

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Agenda Item 4

RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING 8 MARCH 2011

Held at Capron House, Midhurst

Present:

Sebastian Anstruther

Susanna Kemp

Deborah Urquhart (Chair)

Margaret Paren (ex officio
Member)

Sue Saville

Geoffrey Theobald

Keith Wood

Charles Peck Paren (ex officio
Member)

Jeremy Leggett

Mark Kemp-Gee

Thomas Tupper

Officers: John Beckerleg (Director of Corporate Services), Sue Chapman (Deputy Chief Finance Officer), Rebecca Haynes (Member Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

60. Apologies were received from Jo Carr.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

61. Sebastian Anstruther declared a personal and prejudicial interest for any Heathland discussions.

MINUTES

62. The minutes of the Resources and Performance Committee meeting held on 22 November 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

URGENT MATTERS

63. There were no urgent matters raised.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

64. There were no members of public present and no requests from the public to participate at the meeting had been received.

BUDGET MONITORING FOR QUARTER 3, 2010/11

65. The Committee considered a report from the Chief Finance Officer.
66. It was confirmed that £2.072million had been allocated for the purchase and refurbishment of Capron House.
67. A member asked if there was a guarantee that Defra would not reclaim underspendings arising in 2010/11. The predicted underspendings were clearly identified for SDNPA projects and communication with Defra had confirmed that any unspent monies could be carried forward. However, it was stated that Defra could at any time reconsider grants awarded to National Park Authorities.
68. A member asked if it was less expensive to have 'in house' Human Resource (HR) staff compared with an outsourced service. A report would be prepared for a future meeting on the procurement of support services including HR.
69. In relation to staff managing budgets, all budget holders would receive a monthly report to assist them with monitoring their budget.
70. Since 1 January 2011 the Authority was obliged to publish details of expenditure on individual transactions over £500 and had provided this via the website. The Committee

Unconfirmed minutes – to be confirmed at the next meeting of the Committee

discussed the possibility of publishing details of any officer earning a salary above £58,000. Members' expenses would be published on the SDNPA website alongside any gifts and hospitality over £25.

71. **Resolved:** that the Committee note the overall financial position as at Quarter 3.

2011/12 BUDGET & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

72. The Committee considered a report by the Chief Finance Officer.
73. The Committee discussed the Planning budget. It was stated that efficiency savings over the next 3 years had been incorporated in the financial planning assumptions in this area. The planning delegation arrangement was explained to the Committee and that there might at some point be consistent planning fees across all areas of the Park. Concerns were raised that other aspects of the SDNPA's budget might be used to fund areas of planning and that this would need to be closely monitored.
74. **Action:** Officers to provide a separate appendix detailing planning costs in future reports and to provide an opportunity for the Committee to assess the risk of the planning budget.
75. The Committee discussed Appendices 1 & 2 of the report. It was requested that although Appendix 1 was clear and 'user friendly' a more detailed description of services would be appreciated. It was stated that Appendix 1 of the report would form the basis for future monitoring reports.
76. **Action:** Officers to provide a detailed account of the content the budget for each directorate.
77. The Committee discussed the capital programme as set out in section 5 of the report.
78. It was explained that a direct comparison between the SDNPA and the South Downs Joint Committee would not be possible as there were different responsibilities and financial commitments.
79. The Committee discussed in detail Appendix 4 of the report. Concerns were raised that some levels of risk were possibly too low and it was confirmed that the Audit Committee would be assessing the corporate risks.
80. **Action:** Officers to arrange a joint workshop with members of the Audit Committee to discuss the risk register and performance indicators.
81. **Action:** Officers to arrange a workshop in 6 months from this meeting date to discuss what should be included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2012/13 onwards.
82. **Resolved:** that the Committee recommends that the Authority:
- approves the revenue 2011/12 Budget as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2;
 - approves the use of revenue reserves as set out in section 4;
 - notes the approved capital programme as set out in section 5; and
 - notes the Medium Term Financial Strategy and resources projections.

DRAFT 2011/12 BUSINESS PLAN

87. The Committee considered a report from the Director of Corporate Services.
88. It was stated that the outcomes of the Localism Bill would be incorporated into the Business Plan once known and might affect objectives 3 & 4 of the Plan.
89. The Committee discussed including neighbourhood planning into the Business Plan and how to achieve memorandums of understanding with other stakeholders and groups such as Tourism, Youth and Education.
90. The Committee discussed if the document was for internal use or if it was to inform the public about the SDNPA's work. It was explained that it might serve both purposes.

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91. The Committee discussed the inclusion of topics such as sustainability, sustainable development and climate change in the document.
92. **Resolved:**
- to add more detail surrounding delivering services for the National Park;
 - to expand the programme of action in the first year;
 - to revise the diagram relating to the achievement of the Duty and Purposes of the National Park;
 - to sharpen the language used in reference to the South Downs Way;
 - to include the government's vision statement on National Parks; and
 - to explain net or gross on the charts on pages 33 & 34 of the Plan.
93. **Resolved:** The Committee indicated the amendments required before the Plan is presented to the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) on 29 March 2011.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2011/12

94. The Committee considered a report by the Chief Finance Officer
95. The Committee discussed in detail the report and accompanying appendices.
96. Mark Kemp-Gee left the meeting at 3:50pm
97. **Resolved:** That the Committee recommends that the Authority approve:
- the Treasury Management Policy Statement 2011/12 and Treasury Management Practices 2011/12 as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.
 - the Annual Investment Strategy 2011/12, including the ethical investment statement and benchmark risk factor of 0.05%, as set out in Appendix 3.

REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

98. The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Chief Finance Officer
99. The Committee discussed the report in detail recommending the following amendments:
- to include the Park's Duty on Page 15 of the Financial Regulations;
 - to mention the Authority's Vision is due to be adopted shortly;
 - page 12 4.8 to make clear what the disaster recovery plans are; and
 - page 24 C.5.1.3. to make clear if laptops need a separate mention or would be covered under C.5.1.7
100. **Action:** Officers to provide the Resources and Performance Committee with a report on disaster recover plans.
101. **Resolved:** that the Committee recommends that the Authority approves and adopts the revised Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures with immediate effect.

Chair

Meeting closed at 4:05pm