

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY POLICY & PROGRAMME COMMITTEE MEETING 26 JANUARY 2017

Held at the Memorial Hall, South Downs Centre, Midhurst at 2.00pm

Present:

Ken Bodfish (Chair)	Janet Duncton	Mark Dunn	Philip Ede
Helen Jackson			
Margaret Paren (ex officio)	Norman Dingemans (ex officio)		
Other SDNPA Members:			
Neville Harrison	Barbara Holyome		

SDNPA Officers: Andrew Lee (Director of Countryside Policy and Management), Trevor Beattie (Chief Executive), Karen Everett (Deputy Monitoring Officer), Steven Bedford (Principal Accountant), Alan Brough (Head of Business Services), Robin Parr (Head of Governance), Nigel Manvell (s151 Officer) .

Also attended by: Chris Fairbrother (Landscape and Biodiversity Lead (Chalk))

OPENING REMARKS

98. The Chair welcomed all those present and stated that: SDNPA Members had a primary responsibility for ensuring that the Authority furthers the National Park Purposes and Duty. Members regards themselves first and foremost as Members of the Authority, and would act in the best interests of the National Park as a whole, rather than as representatives of their appointing body or any interest groups.

ITEM 1: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

99. Apologies were received from Dan Humphreys, Sue Saville, Jo Carr and Pete West.

ITEM 2: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

100. Ken Bodfish declared a personal interest in the item of Urgent Business as Chairman of the Brighton and Hove Estates Conservation Trust.

ITEM 3: MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2016

101. The minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ITEM 5: MATTERS ARISING

102. Minute 84: The SDNPA was leading on a joint procurement exercise for Insurance Services for 11 National Parks. Tenders had recently been published with a response date of 20 February 2017.
103. Minute 91: The affordable Housing Working Group had met on 16 January 2017. 102 attendees had signed up for the landowners conference scheduled for 3 February 2017, and the outcomes of that event would be fed back to the Committee via the Working Group.

ITEM 5: UPDATES ON PREVIOUS COMMITTEE DECISIONS

104. There were none.

ITEM 6: URGENT MATTERS

105. The Chair advised that, following consultation with the Chief Executive an item of Urgent Business would be considered at the meeting. This related to Stanmer Park and, due to the nature of the business would be considered in private session. The reasons for urgency were that this was a fast moving issue and the outcomes of a committee meeting to be held by Brighton and Hove City Council were expected imminently and the Authority needed to be in the best possible position to respond in to protect the interests of the National Park.

ITEM 7: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

106. There were none.

STRATEGY, PLANS & POLICY

ITEM 8: BUDGET 2017/18 and MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

107. The Committee considered report PP01/17 by the Chief Finance Officer.
108. In response to questions, officers clarified:
- The reduction in forecast planning income had been factored into the budget.
 - The Medium Term Financial Strategy had taken into account a forecast uplift in major applications that was expected after the publication of the Local Plan
 - “South Downs Counters” referred to technology used of the South Downs Way to measure the amount of users. It was noted that the National Trail grant had been protected at 2016/17 levels for 2017/18
109. 12. **RESOLVED:** that the Committee recommended that the Authority:
- 1) Approve the 2017/18 Revenue Budget as detailed in Section 2 and Appendices 1, 2 & 3 of this report
 - 2) Approve the Capital Programme as set out in Section 3 and Appendix 4 of this report
 - 3) Approve the use of Reserves as set out in Section 4 and Appendix 5 of this report
 - 4) Note the Medium Term Financial Strategy and resource projections as set out in Section 5 and Appendix 6 of this report

ITEM 9: TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2017/18

110. The Committee considered report PP02/17 by the Chief Finance Officer
111. The Committee commented:
- In respect of potential investment barriers that may result from the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) Consultation the SDNPA may be affected even though the Authority’s investments were managed by Brighton and Hove City Council.
 - Whilst the outcome of the FCA consultation was awaited any action the Authority could take in response to changes to its investments status needed to be considered. It was noted that the Local Government Association has made strong representations on behalf the sector.
112. **RESOLVED:** That the Committee recommended the Authority to approve:
- 1) The Treasury Management Policy Statement 2017/18 and the Treasury Management Practices 2017/18 as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to this report;
 - 2) The Annual Investment Strategy 2017/18, including the benchmark risk factor of 0.05%, as set out in Appendix 3 to this report.

ITEM 10: THE BIG CHALK – UPDATE ON PROGRESS

113. The Landscape and Biodiversity Lead (Chalk) updated the Committee on progress with the Big Chalk programme stating that:
- Post the Brexit referendum partners were still keen to participate in this work and offers of funding for elements of the programme had been forthcoming.
 - A number of pilot projects to deliver elements of the programme were underway or in development that would deliver Big Chalk objectives
 - The ongoing work would be used to inform the development of the Landscape and Biodiversity delivery plans.
- Members commented that this was a vitally important programme of work which was worthy of continued support. Focus needed to be maintained, despite the loss of opportunities for EU funding.
114. **RESOLVED:** That the Committee noted the progress on the delivery of the Big Chalk work Programme

115. It was proposed and seconded to exclude any Press and Public during items consideration of the urgent business on the basis that it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if a member of the public were present during the items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Authority, , and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exempt information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, Following a vote the proposal was carried.
116. **RESOLVED:** That the Committee move into Part 11 (private session) for consideration of the urgent business and exclude any members of the public and press from the meeting at that time.
117. Nigel Manvell and Steven Bedford left the meeting.

ITEM 11: URGENT BUSINESS – STANMER PARK

118. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Countryside and Policy Management

ITEM 12: TO NOTE THE DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

119. Thursday 28 February 2017 at the South Downs Centre

CHAIR

The meeting closed at 3.10 pm.

