

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING

Held at 12.00pm on 25 March 2021 using Zoom Video Conferencing.

Present:

Alun Alesbury, Heather Baker, Annie Brown, Tim Burr, Helen Burton, Chris Dowling, Angus Dunn, Janet Duncton, Therese Evans, Barbara Holyome, Melanie Hunt, Doug Jones, Baroness Jones of Whitchurch, Michael Lunn, Gary Marsh, William Meyer, Robert Mocatta, Russell Oppenheimer, Martin Osborne, Ian Phillips (Chair), Henry Potter, Vanessa Rowlands, Andrew Shaxson, Isabel Thurston, Richard Waring and Stephen Whale.

South Downs National Park Authority Officers:

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

Also attended by:

Ruth James (Communications and Engagement Manager), Anne Rehill (Performance and Projects Manager), Tanya Hibberd (Performance and Research Lead) and Kirsten Williamson (Planning Policy Lead).

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

180. The Chair welcomed all present and stated that:

- Due to the current Coronavirus pandemic the South Downs Centre and Memorial Hall remained closed for public meetings until further notice, hence the meeting of the South Downs National Park Authority was held using the Zoom Cloud Meetings software.
- The meeting was being webcast by the Authority and would be available for subsequent on-line viewing. Anyone entering the meeting was considered to have given consent to be filmed or recorded, and for the possible use of images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purpose
- The Chair advised the meeting that the order of agenda items would be revised with Agenda Item 10 coming ahead of Agenda Item 8.

ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

181. Apologies were received from Diana Van Der Klugt

ITEM 2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

182. The following declarations of interest were made:

- Robert Mocatta declared a Public Service Interest in Item 15 as a Member of Hampshire County Council.
- Andrew Shaxson declared a Public Service Interest in Item 14 as a Member of Harting Parish Council.
- Stephen Whale declared a Personal Interest in Items 16 and 21 as the prospective Chair of the Board of the Directors of the South Downs Commercial Operations Ltd and withdrew from the meeting for these items.
- Janet Duncton declared a Public Service Interest in Item 14 as a Member of West Sussex County Council.
- Vanessa Rowlands declared a Personal Interest in Items 16 and 21 as a prospective Director of the South Downs Commercial Operations Ltd and withdrew from the meeting for these items.

- Gary Marsh declared a Public Service Interest in item 21 as a Seven Sisters Project Board Member.
- Martin Osborne declared a Public Service Interest in item 12 as a Member of Brighton and Hove City Council.
- Russell Oppenheimer declared a Public Service Interest in Item 15 as a Member of Hampshire County Council.
- William Meyer declared a Personal Interest in Items 16 and 21 as a prospective Director of the South Downs Commercial Operations Ltd and withdrew from the meeting for these items.
- Janet Duncton declared a Personal Interest in Item 12 as a Trustee of the South Downs National Park Trust
- Richard Waring declared a Personal Interest in Item 12 as a Trustee of the South Downs National Park Trust.
- Chris Dowling declared a Personal Interest in Item 17 as his wife was a member of the East Sussex County Council Cabinet.

183. Angus Dunn joined the meeting.

ITEM 3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2020

184. The minutes of the Authority meetings held on 17 December 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ITEM 4. MATTERS ARISING

185. There were none.

ITEM 5. URGENT ITEMS

186. The Authority Chair informed the meeting that he had been notified of one urgent item of business. It related to a decision, to be taken in private session, which was required to consider a request to increase the contingency funds, and the use of grant funding received for the Seven Sisters project. The Chair had agreed that there were special circumstances that required the Authority to take this as an urgent item of business. These circumstances were the price volatility in the construction market at present with the implications of Covid-19, and to a lesser extent Brexit, impacting on the industry supply chains, meaning that if a decision was not taken before the May NPA meeting to increase the contingency funds and allocate the grant funding for the refurbishment of the properties at Exceat and Foxholes, there was a significant risk of further increases in costs as a result of the supply chain issues and, in addition, a potential delay to the project time line. Therefore, the Chair agreed that it was not in the interests of the Authority to defer consideration of this item to a future meeting.

187. The Chair also confirmed to the meeting that the exempt supporting paper was sent to all Members on Tuesday 23 March.

ITEM 6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

188. There were none.

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

189. The Authority was asked to consider whether, in respect of Appendix 2 to Agenda Item 18 and the urgent Agenda Item 21, the public, including the press, should be excluded from the meeting 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 paragraphs 1 (Appendix 2 to Agenda Item 18) and 3 (Agenda Item 21) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to an individual and information relating to the financial and business affairs of a particular person including 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. This conclusion was reached on the basis that whilst there was a public interest in the transparency of Authority proceedings, the individual's right to privacy outweighs any public interest in releasing this information at this time. Also, in relation to the business of the Authority it was felt that on balance this was outweighed by the requirement of the National Park Authority to be able to consider matters in relation to its business and fully consider the implications of its actions or proposed actions particularly in relation to decisions which may have implications for an ongoing competitive tendering process without the disclosure of information that could undermine its position or its ability to deliver value for money through its procurement processes.

190. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved that the meeting would move into private session at the appropriate point to consider Appendix 2 of Agenda Item 18 and Agenda Item 21 and that the public, including the press, would be excluded from the meeting at that point.

ITEM 10. DARK NIGHT SKIES FESTIVAL UPDATE

191. The Communications and Engagement Manager gave a verbal update on the successes of the dark Night Skies Festival, which was held in February 2021. Within the update, it was explained that due to the Covid-19 pandemic the event had been held virtually and had engaged over 240,000 people both from within and outside the SDNP boundary. The festival also generated over 225 pieces of individual media, which reached 10 million people and gave a PR value of £309,000.
192. A short film explaining the successes of the Dark Night Skies Festival was played to Members.
193. In response to questions, Officers advised Members of the following:
- The film had only recently been produced and a link would be shared with members for circulation to their wider networks.
 - Officers were working within powers to offer advice to the Falmer Stadium on how to reduce light pollution.
194. Members commented that:
- The figures of engagement and reach were excellent and the whole festival had been a fantastic achievement.
 - The virtual events had been an excellent outcome as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic with the increased reach and interest in the SDNPA events.
 - The Dark Night Skies films make people think about light pollution and what could be done to minimise it.
 - Members' thanks went to all involved in the Dark Night Skies Festival.

ITEM 8. AUTHORITY CHAIR UPDATE

195. The Authority Chair introduced report (NPA20/21- 24) and reminded Members of the content. The Chair gave an update on:
- A recent meeting with other National Park Chairs and the National Park England (NPE) proposals submitted to Defra & Ministers on the National Landscape Service. The Chair advised that a Government Announcement was imminent.
 - The ongoing process to find a chair of the South Downs Partnership and advised members that announcement on an appointment would be made in the not too distant future.
 - The attendance at the Volunteer Ranger Service AGM and awards presented to volunteers, some of whom had given in excess of thirty years of volunteer service.

196. In response to questions, Officers advised Members of the following:
- The second year of a flat cash settlement from Defra was disappointing. A further year of a flat cash settlement may leave the Authority with nothing to invest in projects other than what was generated by the Authority itself. The 2022/23 budget round may require a third workshop with Members to allow the Authority's Medium Term Financial Strategy to be discussed.
197. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to note the update from the Chair of the South Downs National Park Authority.

ITEM 9. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S PROGRESS REPORT

198. The Chief Executive introduced report (NPA20/21-25) and reminded Members of the content. The Chief Executive referred to the following updates since the report had been published:
- A recent meeting with Lord Gardiner with highlights including praise for the Authority's positive plans around visitor management and approach to increasing diversity and new audiences. Lord Gardiner passed a message to all staff, members and volunteers to thank them for their work and provide assurance around the future.
 - Ongoing work around the Environment Land Management (ELM) National Pilot.
 - The Vaccination Centre in the Memorial Hall had vaccinated a total of 12,000 people since it started, approximately 950 people a day.
 - South Downs volunteer, Rod Gentry, had been awarded the first ever Campaign for National Parks "Volunteer of the Year" award.
 - The pre-election period for the May 2021 local elections would begin on the 29 March 2021.
199. In response to questions, Officers advised Members of the following:
- Powers for Local Authorities, including National Park Authorities, to hold remote virtual meetings would expire on the 7 May 2021 with the Government advising there was no time to extend the powers. This view was not supported by the majority of Local Authorities or National Park Authorities and was now with the courts with a judgement expected by the end of April 2021. Officers advised that due to the delegations in place the Authority could continue to operate until physical meetings could be held again.
 - As soon as there was clarity and detail around the Environmental Land Management Schemes information would be shared with the farm clusters.
 - Once the Seven Sisters Landscape Management Plan was agreed it would be shared widely amongst the local communities, including local farmers.
200. Members commented that:
- They were pleased to see that another Staff Health and Wellbeing survey had been completed and expressed thanks to the Youth Ambassadors for the work that they were undertaking.
201. Helen Burton joined the meeting.
202. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to note the progress made by the South Downs National Park Authority (the Authority) since the last report.

ITEM 11. CORPORATE PLAN 2020-25 YEAR 2 ACTION PLAN FOR 2021/22

203. The Performance and Research Lead introduced the report (NPA20/21-26), reminded Members of the content and gave a presentation.
204. The Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee commented that at its recent meeting the Committee had studied the year 2 action plan in depth and had a presentation on the new areas of work and projects, all of which the Committee supported.

205. In response to questions, Officers advised Members of the following:
- Members highlighted errors within the Cycling and Walking Strategic Routes map that the red dot was referred to as a railway station and that a number of the locations identified such as Wickham, Bishops Waltham and Denmead did not have railway stations. Officers advised that the map key would be amended to reflect that the red dots should be referred to as 'Transport Hubs'.
 - Outcome 9.3 '*support improvement in the digital infrastructure, speed and coverage throughout the South Downs National Park*' was a priority in the Partnership Management Plan with the delivery mechanism through the County Councils and Open Reach; not all priorities within the Partnership Management Plan are within the remit of the SDNPA.
206. Members commented that:
- This week had been the one year anniversary of England going into lockdown and the way the Authority had worked became very different. Members praised all staff and fellow Members that despite the many difficulties, stresses and challenges with the pandemic the Authority had achieved a huge amount including implementing some of the changes recommended by the Glover review.
 - The Corporate Plan Action Plan for Year 2 was presented in a very clear format easily being able to see how the work contributed to each aspect of the Partnership Management Plan.
207. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to approve the Corporate Plan 2020-25 Year 2 action plan for 2021/22, as set out in Appendix I of the report, subject to:
- a) any amendments required to address any issues raised by the NPA
 - b) the final design of the Corporate Plan 2020-25 Year 2 action plan for 2021/22, and
 - c) any minor text amendments considered appropriate,
- being approved by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Authority.
208. William Meyer and Michael Lunn left the meeting.
209. The meeting adjourned for a 30 minute break.

ITEM 12. REVENUE BUDGET 2021/22, CAPITAL STRATEGY 2021/22, TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2021/22 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

210. The Head of Business Services advised members that the Authority would receive a flat cash settlement for 2021/22, the second year in a row. This scenario had been planned for through the budget workshops with the £300,000 budget for the Theme Programme Boards coming from the 2020/21 underspend; however it was advised that a flat cash settlement was not sustainable in the long term.
211. The Chief Finance Officer introduced report (NPA20/21-27) and reminded Members of the content.
212. In response to questions, Officers advised Members of the following:
- Investment returns were currently poor but returns for SDNPA were outperforming market rates. The Authority Investment Strategy was to maintain security and liquidity, and therefore there were limitations on where investments could be deposited. In the previous financial year, the Treasury Management Strategy had been altered to include investment with short dated bonds, but the advisors were not currently recommending this due to the volatility within the market and the risk to capital this presented, but a watching brief would be kept.
 - Funds were flexible with some funds on 12 month deposits with a reasonable rate but there was a lot of liquid resource that could be acted quickly with if the market did pick up.

- The SDNPA used the Defra Grant to fund the Authority's operating costs with additional funds raised for projects by the South Downs National Park Trust, and hopefully in the future the Trading Company. This flexible funding approach allowed the Authority to use 100% of grants received on projects. The flexible funding approach also allowed the Authority to fund projects that it saw as a priority and that were in the Partnership Management Plan, and not just focus on projects that a grant was able to be obtained for.
- The Community Infrastructure Levy funds were ring fenced and held until the projects that they had been allocated for had been delivered. The Authority did not want to hold onto these reserves for any longer than it needed to, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic many of the projects had been paused and it was hoped that this reserve would reduce as Covid restrictions were lifted.
- The payment per planning application model with the Host Authority Service Level agreements had proved to be financially resilient under the Covid-19 crisis. The number of planning applications that had been received was steady and officers felt that was likely to continue.
- There were a number of affordable Housing scheme projects in the pipeline and it was hoped that the Affordable Housing Reserve would therefore be reduced.

213. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to agree:

1. Approve the Revenue Budget 2021/22 of £10.669m, including a contribution from General Reserves of £0.233m, as detailed in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.7 and Appendix 1.
2. Approve the Capital Strategy 2021/22, including new capital projects totalling £0.050m and a capital variation of (£0.196m), as detailed in paragraphs 3.8 to 3.11 and Appendix 2.
3. Approve the Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22 at Appendix 3.
4. Note the reserves position as detailed in paragraphs 3.15 to 3.21 and Appendix 4.
5. Note the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 to 2025/26 at Appendix 5.

ITEM 13. SDNPA HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

214. The Performance and Projects Manager introduced report (NPA20/21-28, reminded members of the report content and gave a presentation.
215. The Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee commented that the draft Strategy had been considered by the Committee at the recent meeting with a good discussion drawing on the morning workshop and amendments suggested.
216. In response to questions, Officers advised Members of the following:
- The Authority did work in co-ordination with other bodies to deliver health and well-being work and were an active member in the 'Sussex Local Nature Partnership'.
 - The map contained within the strategy was an indicative map to show where work would be focussed, both inside and outside the SDNP boundary. The circles could, in many cases, also be overlaid with natural capital investment areas.
 - The Health and Wellbeing hubs were already physically existing structures such as the Sustainability Centre and Youth Hostel at Truleigh Hill, the aim being to make links with existing providers and not develop new buildings. Good transport links were needed and conversations would be happening with local communities to develop facilities that could be opened up for social prescribing.
 - The 'other implications' table at the bottom of all Committee reports set out the minimum requirements that Members needed in order to make a decision and included the Public Sector Equalities Duty.

- Not everyone had access to a vehicle and thought had to be given to the location of Health and Wellbeing hubs so that transport was not a barrier.
 - There was an action plan that sat behind the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and it was a travel grants scheme could be developed, similar to the schools travel grant scheme, for community groups to access to bring social prescribing activities to the Downs.
217. Members made the following comments:
- Good to see a geographical spread from east to west across the park.
 - Some members of the public needed to understand that there was a Countryside Code.
218. The Chair proposed and Members agreed that as no changes had been suggested to the Strategy that Recommendation 2 '*Delegate authority to the Director of Countryside Policy and Management, in consultation with the Chair of the Authority, to make any amendments to the Health and Well-Being Strategy required to address any issues raised by the Authority*' be withdrawn.
219. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to:
1. Approve the Health and Well-Being Strategy as set out at Appendix 1.

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

220. The Planning Policy Lead introduced the report (NPA20/21-29), reminded Members of the content and gave a presentation. Within the introduction the Planning Policy Lead informed Members that West Sussex County Council had now agreed the Soft Sand Review for adoption.
221. The Chair of the Planning Committee commented that the Soft Sand Review had been scrutinised at Planning Committee and expressed thanks to both SDNPA and West Sussex County Council Officers.
222. In response to questions, Officers advised Members of the following:
- SDNPA did work with the other Authority areas of East Sussex and Hampshire on similar mineral plans for those areas, including ensuring cross boundary and collaborative working across all three areas and also had representation on national groups.
 - The wording within the Sustainability Appraisal Addendum had been approved by the inspector and therefore was what would be used, but explanation would need to be offered to explain that where you can't avoid, you minimise the impact.
 - Community liaison groups would be established at the point that a developer submitted a planning application; therefore, it was difficult to add a timescale to when this would be.
 - The naming of site allocations did not reflect the Parish in which they were located but that of the nearest settlement.
 - There was still commitment for the development of the Midhurst to Petersfield non-motorised user route but no time period has been added to leave it flexible as possible.
223. William Meyer joined the meeting.
224. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to:
1. Note the content of the Inspector's Report and his conclusion that the Soft Sand Review of the Joint Minerals Local Plan provides an appropriate basis for the planning for soft sand within the West Sussex including that area which lies within the National Park, provided that a number of Main Modifications are made to it;
 2. Note the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) and the Habitat Regulations Assessment of the Soft Sand Review of the Joint Minerals Local Plan;

3. Delegate authority to the Director of Planning in consultation with the Chair of the Authority to make any other inconsequential changes to the text required prior to publication of the updated West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan;
4. Adopt the Soft Sand Review of the Joint Minerals Local Plan as amended by the Inspector's recommended Main Modifications to form revised policies M2 and M11 of the statutory minerals plan for the South Downs National Park within West Sussex, and use these policies as the basis for planning decisions for soft sand minerals development across this area of the National Park along with neighbourhood development plans and the South Downs Local Plan, where relevant; and
5. Publish an updated version of the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2018) and the relevant Policies Map.

225. The Authority adjourned for a 5-minute break

ITEM 15. UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE REVIEW OF THE HAMPSHIRE MINERALS AND WASTE PLAN (2013)

226. The Planning Policy Lead introduced the report (NPA20/21-30) and reminded Members of the content.
227. The Chair of Planning commented that the progress of the review of the Hampshire minerals and waste plan had previously been to Planning Committee where a number of questions had been asked and comments provided. It was explained that it was out of alignment with other reviews as a quirk of history as previous plans were made before SDNPA became the Minerals Planning Authority and had the Statutory Duty to do so.
228. In response to questions, Officers advised Members of the following:
- Since the creation of the existing Hampshire Minerals and Waste plan in 2013 oil and gas policies had changed at a national level and therefore it would be considered as part of the review. However, policies were required to deal with any type of application that was received and officers had identified those policies within the plan that were working and those that needed reviewing.
229. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to:
1. Approve the 2020 Review of the Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan (2013)
 2. Progress a partial update to the Hampshire Minerals & Waste Plan (2013) as indicated in the review document and the revised timetable (Appendices 1 and 2)
 3. Agree to the publication of a summary of the review process and the decisions on the Hampshire County Council website

ITEM 16. SDNP TECKAL COMPANY - PROVISION OF EQUITY

230. William Meyer, Vanessa Rowlands and Stephen Whale left the meeting for Item 16.
231. The Head of Business Services introduced the report (NPA20/21-31) and reminded Members of the content.
232. In response to questions, Officers advised Members of the following:
- The trading company, South Downs Commercial Operations Ltd, would be registered in May 2021 and would begin operating in January 2022, once the visitor centre was completed.
 - Under TUPE staff would be transferred to the SDNPA and then seconded to the trading company for the reason that SDNPA was a member of the Local Government pension scheme. This would also apply to any new staff recruited.
 - SDNPA would own 100% of South Downs Commercial Operations Ltd and would be a single shareholder. It would be the responsibility of South Downs Commercial Operations Ltd Directors to determine how much of the profits and at what timescale dividends would be returned to the SDNPA. It was envisaged that the return might not

be for a number of years as it was likely that any profits would be re-invested into the Seven Sisters Country Park.

233. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to approve an initial investment in the South Downs National Park Authority's Teckal Company of £100,000.

234. William Meyer, Vanessa Rowlands and Stephen Whale returned to the meeting.

ITEM 17. GOVERNANCE MATTERS AND ETHICAL FRAMEWORK UPDATES

235. The Chair and the Head of Governance introduced the report (NPA20/21-32) and reminded Members of the content. Within the update the Head of Governance informed Members that the extension to the powers for Local Authorities including National Park Authorities to hold virtual meetings could not be confirmed at the point in time and more information would be circulated to members once known.

236. In response to questions, Officers advised Members of the following:

- The changes proposed to the 'cooling off' period for the resignation of the Authority Chair, Deputy Chair or Committee Chair or Deputy had been added to the Standing Orders to avoid a position where a resignation was tendered in the heat of the moment without due consideration being given.
- Up until now, each Committee had taken its own decisions regarding the appointment of the Committee Chair and Deputy. The decisions would now be taken by the NPA which would also allow the opportunity for gender balance across the positions but would still require Members to put themselves forwards.
- The current bylaws were made by East Sussex County Council under Section 41 of the Countryside Act in 1968. The bylaws could be updated and amended to reflect the changing circumstances but if the Authority was to stray too far from the current bylaws they could be considered as new bylaws. To minimise this risk and avoid a situation where there were no bylaws covering the Seven Sisters Country Park it was proposed to make the same bylaws as those currently in force at the site.
- The Coast to Capital had a joint committee status with the Authority, which other Local Enterprise Partnerships did not and was the reason why it was only the Coast to Capital Heads of Terms that appeared in the Standing Orders.
- If the powers for the Authority to hold virtual meetings were not extended beyond the 7 May 2021 and until social distancing regulations were relaxed the Authority may not be able to hold meetings and in extreme circumstances planning decisions could be made by the Director of Planning in consultation with the Chair of the Planning Committee and these would be published on the Authority's website.

237. Michael Lunn joined the meeting

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

1. Agree the changes to Standing Orders for the Regulation of Authority Proceedings and Business ("Standing Orders") set out at para 2.1 of this report and adopt the revised Standing Orders set out at Appendix 1.
2. Agree the revised Local Protocol for Members and Officers Dealing with Planning Matters (Appendix 2).
3. Agree the revised Arrangements for Assessment, Investigation and Determination of a Complaint that a Member has failed to Comply with the Member Code of Conduct (Appendix 3).
4. Note the position regarding Byelaws at the Seven Sisters Country Park Site and delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make such decisions and take such actions, up to and including submission for confirmation by the Secretary of State, as required for the NPA to make, in relation to the Seven Sisters Country Park, the same byelaws as those currently in force at the site (updated and amended as appropriate).

5. Agree that, pursuant to section 7 of the Countryside Act 1968, once the Seven Sisters Country Park site has been transferred to the Authority by East Sussex County Council, the Authority will provide a country park on the site for the purpose of providing, or improving, opportunities for the enjoyment of the countryside by the public

ITEM 18. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS TO THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

239. The Deputy Chair and the Head of Governance introduced the report (NPA20/21-33) and reminded Members of the content. Within the update Members were reminded of the process that had been undertaken to find up to 3 co-opted Members from under-represented groups in the Authority's formal decision making structure. As a result of the interviews the panel was recommending 2 candidates to become co-opted Members of the Policy and Resources Committee for 1 year with a third candidate still to be found.
240. The panel further commented that the Glover Review had highlighted that the co-opted Members would add diversity to the voices that were heard when the Committee was making decisions. The co-optees would also play a role in advocating and championing the SDNP.
241. The meeting was closed to the public, including the press, and moved into private session at 4.30pm.
242. The meeting returned to public session at 5.43pm.
243. An alternative recommendation was proposed, seconded and agreed that '*The Authority is recommended to appoint Lawrence Leather and Morris Findley to serve as non-voting Co-opted Members on the Policy and Resources Committee, to serve for the period from now until the date of Authority's Meeting in March 2022*'
244. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to appoint Lawrence Leather and Morris Findley to serve as non-voting Co-opted Members on the Policy and Resources Committee, to serve for the period from now until the date of the Authority Meeting in March 2022.

ITEM 19. PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

245. Authority Members noted the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 10 December 2020 and 21 January and 11 February 2021.

ITEM 20 POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES

246. Authority Members noted the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 26 November 2020.
247. Chris Dowling, Janet Duncton, William Meyer, Vanessa Rowlands and Stephen Whale left the meeting.

ITEM 21 SEVEN SISTERS COUNTRY PARK REFURBISHMENT CONTRACT – ADDITIONAL CONTINGENCY FUNDS AND ALLOCATION OF GRANT FUNDING

248. The meeting was closed to the public, including the press, and moved into private session at 5.50pm.
249. The meeting returned to public session at 6.06pm.
250. **RESOLVED:** The Authority resolved to:
 1. Approve a potential further borrowing by the Authority of £240,000 to provide additional contingency for the project to refurbish properties at Exceat and Foxholes within Seven Sisters Country Park.
 2. Agree to revise the project delivery costs of phase 1 from £1.9m to £2.025m (funded by the secured grant applications) plus the additional £240,000 contingency as set out at recommendation 1.

251. The Chair closed the meeting at 6.07pm.

Signed _____

Dated _____

