

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING

Held at 2.00pm on 28 March 2019 at the Memorial Hall, South Downs Centre, North Street, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9DH.

Present:

| | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Alun Alesbury | Heather Baker | Ken Bodfish | Tim Burr |
| David Coldwell | Norman Dingemans | Chris Dowling | Neville Harrison |
| Barbara Holyome | Daniel Humphreys | Roger Huxstep | Helen Jackson |
| Doug Jones | Tom Jones | Gill Mattock | Robert Mocatta |
| Russell Oppenheimer | Margaret Paren (Chair) | Ian Phillips | |

South Downs National Park Authority Officers:

Trevor Beattie (Chief Executive), Andrew Lee (Director of Countryside and Policy Management), Nigel Manvell (Chief Finance Officer), Louise Read (Monitoring Officer), Alan Brough (Head of Business Services), Robin Parr (Head of Governance), Richard Sandiford (Senior Committee and Member Services Officer).

Also attended by:

James Winkworth (Head of Marketing and Income Generation).

OPENING REMARKS

151. The Chair informed those present of general housekeeping matters.
152. The Chair informed Members that this meeting was the last National Park Authority (NPA) meeting for Member Gill Mattock and recorded the thanks of the Chair and the Authority for Gill's hard work and service to the Authority.
153. Following the death of Steve Ankers of the South Downs Society the Chair recorded her thanks for his many years of work in support of the South Downs and requested all in attendance to stand and observe a one minute silence.
154. A one minute silence was observed by all in attendance.

ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

155. Apologies were received from Sebastian Anstruther, Jo Carr, Janet Duncton, Graham Morrison, Anthony Watts Williams and Pete West.

ITEM 2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

156. There were none.

ITEM 3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 18 DECEMBER 2018

157. The minutes were approved as a correct record of the Authority meeting held on 18 December 2018.

ITEM 4. MATTERS ARISING

158. Members received an update on the consultation for the A27 Arundel scheme and were advised the consultation would be held in September or October 2019.
159. Members received an update on the Future of Farming test and trials. The SDNPA's proposals had been approved by Defra and funding and a case officer had been allocated. Workshops would be held across the park to discuss the schemes and officers would be working with other protected lowland landscapes.

ITEM 5. URGENT MATTERS

160. There were none.

ITEM 6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

161. There were no public speakers.

ITEM 7. NEED FOR PART II EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

162. Members were asked to consider the exclusion of the public, including the press, from the meeting for Agenda Items 17 and 18.

163. The Monitoring Officer outlined the reasons for the consideration of this exclusion under paragraphs 2, 3, 5 and 6b of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

164. It was proposed and seconded that the meeting move into private session to consider Agenda Items 17 and 18.

165. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to move into private session for Agenda Items 17 and 18 and that the public, including the press, would be excluded from the meeting at the appropriate time.

ITEM 8. AUTHORITY CHAIR UPDATE

166. Authority Members considered the report from the Authority Chair (Report NPA01/19).

167. The Authority Chair updated Members on the following:

- The Transport for South East consultation would be considered by the NPA.
- A meeting had been held with Gillian Keegan MP discussing farming and water in the South Downs.
- The Chair would be attending the Volunteer Ranger Service (VRS) AGM and presenting awards there.

168. Members made the following comments:

- It was good to note the meeting held with the Bishop of Chichester on ways of working together. This could allow Members and Officers to make new contacts through these different networks.

ITEM 9. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S PROGRESS REPORT

169. Authority Members considered the report from the Chief Executive (Report NPA02/19).

170. The Chief Executive updated Members on the following:

- The new National Park signage was currently being installed. Lessons learnt from phase 1 would be considered by P&R Committee in June 2019 and plans for phase 2 by the NPA in July 2019.
- Further ways to effectively and meaningfully involve the Youth Ambassadors in the Authority were being considered and Members were requested to inform the Chief Executive of any suggestions they may wish to put forward.
- Members were encouraged to attend the Farmers Breakfast events and future dates would be circulated in the Members Bulletin.

171. The Chair of the Partnership Management Plan Task and Finish Group updated Members on the progress to date, the outcomes of the March workshop and the future work of the group.

172. Members made the following comments:

- The team involved on the signage project should be congratulated on what was a challenging project. Future plans should include a sign near Alice Holt.
- There had been some unfavourable comments about the metal signs.
- In relation to paragraph 3.5, what classified a site as "difficult"?
- Was the Homes England Land Assembly Fund time limited?

- Could funding for rural exception sites be topped up from CIL or Section 106 funds?
- The Take the Lead campaign was commended, particularly the new strands to the campaign that had been added.

173. In response to questions Members were advised:

- Small rural exception sites were often considered “difficult” as they were sites that the market would not deliver.
- The Homes England Land Assembly Fund was not time limited, but did contain only a limited amount of money.
- The Land Assembly Fund was there to help bring forward difficult sites. CIL and Section 106 funds could work alongside this.

174. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to note the progress made by the South Downs National Park Authority since the last report.

ITEM 10. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES

175. Authority Members received the report on the Sustainable Communities Fund (SCF) (Report NPA03/19).

176. The Chair of the SCF updated Members on the recent meeting about projects that had been considered and supported.

ITEM 11. REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20, CAPITAL STRATEGY 2019/20 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

177. Authority Members considered the report from the Chief Financial Officer (Report NPA04/19).

178. It was recorded that Russell Oppenheimer was not in support of the annual investment strategy.

179. It was proposed and seconded to vote on the recommendation.

180. Russell Oppenheimer recorded his vote against the recommendation.

181. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to:

1. Approve the Revenue Budget 2019/20 of £10.486m, including a contribution of £0.136m to reserves as detailed in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.7 and Appendix 1 to this report.
2. Approve the Capital Strategy 2019/20 at Appendix 2 of this report including the Capital Programme 2019/20 of £171,000.
3. Approve the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy 2019/20 at Appendix 3 of this report.
4. Approve the use of Reserves including the creation of an Affordable Housing Reserve as detailed at Appendix 4.
5. Note the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20 to 2023/24 at Appendix 5.

ITEM 12. CORPORATE PLAN 2019/20

182. Authority Members considered the report from the Director of Countryside Policy and Management (Report NPA05/19).

183. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to approve the Corporate Plan for 2019/20.

ITEM 13. SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK TRUST UPDATE

184. Helen Jackson, as a Trustee of the South Downs National Park Trust, and James Winkworth provided an update on behalf of the South Downs National Park Trust on the following:

- Return on SDNPA funding.

- Current funding streams.
- Funding allocation.
- Comparison against other National Park Trusts.
- Endorsements.
- SCF endowment.
- VRS Conservation Fund.
- Emerging campaigns.

185. Members made the following comments:

- Were donors to the trust identified anywhere?
- Was there action Members could take to promote visitor giving?
- Were there key lessons to learn from the highest performing National Park Trusts?

186. In response to questions Members were advised:

- There will be a list of all donors with the exception of those who wished to remain anonymous.
- Members could promote the visitor giving scheme with businesses in their local area. Officers were able to visit and discuss this further with interested businesses.
- The highest performing National Park Trusts had some significant individual supporters and substantial funds from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Trust would be considering ways to replicate their successes.

ITEM 14. RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING FRAMEWORK CONTRACT APPROVAL

187. Authority Members considered the report from the Head of Business Services (Report NPA06/19).

188. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to:

1. Approve the commencement of a procurement process leading to the establishment of a framework agreement to provide recruitment advertising services to National Parks in the UK for a period of 4 years (and up to 6 years with extensions) from July 2019.
2. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to award contracts for the above, following a competitive process carried out under the terms of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

ITEM 15. PLANNING COMMITTEE

189. Authority Members noted the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 13 December 2018, 17 January 2019 and 14 February 2019.

ITEM 16. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

190. Authority Members noted the minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 22 November 2018.

191. The meeting was closed to the public, including the press, and moved into private session at 3.02pm.