

## **SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY POLICY & PROGRAMME COMMITTEE MEETING 30 JANUARY 2014**

Held at Cowdray Hall, Midhurst at 10:30AM

Present

Sebastian Anstruther

Ken Bodfish

Jo Carr

Vaughan Clarke

Jim Funnell

Jeremy Leggett

Barry Lipscomb

Deborah Urquhart

Pete West

Margaret Paren (ex officio)

SDNPA Officers: Trevor Beattie (Chief Executive Officer), Hélène Rossiter (Director of Corporate Services), Andrew Lee (Director of Strategy & Partnerships), Karen Everett (Deputy Monitoring Officer), Michelle Herrington (Interim Deputy Chief Finance Officer), Ruth James (Communications & Engagement Manager) and Rebecca Haynes (Member Services Officer).

### **APOLOGIES**

1. Apologies were received from Norman Dingemans (ex officio).

### **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

2. The Chief Executive Officer declared that nominations closed 5 clear working days prior to the meeting and 2 nominations were received; Ken Bodfish and Barry Lipscomb. In line with the SDNPA Standing Orders each nominee was invited to address the Committee, in alphabetical order by surname for no more than 2 minutes.
3. Ken Bodfish addressed the Committee and in addition to his nomination statement that he would be committed to the Chair role of the P&P Committees taking on policy issues and key themes of the SDNPA Partnership Management Plan (PMP) to ensure that resources were directed to the objectives of the Plan.
4. Barry Lipscomb briefly addressed the Committee and, in addition to his nomination statement, concurred with the previous comments from Ken Bodfish and said that, if not elected as Chair, he would wholeheartedly support the Chair in the role of Deputy Chair.
5. Without further question or debate and following a vote Ken Bodfish was duly elected as Chair of the Policy & Programme Committee until the Authority AGM and presided over the rest of the meeting.

### **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR**

6. As the only nomination Barry Lipscomb was duly elected as Deputy Chair of the Policy & Programme Committee until the Authority AGM.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

7. There were no declarations of Interest.

### **MINUTES**

8. The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

9. Matters Arising from the minutes:

#### Stanmer Park Estates Strategy

- Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC) had agreed to move forward with this and a Master Plan would be drawn up for consultation. Any evidence gathered would inform the bid for Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funding. A Committee member confirmed that B&HCC were fully supportive of the HLF bid and that the existence of the SDNPA had been the key factor for the project to be possible

The SDNPA Chief Executive Officer had met with B&HCC Chief Executive Officer and their senior team, they confirmed that the Stanmer project had cross party support. The timetable was tight as the bid had to be made to the HLF by August 2014. B&HCC also confirmed that a consultant would be recruited for this work and the SDNPA would match this with staff resources.

- It was agreed that a section on matters arising would be included on all future agendas and for consistency should also be included on SDNPA Authority and other Committee agendas.

## **URGENT MATTERS**

10. There were none.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

11. There were no members of the public present.

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE AND WORK PROGRAMME**

12. The Director of Corporate Services introduced this item, reminding the Committee of the outcomes of the Governance Review, the revised Committee structure and Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Policy & Programme Committee.
13. The Committee commented:
- It would be useful to have the Chairs of other Committees and members of working groups attending P&P Committee meetings in order to share information. This would ensure that Members were fully informed
  - The creation of the P&P Committee enabled full discussion of critical policy issues before decisions were taken at full Authority meetings
  - The Chairs of P&P and the Governance Committees should meet regularly to discuss any risks that may be need to be referred
  - The need to;
    - annually review ICT, Contracts, Estates & Education programmes
    - review the Area Teams work programme in order to prioritise depending on resource implications
    - have specific projects to study rather than reports for noting
    - look at the SDNPA relationship with LEPs
  - The SDNPA Learning Portal had been highlighted as excellent by partners during the Shared Identity consultation.
14. In response to questions officers clarified:
- The potential business for the P&P meetings would be appropriately timetabled so not to place additional burden on senior officers
  - ToR number 8 confirmed that the P&P Committee were able to authorise entering into contracts of a value of £100k or greater in accordance with contract Standing Orders and agree arrangements for the procurement and on going monitoring of external contracts for support services. Following the Governance review, changes were made to give Committees greater decision making power, taking the burden off the agendas for the full Authority meetings. However the P&P Committee could recommend some of the decisions to the Authority for resolution, should it wish to
  - It was important not to duplicate the work of other Committees but to ensure that there was consistency and linking work to other Committees where appropriate.
  - Working groups had been set up to ensure greater involvement of Members using their expertise, to advise and feed back to Members on projects. Many current working groups were good models of this process such as the External Comms and Engagement Working Group, the Member Advisory Group on the South Downs Centre and the Budget Working Group.
  - The Director of Strategy & Partnerships and the Director of Operations would strategically plan the work programme for the P&P Committee as there was potentially a huge volume of work to be undertaken in the 2014/15.
15. **RESOLVED:** that the Committee noted the draft work programme for 2014

## **PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT PLAN**

16. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Strategy and Partnerships (Report PPI/14). The report set the scene for the role of the P&P Committee in the delivery process and the mechanisms that were in place for effective delivery, reporting and evaluation within the SDNPA and to ensure strong buy in, delivery and reporting by Partners.

17. The Committee commented:
- It was an ideal opportunity to review the membership of the South Downs Partnership now that the SDNPA had progressed from set up to delivery
  - Concern was raised on
    - the use of the word accountability; it was felt this term was inappropriate as many partners were responsible for the delivery of the PMP and not just the SD Partnership
    - the conflicting approach in the report that members of the SD Partnership were both representing their key sector organisation, and, on the SD Partnership in their capacity as knowledgeable individuals and champions rather to represent their organisations per se.
18. In response to questions, officers clarified:
- It was an opportune time to review the membership of partner groups such as the South Downs Land Managers Group, the South Downs Network and the SD Partnership.
19. **RESOLVED:** That the Committee noted a report would be presented to a future P&P meeting specifying the mechanisms in place to ensure;
- i) Effective Partnership Management Plan delivery reporting and evaluation within the SDNPA and
  - ii) Strong Partnership Management Plan buy in, delivery and reporting by partners.

#### **ICT SERVICE REVIEW – OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

20. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate Services (Report PP2/14)
21. A power point presentation was given to the Committee detailing;
- the contextual overview of the ICT environment of the SDNPA
  - the scope of ICT services to be reviewed
  - time line, key milestones and the next steps, which included conducting an evidenced appraisal of the ICT needs of the organisation across all users and systems.
22. Committee member Jeremy Leggett left the meeting at 12.05pm
23. Committee Members commented:
- It was the correct time to review the delivery of ICT now the SDNPA was in the delivery phase, evidence should be gathered and a strategy produced
  - Caution should be used when exploring ICT strategies from other national parks as they were more established than the SDNPA. With future budgets constraints, other parks may also be investigating different ICT models
  - The presentation was very informative. The review of ICT facilities and services should be officer lead as a high degree of expertise was required. The Committee had confidence in the officers to lead on this and it would be beneficial to have involvement of Members on the working group involved in developing the ICT Strategy.
24. In response to questions, officers clarified:
- The scope of ICT would be considered as part of the overall ICT Strategy document
  - Other national parks had a mixture of both in house and outsourced IT facilities
  - The SDNPA has a very small ICT team of one officer.
  - The Website and Intranet facility was shared with other national parks. The high capacity planning needs of the SDNPA was causing problems with the capacity of the SDNPA websites. The issues were being investigated by the Communications Team and it was hoped that user issues would be resolved shortly
  - The current IT provider (Advanced 365) supported remote working, although the use of a variety of different hardware caused difficulties

- The overall costs of ICT included the consumables and the printing costs were significant. As a sustainable organisation, alternatives should be explored.
25. It was agreed that Jo Carr and Sebastian Anstruther would be the SDNPA Member representatives on the ICT working group.
26. Deborah Urquhart left the meeting at 12:25pm
- RESOLVED:** the Committee agreed to further work being undertaken over the next three months:
1. Establish the business requirements for the organisation as a whole in relation to ICT services; and
  2. To examine the necessary internal arrangements, structures and capabilities for meeting those requirements.

## **SHARED IDENTITY PROJECT PROCESS AND FORWARD PLAN UPDATE**

27. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Strategy & Partnerships (Report PP3/14). The governance of the Communications and Engagement Strategy was shown to the Committee and the context of the Shared Identity Project within the overall Strategy was explained.
28. Committee Members commented:
- It was encouraging that the consultants had proved themselves to deliver on time up to this point and that they had understood well the needs of the SDNP
  - External partners were very enthusiastic and positive about a project that could tie them to the SDNP
  - Any additional funding could be used in further utilising the work of Thinking Place
  - The Committee would need to be kept informed and updated on the progress of the work of the Shared Identity in order to be well informed of possible resource implications
  - The shared Identity project was looking at the work of the South Downs National Park and not the Authority. The Authority Brand and Logo would not be changing.
29. In response to questions, officers clarified:
- A copy of the Communications and Engagement Strategy was available on the internal website and by following the link below:  
<http://intranet.southdowns.gov.uk/directorates/strategy-and-partnerships/communications-and-engagement/EXTERNAL-USE-Comms-and-Engagement-Strategy-2012-18.pdf>
  - The budget for this project was £50k and already £49.5k had been spent. This included a new toolkit and the sense of place toolkit had been built on. The roll out of the Shared Identity will be integrated into the work the Communications Team handle on a daily basis
30. **RESOLVED:** that the Committee:
1. noted progress to date against agreed project plan activity and milestones and
  2. Noted the next steps of the project.

## **Chair**

The meeting closed at 12.46pm