

**SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
AUTHORITY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)**

Held at 2.00pm on 3 July 2018 at the Memorial Hall, South Downs Centre, North Street, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9DH

Present:

Alun Alesbury	Sebastian Anstruther	Heather Baker	Ken Bodfish
Tim Burr	Norman Dingemans	Chris Dowling	Janet Duncton
Neville Harrison	Barbara Holyome	Roger Huxstep	Helen Jackson
Doug Jones	Tom Jones	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), Tim Slaney (Director of Planning), Steven Bedford (Finance Officer), Karen Everett (Deputy Monitoring Officer), Robin Parr (Head of Governance), Richard Sandiford (Senior Committee and Member Services Officer).

Also attended by:

Ruth James (Communication and Engagement Manager), Kirsten Williamson (Minerals and Waste Lead), Lucy Howard (Planning Policy Manager), Andy Beattie (Wealden Heath Countryside and Policy Manager), Veronica Craddock (Infrastructure and Environment Strategy Lead), Mike Hughes (Major Planning Projects and Performance Manager).

OPENING REMARKS

1. The Chief Executive informed those present of general housekeeping matters and that the meeting was being web-cast by the National Park Authority and would be available for subsequent on-line viewing. By coming into the Meeting Room members of the Authority, public and press were considered to have given their consent to be filmed or recorded, and for the possible use of images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. Apologies were received from Jo Carr, David Coldwell, Mark Dunn, Daniel Humphreys, Gill Mattock and Pete West.

ITEM 2. ELECTION OF CHAIR

3. The election process was presided over by the Chief Executive and the Authority was informed that nominations closed five clear working days before the meeting and as Margaret Paren was the only nomination, Margaret Paren was duly elected as Chair of the Authority until the Authority AGM in 2019.
4. The Chair informed the Authority that agenda items 18, 19 and 20 were to note. These items were taken as read as no Member indicated that they had any matters related to these items that they wished to discuss.

ITEM 3. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

5. The election process was presided over by the Chair and the Authority was informed that nominations closed five clear working days before the meeting and as Norman Dingemans was the only nomination, Norman Dingemans was duly elected as Deputy Chair of the Authority until the Authority AGM in 2019.
6. The Authority was informed that Gary Marsh from Mid-Sussex District Council was no longer a Member of the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). Anthony Watts Williams had been appointed as the new SDNPA Member from Mid-Sussex District Council.

ITEM 4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

7. The following declarations of interest were made:
 - Sebastian Anstruther – Agenda Item 14, Pecuniary Interest and would withdraw from the meeting for the consideration of item 14.

- Janet Duncton – Agenda Item 14, Public Service Interest as a West Sussex County Councillor.

ITEM 5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 26 APRIL AND 24 MAY 2018

8. The minutes were approved as a correct record of the Authority meetings held on 26 April and 24 May 2018 subject to the following amendments:
 - Minute 487, bullet 7; was amended to read “The Chair of the SDNP Trust could be invited to provide an annual report to the Authority”.
 - Minutes 522, bullet 2; Walberton was spelt incorrectly.

ITEM 6. MATTERS ARISING

9. There were none.

ITEM 7. URGENT MATTERS

10. There were none.

ITEM 8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

11. The Chair invited Steve Ankers, speaking as a representative of the South Downs Society (SDS) and the Campaign for National Parks (CNP), to address the meeting.
12. The Chair paid tribute to Steve Anker’s work for the South Downs as a National Park and the South Downs Society.
13. Steve Ankers made the following points:
 - A number of voluntary organisations would take any steps possible to support the SDNPA in the judicial review of the A27 Arundel preferred route announcement.
 - SDS and CNP would be responding to the Glover Review stressing the need for a well-resourced and stable network of accessible landscape with appropriate planning protection and environmentally sustainable management.
 - Reinforced SDS’ continued commitment as supporters and challenging friends of the National Park.

ITEM 9. NEED FOR PART II EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

14. Members were asked to indicate if they wished to discuss any matters under Agenda Item 21, the Part II minutes of the National Park Authority (NPA) meeting held on 24 May 2018, or Agenda Item 22, the Part II minutes of the Policy and Resources (P&R) Committee held on 29 March 2018.
15. As no Members indicated they wished to discuss any matters under Agenda Items 21 or 22 the Part II minutes of the NPA meeting held on 24 May 2018 were approved as a correct record and the Part II minutes of the P&R Committee held on 29 March 2018 were noted.

ITEM 10. AUTHORITY CHAIR UPDATE

16. Authority Members received a verbal report from the Chair on the following:
 - In capacity as Chair of National Parks England (NPE) met with Lord Gardiner and a number of matters were discussed including the Glover Review which we were reassured was a positive step forward with no agenda to confront National Parks. A round table discussion with Julian Glover and representatives of 8 other National Parks was taking place on 5 July and Julian Glover was also planning to visit all National Parks as part of the review. The future of farming was discussed and a meeting with George Eustice MP was planned for late July. Also discussed was the subject of Member allowances; our concerns regarding the removal of the highest protection for protected landscapes within the new NPPF, concerns which were shared by Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs); progress on the 8 point plan and Secretary of State appointments which had gone to ministers and the aim was to notify successful candidates by mid-July 2018.

- Also in capacity as Chair of NPE met with senior officials from Highways England (HE) to consider better ways of working in the future.
 - A meeting with Steve Brine MP for Winchester at which the Economic Strategy, affordable housing and the M3 Junction 9 scheme were discussed.
 - A meeting with Members from Hampshire County Council, which was chaired by Russell Oppenheimer, to discuss Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) in East Hampshire.
 - A meeting with Cllr Rob Humby from Hampshire County Council to discuss the M3 Junction 9 scheme.
 - Attendance at the SDNPA All Staff and Member Day which was both enjoyable and useful. As the event was a success it would be repeated in 2019. It was also good to note that David Coldwell and Roger Huxstep were representing Members on the Culture Group.
 - Attendance at the Coast to Capital LEP Leader Group where the Economic Strategy was signed off for submission to government. The strategy had Gatwick at its core but it also recognised the importance of the countryside and the SDNP and other protected areas as one of the regions selling points. They were aiming to work with the SDNPA on a green infrastructure plan.
17. The Chair informed Members that at future meetings of the Authority, in order to ensure the NPA is more aware of the activities of outside bodies, written or verbal updates from Members appointed to outside bodies would be acceptable and the agenda item to consider these updates would immediately follow the Chief Executive's Progress Report.

ITEM 11. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S PROGRESS REPORT

18. Authority Members considered the report from the Chief Executive (Report NPA18/18).
19. The Chief Executive updated Members on:
- The new "Raising the Bar" report from CNP which challenged National Parks on biodiversity. The analysis of the report would feed into the Partnership Management Plan (PMP).
 - Members were thanked for their time and energy at the Seven Sisters Members Day from which a number of key action points arose.
 - The "Way in a Day" event on 14 September. There were a number of different route lengths and transport options to allow as many as possible to engage. If successful, consideration would be given to an annual, possibly public, event.
20. Members made the following comments:
- Pleased to note that Members would be seeing the good use of SCF grants at the Member Day in November.
 - The routes outlined for the Way in a Day event had specific modes of transport, did that mean you could not walk an identified cycle route, or vice versa?
 - As far as officers were aware was the Local Plan examination still due to take place in October/November 2018?
 - It was good to note that parish signage was being progressed especially in Upham.
21. In response to questions Members were advised:
- The stages had been identified for a specific mode of transport, so although it was not impossible to walk a cycle route all taking part were encouraged to complete the stages as a group.
 - Current advice on the scheduling of the Local Plan examination was that it would be held in October/November 2018.
22. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to note the progress made by the South Downs National Park Authority since the last report.

ITEM 12. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

23. Authority Members considered the report from the Head of Governance (Report NPA19/18).
24. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to:
1. Appoint the Planning Committee, Policy and Resources Committee and Appointments, Management & Standards Committee with the Terms of reference set out at Appendix 1, as the committees necessary to discharge the functions of the Authority.
 2. Appoint the Membership of Committees as set out in Appendix 3 to this report (tabled at the meeting).
 3. Appoint the Members to outside bodies and panels until the Authority AGM in 2019 as set out in Appendix 5 to the report with the effect that previous such appointments are now revoked.
 4. Agree, for purposes of Standing order 8.1(e), that, in line with the Authority's established practice, the Committees appointed by the Authority may not arrange for the discharge of the Authority's functions by a sub-committee. All Committees retain powers under Standing Order 27 to establish Member Task and Finish Groups.
 5. Appoint the named individual(s) set out in the exempt Appendix 6 to serve as Independent members (non-voting co-optees) of the Policy and Resources Committee, to serve for a period of 4 years (until the Authority AGM in 2022).

ITEM 13. PUBLIC AFFAIRS STRATEGY

25. Authority Members considered the report and presentation from the Communications and Engagement Manager (Report NPA20/18).
26. Members made the following comments:
- As the 'asks' would not be public knowledge would it be clear what the authority would be focussing on?
 - What were other National Park's Public Affairs Strategies focussed on?
 - Could the authority form a parliamentary group focussing on the aims of the National Park?
 - The concise document outlining the key messages was welcomed.
 - There were risks arising from stakeholders own agendas and potential misrepresentation. Progress on the Public Affairs Strategy should be kept under review.
 - Concern that there were no timed actions as part of the Stakeholder Management Plan.
 - How would this work be integrated with communications and public engagement work on the Partnership Management Plan?
 - The Authority had a wide group of stakeholders and all Members could make a difference in communicating the messages. The South Downs Partnership could be a good body to present to.
 - Was the objective of being a "premier sustainable tourism destination" defined in terms of quality or quantity? Would exemplary be a more appropriate adjective than premier?
 - It was clear from the Health and Harmony paper, the 8 point plan and the Glover Review that National Parks were being asked to consider how they could be a national asset.
27. In response to questions Members were advised:
- The Corporate Plan would set out all organisational priorities, but the areas identified in the Public Affairs Strategy were where there were opportunities for the authority to make a difference now.
 - Officers were unaware of any other National Park having a Public Affairs Strategy.
 - An all-party parliamentary group had been set up by NPE. Getting messages across locally may be better served by engaging MPs directly.

- Actions had no timescale in the Stakeholder Management Plan as the plan was a living document that would be updated on an ongoing basis.
 - This plan was put together taking account of current resources. The authority needed to be smarter in its use of resources and consider how communication with stakeholders could be improved. The PMP process was an excellent opportunity to meet a range of targets.
 - Being a “premier sustainable tourism destination” related to quality and the experiential nature of tourism in the National Park. Improving the experience for visitors, business and residents; encouraging visitors to understand the National Park and give to its sustainable future. The word premier could be replaced with exemplary.
28. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to adopt the Public Affairs Strategy, set out in Appendix I of the report, subject to the changes agreed at the Authority meeting.
29. Sebastian Anstruther left the meeting at 14.58.

ITEM 14. ADOPTION OF THE WEST SUSSEX AND SDNPA JOINT MINERALS PLAN

30. Authority Members considered the report from Planning Policy Lead - Minerals and Waste (Report NPA21/18).
31. Members made the following comments:
- The report had been considered at Planning Committee and there had been good work and some excellent outcomes. Soft sand was a precious commodity, hence the review.
 - As minerals extraction was a major feature in some other National Parks what was the SDNPA’s policy direction on minerals extraction? The term ‘managed retreat’ seemed to imply the SDNPA would like to be less involved in minerals extraction.
 - A Member Day on the Soft Sand Review was taking place on 30 August.
 - As the inspector had changed some of the wording was the Authority comfortable that a robust set of criteria was still in place to consider fracking applications?
32. In response to questions Members were advised:
- The Authority’s approach to mineral extractions was that as all mineral extraction was defined as major development it should only take place in a National Park in exceptional circumstances in line with the NPPF.
 - Fracking applications would go through the same process as other applications and the criteria the Authority had was considered to be robust. The wording revised by the inspector was not considered to undermine this.
33. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to:
1. Adopt the Joint Minerals Plan, incorporating the Modifications and publish and adopt the updated Policies Map;
 2. Publish the Adoption Statement and Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) Report;
 3. Note the content of the Inspector’s Report and his conclusion that the JMLP is legally compliant and sound;
 4. Note the ongoing commitment the South Downs National Park Authority has to work in partnership with West Sussex County Council to undertake a Single Issue Review of Soft Sand policy as part of joint working on waste and mineral policy issues
 5. Authorise the Director of Planning to agree any further minor non-material changes to the content of the JMLP in consultation with the Chair of the Planning Committee and WSCC.
34. Sebastian Anstruther returned to the meeting at 15.10.

ITEM 15. UPDATE ON ESSO PREFERRED ROUTE ANNOUNCEMENT

35. Authority Members considered the report and presentation from the Countryside and Policy Manager – Wealden Heath (Report NPA22/18).
36. Members made the following comments:
- Would decommissioning of the existing pipeline require an additional phase of work?
 - Was ESSO the only supplier using this pipeline?
37. In response to questions Members were advised:
- Decommissioning of the existing pipeline would be an additional phase of work. The process of decommissioning had not been finalised and options were being discussed.
 - The fuel in the pipeline originated from various sources, however, the pipeline was operated by ESSO.
38. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to:
1. Note the Preferred Route Announcement for the ESSO replacement pipeline through the SDNP.
 2. Agree that officers continue to work with ESSO to support the development of a fully mitigated and compensated scheme prior to Esso's public consultation exercise in Autumn 2018.

ITEM 16. AFFORDABLE HOUSING – RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

39. Authority Members considered the report and presentation from the Major Planning Projects and Performance Manager (Report NPA23/18).
40. Sebastian Anstruther informed the Authority that he was owner of a site allocated in the Local Plan, however, as this item was discussing a matter of policy he did not feel this constituted a declarable pecuniary interest for this item.
41. Members made the following comments:
- Would the Authority be party to a bid by Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing (HARAH)? We would not want them to think our bid was in competition.
 - Would a rural exception site have affordability in perpetuity rather than being a community land trust?
 - Further exploration of the role of the private sector and possible larger scale investment in affordable housing was welcomed. On a smaller scale landowners and farmers had in the past been overwhelmingly supportive of affordable housing and should not be forgotten. It was felt that some affordable housing should be kept in the private sector to avoid the right to buy.
 - Could reference be made in the second recommendation to taking account of the provisions of the NPPF as they come into force?
 - There may be policy changes following the Local Plan examination and there was still ongoing work. Any opportunities that arose would be brought to P&R Committee and the NPA.
 - It was felt landowners wanted the Authority's facilitation to provide accommodation in their communities.
42. In response to questions Members were advised:
- HARAH was very supportive of a joint bid with the Authority. The Authority was keen to ensure a proposal was submitted which could be supported in planning terms.
 - A rural exception site would have affordability in perpetuity.
 - There would be a rolling series of announcements from government which the group would consider. The group should not have bounds put on what it can consider in relation to affordable housing. Reports back to P&R Committee and the NPA would pick up the group's latest work.

43. An amended recommendation was proposed and seconded which removed wording limiting the group to the consideration of private sector investment and its potential role in the provision of affordable housing in the National Park.
44. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to:
1. Agree the recommendations arising from the Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group, as set out at section 5 of this report.
 2. Agree that the terms of reference for the Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group be amended to extend the duration of its activity until December 2018. This is to allow for additional work to be completed.

ITEM 17. FRAMEWORK FOR THE REVIEW OF THE PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT PLAN

45. Authority Members considered the report from the Director of Countryside and Policy Management (Report NPA24/18).
46. Members made the following comments:
- This was the single most important policy document for the National Park.
 - Members were reminded that meetings of the Partnership Management Plan Task and Finish Group were open to all Members to attend.
47. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to:
1. Endorse the revised timescale & approach for the review of the Partnership Management Plan which was agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee on 24 May 2018.
 2. Agree the proposed changes to the PMP Outcomes and Policies, as set out in Appendix I.

ITEM 18. PLANNING COMMITTEE

48. Authority Members noted the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on the 12 April and 10 May 2018.

ITEM 29. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

49. Authority Members noted the minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on the 29 March 2018 and 24 May 2018.

ITEM 20. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS APPOINTED TO EXTERNAL BODIES

50. There were none.
51. The Chair closed the meeting at 15.55

