

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

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING 16 July 2015

Held at Memorial Hall, South Downs Centre, Midhurst, West Sussex at 2pm

Present:

Alun Alesbury	Ken Bodfish	Jo Carr	Norman Dingemans	Mark Dunn
Philip Ede	Jennifer Gray	Neville Harrison	Barbara Holyome,	Daniel Humphreys
Doug Jones	Diana Kershaw	Barry Lipscomb	Gary Marsh	Gill Mattock
Margaret Paren(Chair)	Ian Phillips	Karen Roberts	Sue Saville	Deborah Urquhart
Pete West				

SDNPA Officers: Trevor Beattie (Chief Executive Officer), Andrew Lee (Director of Strategy & Partnerships), Tim Slaney (Director of Planning), Phil Belden (Director of Operations), Louise Read (Monitoring Officer), Robin Parr (Governance & Support Services Manager), Lucy Howard (Planning Policy Manager), Lara Southam (Local Plan Lead), Sarah Nelson (Strategic Planning Lead), Anna Ludford (Senior Policy Officer), Angie Blowman (Sustainable Futures Manager) & Rebecca Haynes (Member Services Officer).

OPENING REMARKS

49. The Chair welcomed the following new Members to the Authority;
- Karen Roberts, appointed by West Sussex Parishes
 - David Coldwell, appointed by Horsham District Council following the resignation of Brian O’Connell
 - Philip Ede, appointed by Wealden District Council
50. The Chair, on behalf of the Authority, thanked the following Members for their commitment, dedication and valuable contributions they had made to the Authority;
- David Burden
 - Jennifer Gray
51. Authority Member Barbara Holyome joined the meeting at 2:05pm.

ITEM 1 - APOLOGIES

52. Apologies were received from, Sebastian Anstruther, Vaughan Clarke, David Coldwell, Tom Jones, & Jim Sheppard.
53. Authority Member Jo Carr joined the meeting at 2:10pm.

ITEM 2 - DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

54. The Monitoring Officer gave Authority Members advice on declaring both disclosable pecuniary and public service interests and declared that it would be taken as read that all Parish and local authority appointed members present would declare a public service interest in Item 7

Alun Alesbury	Jo Carr	Norman Dingemans	Mark Dunn
Philip Ede	Jennifer Gray	Neville Harrison	Barbara Holyome
Daniel Humphreys	Doug Jones	Barry Lipscomb	Gary Marsh
Gill Mattock	Karen Roberts	Deborah Urquhart	Pete West

55. Jo Carr declared a pecuniary interest in item 7 as she owned a farm and equestrian business in the SDNP and that she would not participate in the debate and decision on the item.

ITEM 3 - MINUTES

56. The minutes of the Authority meeting held on 25 June 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ITEM 4- MATTERS ARISING

57. Minute 21: Triathlon World Championships: The Director of Corporate Services competed in this event and came 15th in her class.

Minute 22: Rampion Wind Farm: Work was due to start during July 2015 and as the Authority anticipated that there would be questions about why and how it’s happening, a [FAQ section](#) has been provided on the Authority website.

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Minute 25: Minister for National Parks: Rory Stewart was unable to visit the SDC prior to Recess and the offer of an early visit to the South Downs had been repeated. The Chief Executive Officer and the Authority Chair attended a Parliamentary Reception on Wednesday 15 July at the House of Lords where Rory Stewart held a Pre meet with Chief Executive Officers and NP Chairs. The Minister was interested in assisting National Parks to open up opportunities for greater commercial sponsorship and suggested that he could host a visit from the USA National Parks. In both these areas the SDNPA was well positioned, both with the alternative Income project that the Director of Corporate Services was leading on and with the links the Director of Operations had made following his recent visit to National Parks in the USA.

The Minister was looking for opportunities to promote stories about individual National Parks, and the Authority's communications team would work with Defra to ensure that he had options to take up. He was also interested in extending the "membership base" of National Parks to supplement existing volunteers and friends groups and suggested that authorities might make contact with the RSPB to learn more about their approach to mass participation.

The meeting was positive with many of his comments in line with current SDNPA plans and the Minister understood the need for Defra to continue to fund the core budgets of national parks.

Minute 25: Alternative Income Sources: A key priority for the SDNPA was the investigation of opportunities to diversify the income sources. In order to achieve this a focussed approach was required that draws on expertise within and outside the organisation. Whilst the Director of Corporate Services was leading on this project, the Authority had recruited an interim manager, Vince Hislop, to commence on 6 August for an initial period of 6 months to cover the day to day management of the Corporate Services function and to support the Chief Executive Officer in delivering the 2016-17 budget and corporate plan, with any associated savings that may be required. The Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Authority and Members welcomed Vince Hislop to the Authority.

The income generation project was likely to cover the following:

- income through charitable giving (legacies, visitor giving, donations, gift aid etc.)
- income through (corporate) sponsorship
- income from commercial sources (retail, rental of assets etc.)

This would require a period of scoping and analysis before a clear strategy for action could be built and it was the intention that Authority Members would be involved in the development of the strategic direction.

Minute 25: Direct Elections: In response to a parliamentary question on 29 June 2015 it was confirmed that the Government would not be pursuing legislation on direct elections to National Park Authorities.

A27: The SDNPA was maintaining a close watching brief on both aviation issues and the various A27 schemes as Officers were being regularly approached by consultants and campaign groups. The Authority's engagement at this stage was based wholly on the SDNPA position statements.

Facilitating the Farmers: A cluster of farmers between the Adur and Arun valleys were working together on compatible farming practices which should benefit the National Park at a real landscape scale as the new Countryside Stewardship agri-environment scheme. The scheme had an optional Facilitation Fund and the SDNPA were successful in its bid. Only half of the applications were approved, and the only successful bid from a National Park was from the South Downs. The Authority had 60% of the area covered in the initial bid, and it was anticipated that others would join as the work progressed over the next five years, with a core grant plus a small amount to be paid to each farm participating. The fund assists the facilitation and for training to deliver NP priorities as set out in the Countryside Stewardship scheme.

Fracking in national parks: Areas to be excluded from underground fracking activities had been set out by the Government (16 July 2015) through draft regulations that defined the zone within protected areas in which fracking would be prohibited. At the time of the

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meeting Authority Officers had not had time to process the new information provided and would report back to Authority Members once this had been completed.

58. An Authority Member commented that flights over the National Park using Farnborough airfield could cause an issue.
59. In response to questions, officers clarified:
- Rampion Project: The SDNPA Project Manager could produce a map of the route where it affects the SDNP
SDNPA Officers had and would continue to work closely with neighbouring authorities during the process.
 - The 10 Year Strategic Vision Map on cycle routes should be treated in confidence as some routes were aspirational and not all landowners had yet given their permission. It was important to complete feasibility studies in the first instance.
 - Take the Lead Campaign: Sheep worrying was an ongoing issue for the SDNPA and there was a need to continue working in partnership with local authorities, as they had the mechanisms and authority to control dogs and address professional dog walkers. The SDNPA were continuing to use many resources to highlight responsible dog ownership such as during films on Brighton beach, social media and ranger blogs.

ITEM 7 - URGENT MATTERS

60. On Monday 6 July 2015 the Chief Executive Officer took an urgent decision to transfer funds from the vehicle reserve budget into the capital budget. The purpose of the decision was to enable the bringing forward of the purchase of two vehicles (which was scheduled for 2016/17) and would ensure the Authority was able to purchase the additional vehicles before Land Rover ceased production this year of the Defender model.
- The transfer of funds into the capital budget would have required P&P Committee approval. However, in order to ensure the Authority was able to reserve the final two production models before production ceased an order was required to be placed on the 6 July, and therefore an urgent decision was required.
- The decision was taken following consultation with the Chair of the Authority and the Chair of the P&P Committee, as well as the Chief finance Officer and Director of Corporate Services.
61. In response to questions, officers clarified:
- The new emission standards meant that some Land Rover models would no longer be produced and the Authority had to ensure it had a fleet of vehicles to deliver the National Park's Purposes and Duty
 - Having a renewed fleet would give the Authority time to investigate alternative options once they become available. There were no suitable alternative available on the market at the present time. Land Rovers had the capacity to transport a number of people in a 4 wheel drive vehicle off-road to sites, the alternatives did not have the capacity for carrying the same number of passengers.

ITEM 8 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

62. Steve Ankers spoke on behalf of the South Downs Society (SDS) and the South Downs Network (SDN) in regard to item 7 on the South Downs draft Local Plan. He commented:
- The Societies had welcomed the overall approach being taken in the Plan and were keen to play their part in its implementation. They recently participated in the 'duty to cooperate' workshop organised by the Authority. They found the engagement process useful and would assist them in formulating their responses to the forthcoming consultation
 - They would be looking to the Plan for ambition and determination when it came to the test of major development in the Park and for creativity when it came to areas like tranquillity, dark night skies and quiet country lanes.
 - They had concerns with townscape and urban regeneration issues, brownfield sites at Fernhurst, Shoreham cement works, North Street, Lewes and a new development threat at Old Malling Farm. They also had an intense interest in highway design and the public realm. Their members shared the concerns expressed in the draft Plan at the

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incremental threat to the countryside which might arise from the wrong kind of farm diversification in the wrong place, from conversions of redundant agricultural buildings, the construction of so-called agricultural dwellings and ill-conceived equestrian development.

63. Authority member Jo Carr left the meeting room at 2:42pm

ITEM 7 – SOUTH DOWNS DRAFT LOCAL PLAN PREFERRED OPTIONS

64. Authority Members considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report 19/15), the revised [Update Sheet](#) (tabled at the meeting), [Powerpoint presentation](#), and were reminded that:

- This was the first South Downs Local Plan and the first National Park to produce a Plan post the NPPF that commenced from a landscape position
- Authority Members had been heavily involved in the progress of the Local Plan through Workshops, the Local Plan Members Working Group, and the Planning Committee
- The report was not seeking approval for the Local Plan, but for consultation on the Preferred Options Local Plan. Authority Members had previously considered the draft Plan, policy by policy at the June NPA meeting.

65. Authority Members were asked to consider the draft Local Plan as a whole, the update sheet, and put forward any questions on individual sections/policies before addressing the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) separately. Any minor points or typos would need to be emailed to the Planning Policy Manager.

66. Authority Members commented:

- [SD37 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows](#). - Point 4 of the policy stated that the SDNPA would require a one-for-one replacement of any felled TPO'd trees. This might not always be the case and it was suggested to remove the text 'one for one' and replace with "of appropriate number, size and scale"
- [Policy SD58 - Air Quality](#) - covers pollution and problems with traffic, however it didn't address issues caused by freight traffic. The policy should mention the issue of diesel freight
- [Document Layout](#) - It would be useful to have a clearer contents page for easier navigation. The Glossary was very good, however the term development was used a lot in the document and should be added to the Glossary to assist the reader

67. In response to questions, Officers clarified:

- [Contaminated Land Policy](#) – the policy doesn't reference the possible impact of the removal of contaminated waste off site for people living/working near the site or using the roads. This was because there was a cross-over on legislation with Environmental Health and the Local Plan could not address issues beyond the control of the SDNPA. However this issue could be made clearer within the supporting text
- [Sustainability Appraisal](#) - in regard to whether the SA needed to deal with the impact of large scale infrastructure projects (NSIPs – Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects) which are outside of the control of the SDNPA; it was dependent on the timing of both the SA for the SD Local Plan and of the Infrastructure projects as to whether the Authority SA evaluated the cumulative impact of the Plan and specific NSIPs.
- The Partnership Management Plan (PMP) addresses the issue of Carbon reduction as this could not be included in the Local Plan
- The document would follow the landscape printing format and design of the PMP, where policy boxes would be shaded
- The statement on page 5 of the Plan in regard to the Authority monitoring and following changes to legislation, would be clarified.

68. The Chair noted the Comments and recommendations, confirming that they would be considered and added to the Local Plan as appropriate.

69. **RESOLVED:** That the Authority:

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- 1 Approved the draft South Downs Local Plan: Preferred Options as set out at appendix 1 of report 19/15 and Update Sheet, for consultation under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
 - 2 Endorsed the direction of the emerging Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of which the summary of the appraisal and recommendations as set out in appendix 2 to report 19/15 and gave the Director of Planning in consultation with the Authority Chair delegated powers to approve for consultation under Regulation 13 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, subject to any comments made by the NPA being addressed
 - 3 Endorsed the direction of the draft Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) as set out in appendix 3 of report 19/15 and gave the Director of Planning in consultation with the Authority Chair delegated powers to approve for consultation under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, subject to any comments made by the NPA being addressed
 - 4 Noted that additional comments raised by members on either the Local Plan, the SA and/or HRA raised during the NPA discussion would be addressed prior to the publication for consultation. The wording of these changes would be approved under delegated powers by the Director of Planning in consultation with the Authority Chair, and
 - 5 Noted that minor changes relating to updates, typographical errors and re-ordering of the Local Plan: Preferred Options prior to publication for public consultation would be made under delegated powers by the Director of Planning in consultation with the Authority Chair.
70. The Chief Executive Officer thanked the Members and Officers that had been involved in the Local Plan and for all their hard work in reaching the consultation stage. Authority Members also wished to record their thanks to Officers.
71. Authority Member Jo Carr re-joined the meeting at 3:19pm

ITEM 8 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

72. Authority Members considered the report by the Governance & Support Services Manager and tabled appendix 1 and 2 to report 20/15.
73. In response to a question, the Chief Executive Officer clarified that the level of representation the Authority has on LEPs is dependent on the amount of the National Park the LEP covered.
74. **RESOLVED:** The Authority
- 1) Appointed the Members to outside bodies, and other bodies/panels for 2015/16 as set out in Appendix 1 to report 20/15
 - 2) Agreed any changes to the membership of Authority Committees as set out at appendix 2 of report 20/15

ITEM 9 BROADBAND UPDATE

75. The Authority received a presentation from the Sustainable Futures Manager. The presentation is available on the [Authority Website](#).
76. Authority Members commented:
- Mobile Broadband was working well, however in order to reach all areas of the Park more masts would need to be installed especially as visitors to the Park would be reliant on their mobile phones for retrieving information such as public transport timetables and routes
 - BT were failing in their responsibility to provide high speed broadband as they held the highest proportion of lines across the Park.
 - The Authority Chair had expressed concern on lack of high speed broadband across the Park to all of the local MPs, and collectively with National Parks England, they had highlighted the issue to the Secretary of State.
77. In response to questions, Officers clarified:

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- The P&P Committee meeting in October would include an item on the national mobile infrastructure, which would explain the mast and planning requirements
- Through the West Sussex Partnership the Authority has made representation to the Select Committees to keep the issue high profile
- Wireless coverage was one option with other projects being investigated using innovation fund monies. Suppliers need to inform on the solution to reach hot spots and areas with no or limited coverage.

Chair

The meeting closed at 3:45pm