

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Agenda Item 3

RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING 21 JUNE 2012

Held at Capron House, Midhurst at 2pm

Present:

Jo Carr

Deborah Urquhart (Chair)

Barry Lipscomb

Pete West

Tom Tupper

Margaret Paren (ex officio
Member)

Officers: Trevor Beattie (Chief Executive Officer) Helene Rossiter (Director of Corporate Services), Phil Belden (Head of Operations), Kevin Gardner (Monitoring Officer), Sue Chapman (Deputy Chief Finance Officer), Anne Rehill (Performance and Business Planning Manager), Anne Bone (Cultural Heritage Strategy Lead), Jan Conway (Capron House Project Manager) and Fiona MacLeod (Member Services Manager)

APOLOGIES

1. Apologies were received from Sebastian Anstruther, Nick Bennett, Jeremy Leggett and Charles Peck (ex-officio).

ELECTION OF CHAIR

2. Deborah Urquhart was elected as Chair for the ensuing year and presided over the rest of the meeting.
3. The Chair welcomed Nick Bennett and Barry Lipscomb as new Members of the Committee, and thanked Mark-Kemp Gee for his valued contribution to the Committee.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

4. Sebastian Anstruther had confirmed his willingness to stand for Deputy Chair and was elected as Deputy Chair for the ensuing year.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

5. None.
6. The Monitoring Officer advised that the Declarations of Interest and Member Code of Conduct would change after 1 July due to the Localism Act 2011.

MINUTES

7. The minutes of the Resources and Performance Committee meeting held on 8 February 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

URGENT MATTERS

8. None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

9. There were no members of the public present.

PRESENTATION BY THE HEAD OF OPERATIONS

10. The Committee received a presentation on the work of Operations (copy available on request) followed by a questions and answer session.
11. The Head of Operations clarified the following in response to Members' questions:
 - a policy on vehicle use, to ensure the NPA had the right fleet, to optimise the use of transport in the Park for effective delivery, would be taken to a future meeting of the Resources and Performance Committee as part of a wider Estates Strategy;

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

- the capacity for the management of volunteers would be included as part of the Volunteers Review and any resource implications would be part of the Business Plan process for 2013-14;
- the balance of policy and delivery would be subject to discussion once the South Downs National Park Management Plan and Local Plan had been agreed;
- clarity on the role of the South Downs Local Access Forum (LAF) was needed as this group evolved and work priorities emerged;
- Operations should communicate their successes with other areas of the organisation as well as with partners through the Communications Strategy, South Downs View etc.

Pete West left the meeting at 2.36pm

PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2011/12

12. The Committee considered a report introduced by the Deputy Chief Finance Officer (Report RPC 09/12) advising the Committee of the provisional outturn position for both capital and revenue budgets for 2011/12.
13. Officers clarified the following in response to Members' questions:
 - The 2011/12 one off underspend was mainly due to delay's in spending as a result in delay's in recruiting permanent staff. The 2012/13 budget is therefore unlikely to result in similar levels of underspending;
 - if, as a result of the Estates Strategy, the policy on vehicles changed from purchasing to leasing, there would need to be a transfer of resources from the capital to the revenue budget;
 - In relation to the Visitor Survey, the £0.049 million referred to in the table in paragraph 3.16 is part of the additional costs (of £0.067 million) referred to in paragraph 3.7;
 - the insurance budget would be reviewed following completion of the purchase of Capron House;
 - a watching brief would be kept on the planning risk earmarked revenue reserve allocation.
14. **Resolved:** that the Committee:
 - 1) notes the provisional outturn position for both revenue and capital budgets for the financial year 2011/12 and approves the carry forwards listed in paragraph 3.16 of report RPC 09/12.

QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE MONITORING INFORMATION

15. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate Services (Report RPC 10/12) introduced by the Performance and Business Planning Manager. The report provided performance monitoring information for Quarter 4 and summarised performance for the whole year of 2011/12.
16. Following discussion, it was agreed that footnotes would be added to future reporting on the local and national Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for planning. The South Downs National Park (SDNPA) had not yet set target KPIs but national targets and indicators for the more established national parks would also be included to future reporting for comparison and to aid understanding. Measures appropriate to the National Park will continue to be developed. The tables at Appendix 3 should be amended to show which actions were complete, and for partnership projects to show which ones the SDNPA was leading on.
17. **Resolved:** that, subject to comments, the Committee:
 - 1) notes the Quarter 4 monitoring against the 2011/12 Business Plan;
 - 2) notes the annual performance for 2011/12;
 - 3) agrees that annual performance as set out in Appendix 3 to report RPC 10/12 is published on the internet; and

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- 2) agrees proposals for 2012/13 Business Plan priority monitoring.

MAJOR PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

18. The Committee considered a report introduced by the Director of Strategy & Partnerships (Report RPC 11/12) that provided advance notice of bids being made for funding from the SDNPA Major Partnerships Panel (MPP). An Addendum to the report was tabled at the meeting that provided options for new arrangements to ensure the timely approval and processing of incoming grants for approved projects.
19. The four options were discussed and Option 1 was considered the most efficient and effective way forward which would achieve the appropriate separation of functions between the MPP and the Resources & Performance Committee.
20. For clarity, the hierarchy for the approvals process would be:
 - MPP recommend grant funding in principle as the Panel was not a formal committee with delegated powers;
 - Resources & Performance Committee to make the final decision on grant funding;
 - decisions to be communicated to all Authority Members;
 - Chief Executive Officer signs off grant funding paperwork;
 - Chief Executive Officer to make any urgent decisions required inbetween scheduled meetings of the Committee using existing delegated powers under Standing Order 18, but with the additional step of consultation with the Chair of the Committee
21. **Resolved:** that the Committee:
 - 1) notes the timescale for current and potential bids for funds in relation to projects approved by the Major Partnership Panel; and
 - 2) agrees to recommend amendment by the SDNPA to the Resources and Performance Terms of Reference 'to agree the submission of bids for grant funding, and the arrangements for application of grant funds received (subject to any urgent decisions required being made by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with Standing Order 18 and in consultation with the Chair of the Committee)'.

IN THE HIGH WOODS PROJECT – CONTRACT WITH HERITAGE LOTTERY

22. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Strategy and Partnerships (Report RPC 12/12) to seek delegated authority for the Chief Executive Officer to sign any necessary contract with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for grants to the "In the High Woods" project.
23. The Cultural Heritage Strategy Lead provided the Committee with an overview and background to the project and referred to the presentation made to Authority Members and members of the public at the Authority meeting on 19 June 2012.
24. The Committee's attention was drawn to an error in paragraph 3.1 of the report. The Stage 2 element should be £992,850.
25. **Resolved :** that the Committee,
 - 1) approves the delegation to the Chief Executive Officer of the power to sign contracts with the Heritage Lottery Fund for grants to the "In the High Woods" project.

ICT PROCUREMENT

26. The Committee received a presentation from Advance365 who were the new ICT providers for the SDNPA. The new arrangements for software and hardware would be implemented over the first weekend in July 2012.

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27. A Welcome Pack and guidance notes would be provided for all staff and Members so that they would be able to access SDNPA systems after the changeover.
28. The Planning service had been identified as the major risk and prioritised accordingly.
29. A Post Implementation Review (PIR) would take place and would be reported to the Resources & Performance Committee when prepared.

CAPRON HOUSE

30. The Committee received an update from the Capron House Project Manager regarding work being undertaken on two Listed Building applications and revised car parking which reminded the Committee on the revised budget approved by the Authority on 24 May 2012.
31. Following a competitive process, Morgan Sindall from Brighton had been appointed as the main contractor for the Capron House refurbishment project under a two stage Design and Build contract.
32. A public consultation on the applications for the South Downs Centre would be community scheduled during the summer and would include a public exhibition which would underline the community focus of the designs. The planning applications would be submitted at the end of June and considered by the Planning Committee in September 2012.
33. The Committee were further updated on the following:
 - transport assessment discussions would take place with West Sussex County Council and a Travel Plan produced;
 - a Member Advisory Group had been set up;
 - the contract incorporated a detailed change management process;
 - use of local people and materials, artisan suppliers etc had been one of the key criteria of the selection process;
 - the Estates Strategy would address area office locations.
34. The Director of Corporate Services explained that the revised budget approved by the Authority on 24 May 2012 had been based on the full details from the feasibility work including actual environmental costs.
35. Members asked why the revised budget had not been taken for consideration by the Committee prior to approval by the Authority. The Committee Chair explained that, as the original decision on budget had been taken by the full Authority, then so would any revision. The budgetary process would be picked up as part of the PIR, as would the tendering process and effectiveness of the construction framework agreement.

Chair

The meeting closed at 4.30 pm