it is unnecessary to include a note in the Statement of Accounts relating to the remote possibility of a contingent liability, as set out in section 6 of this report.

3087 2014/15 Annual Governance Statement

The Annual Governance Statement (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 controls.

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

RESOLVED:

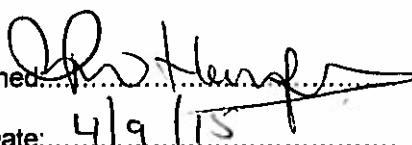
Members

- i) noted the content of the report
- ii) approved the 2014/15 Annual Governance Statement

3088 Proposed Increase in Charges for Princetown Car Park

The Director of Conservation and Communities presented the report to Members.

It was stated that 6 responses had been received to the most recent stage of consultations regarding the increase of car park charges in Princetown. The concerns were mainly around the vehicle displacement that may occur due to people avoiding the car park charges, reduced visitors in Princetown and the scale of the increase of charges.

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Part of the decision to introduce the formal charges in the car park was due to the amount of money Dartmoor National Park Authority has invested in the refurbishment of the visitors centre, the resurfacing of the car park, the repairs to Station Road and wider improvements to the public realm totalling over £100,000. Since these improvements there have been an increase in visitor numbers through the doors of the visitor centre.

Members agreed that the price for all day parking was reasonable in comparison to other National Parks and local authorities. One Member did state that the low number of objections was due to the residents accepting that the charges would happen anyway, but there is a general feeling of unhappiness from the residence, particularly the business owners. The Director of Conservation and Communities confirmed that the Officers have been in dialogue with local residents and businesses throughout the process.

RESOLVED:

Members approved the revised charges for Princetown Car Park as set out in the report.

3089 Renewal of Access Agreement – Use of Disused Railway, Walkhampton Common and Peekhill Farm

The Head of Recreation, Access and Estates informed the Members that the new agreement is required ahead of its renewal date in 2017, due to the construction of the new bridge over the B3212 at Peek Hill that is now part of the route. It is proposed that the new agreement will last for a term of 20 years.

RESOLVED:

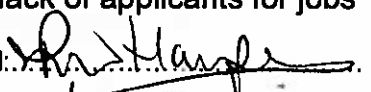
The Members agreed:

- i) To authorise the completion of an access agreement to allow walking and cycling along the section of the disused railway line at Peekhill Farm as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report
- ii) The principle of securing continued cycle access on the disused railway line and authorise officers to work with interested parties to achieve this from 2017 when current arrangements terminate.

3090 Dartmoor Business Forum Workshop and joint South Devon Local Authorities Business Survey

The Members received the presentation from the Communities Officer. She informed the Members that South Devon Local Authorities Business Survey had been conducted in partnership with the district/borough councils. The survey includes responses 82 businesses on Dartmoor.

The survey highlights and gives statistical results that indicate businesses struggle with connectivity, including slow broadband - if they have broadband at all, some farms are still working with dial up internet, the cost of transport to/from rural locations or there being no public transport which results in lack of applicants for jobs

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and lack of training for those living in the National Park. The perception of job opportunities within the park boundary are not considered career enhancing.

The Head of Planning highlighted that the perceptions about the planning service held by some respondents needs to be addressed, many businesses view the policy framework as too restrictive. There was very little engagement from local businesses when the local plan was constructed, which means it may not be targeting their needs. There is a need to encourage local businesses to be active in involving themselves in the next Local Plan.

Members agreed that the results of the survey were helpful and that they needed to help in changing the perception about planning.

The Chief Executive (NPO) agreed to contact David Ledbetter and Kerri Denton, Head of Economic Development at Devon County Council regarding the participation of the Authority in new economic initiatives.

RESOLVED:

Members

- i) noted the issues emerging from the 2014 business survey Executive Summary
- ii) agree actions proposed in response to our economic role

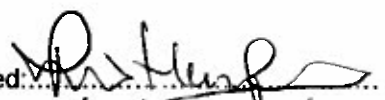
3091 Tree Preservation Orders and Section 211 Notifications (Works to Trees in Conservation Areas Determined Under Delegated Powers)

RESOLVED:

Members noted the report

Mr Nutley thanked the Members and Officers for their company over the last few years. The Chairman thanked Mr Nutley for his services to Dartmoor National Park Authority he also thanked Mr Woodall, Independent Person, who was standing down after several years for his comments and input over the years.

The Members were reminded that the Annual Workshop is to be held on the 17 July 2015.

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