

Report to **South Downs National Park Authority**
Date **8 July 2025**
By **Head of Governance and Monitoring Officer**
Title of Report **Appointment of Committees and Outside Bodies 2025-26**
Decision

Recommendation: The Authority is recommended to:

- 1. Appoint the Planning Committee, Policy and Resources Committee and Appointments, Management and 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 until the Authority AGM in 2026 as set out in Appendix 3 (to be tabled at the meeting) of this report.**
 - 3. Appoint the Chair and Deputy Chair of Planning Committee until the Authority AGM in 2026 as set out in Appendix 4 (to be tabled at the meeting) of this report.**
 - 4. Appoint the Chair and Deputy Chairs of Policy and Resources Committee until the Authority AGM in 2026 as set out in Appendix 4 (to be tabled at the meeting) of this report.**
 - 5. Appoint the named individual set out in the exempt Appendix 5 to serve as non-voting co-opted member on the Policy and Resources Committee until the Authority AGM in 2029.**
 - 6. Appoint the Members to outside bodies and panels and the NPA-appointed Trustees of the South Downs National Park Trust until the Authority AGM in 2026 as set out in Appendix 7 (to be tabled at the meeting) of this report.**
 - 7. Agree, for the purposes of Standing order 8.1(f), 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.**
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1. Introduction

- 1.1** This report enables the Authority to carry out its annual review of arrangements for discharging its decision-making responsibilities, in particular the delegation of responsibilities, and making of appointments, to Committees. The recommendations for Member appointments, including for the positions of Chairs and Deputy Chairs of committees, are made by the Chair of the Authority and will be tabled at the meeting once the outcomes of any elections for Chair of the Authority and Deputy Chair of the Authority are known.
- 1.2** This report asks the Authority to appoint one new co-opted member on to Policy and Resources Committee. This is in addition to OlaOlu Adedayo, who is a co-opted member appointed until the Authority AGM in 2026, and Arthur Sloman, who is a co-opted member

appointed until the Authority AGM in 2028. Also to appoint Members to represent the Authority on a variety of external organisations and outside bodies (for the purposes of this report, the term 'Outside Bodies' is used to encompass all of these bodies) and to act as NPA-appointed Trustees of the South Downs National Park Trust.

- 1.3 Under Schedule 7 Para 13(3) of the Environment Act 1995, the Authority has a duty to secure that the division of local authority appointed Members and Secretary of State appointed Members on any Committee is (as nearly as possible using whole numbers) in the same proportion as required in the case of the Authority itself.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1 It is proposed that the existing committees of the Authority be reappointed for the forthcoming year with the Terms of Reference as set out in **Appendix 1**. Any amendments to the Terms of Reference are proposed as part of the Updates to Standing Orders item on the agenda of this meeting.
- 2.2 The current membership of Committees is set out at **Appendix 2**. The proposed membership of Committees for approval is set out in **Appendix 3** (to be tabled at the meeting). The division of Members on committees is considered carefully by the Chair of the Authority alongside the skills and experience of the Members being appointed to those committees.
- 2.3 In order to ensure the effective operation of the Appointments, Management and Standards Committee it is again proposed, as has been the Authority's established practice, that a number of substitute members be appointed. Substitute members are to be drawn from both Secretary of State Appointees and Local Authority Members and will act in place of Committee Members who are absent or who have a conflict of interest.
- 2.4 In line with the Authority's established practice, it is proposed that 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.

3. Appointment of Chairs and Deputy Chairs of Committees

- 3.1 The proposed Chairs and Deputy Chairs of Committees are set out at **Appendix 4** (to be tabled at the meeting). If an appointment to one or more of these positions is not made by the NPA, the duty to elect a Chair and/or Deputy Chair will fall to the relevant Committee in accordance with Standing Order 8.3(a)
- 3.2 With regard to the Policy and Resources Committee specifically, at its meeting on 16 May 2019, the NPA agreed that, in accordance with Standing Orders, the Policy and Resources Committee may elect up to two Deputy Chairs of the Committee. It is proposed that, in line with the NPA's previous decisions, the NPA appoints two Deputy Chairs of the Policy and Resources Committee and, accordingly, two nominations for the position of Deputy Chair are set out in **Appendix 4**.
- 3.3 If the NPA fails to appoint a Committee Chair or Deputy Chair, Standing Order 8.3 empowers the Committee to elect a Chair or Deputy Chair(s), including where a vacancy in the position arises between AGMs. It is considered that the NPA's earlier decision on 16 May 2019 to empower the Policy and Resources Committee to elect up to two Deputy Chairs of the Committee continues to apply in the circumstances set out in Standing Order 8.3.

4. Non-voting Co-opted Members of Policy and Resources Committee

- 4.1 The membership of the Policy and Resources Committee includes two Co-opted Members, who assist in promoting public confidence in the work of the Committee and in ensuring impartiality in relation to the audit and governance remit of the committee, as set out by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) as best practice. Tom Fourcade and Catriona Aves were appointed to these roles for four-year terms by the Authority at its AGM in 2022.
- 4.2 At its meeting in December 2020, the NPA agreed to co-opt up to three additional

individuals (in addition to the two independent (CIPFA) Co-opted Members) to the Policy and Resources Committee to improve decision making through widening the range of voices heard in discussions and debates.

- 4.3 At its meeting in October 2022, the Authority appointed OlaOlu Adedayo to serve as a non-voting Co-opted Member on the Policy and Resources Committee until the Authority AGM in 2026, and at its meeting in July 2024, the Authority appointed Arthur Sloman to serve as a non-voting Co-opted Member on the Policy and Resources Committee until the Authority AGM in 2028.
- 4.4 There is now a vacancy for a third co-opted member. In early 2024 a recruitment process was undertaken by the Chair of the P&R Committee, one of the Deputy Chairs of P&R Committee, and the Head of Governance to fill a vacancy in 2024. As part of this recruitment process two individuals considered appointable were identified. One was appointed in 2024. The individual who was not recommended for appointment in 2024 expressed an interest in appointment in 2025 should a vacancy arise. Therefore, Members are recommended to appoint the individual named in the exempt **Appendix 5** as a co-opted member of the P&R Committee until the Authority AGM in 2028.

5. Appointments to Outside Bodies

- 5.1 The role of a Member appointed to an Outside Body will vary according to the requirements of each external organisation. The Member may be a decision maker, a representative of the Authority, or simply a first point of contact for the external organisation. In some cases, Officers may also attend in support.
- 5.2 Except in cases where Members perform a role that has separate legal duties, for example, as a Trustee, Members will represent the Authority's interests and, where appropriate, report back to the Authority. Any issues arising from these external contacts requiring consideration by the Authority may form part of a report compiled by the appropriate Member for consideration at a meeting of the Authority.
- 5.3 The process governing appointments to outside bodies is set out at Order 26 of the Authority's Standing Orders. This provides that appointments will be made by the Authority at its Annual Meeting where it considers that the appointment will support and be consistent with its purposes and objectives. Standing Orders require that the Chief Executive seek expressions of interest from Members in relation to outside bodies. Members are required to express an interest, where applicable at least two working days before the meeting, in writing. Such expressions of interest are considered by the Chair of the Authority and the Chairs of its committees, and proposals for appointment presented to the Annual Meeting for approval.
- 5.4 Standing Order 26 further sets out that any appointments to outside bodies not made at the Annual Meeting of the Authority will be made by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Authority and will be reported to the next available meeting of the Authority.
- 5.5 The current appointments to outside bodies are set out in **Appendix 6**. The proposed appointments to outside bodies for approval are set out in **Appendix 7** (to be tabled at the meeting).

6. Options and cost implications

- 6.1 The Authority could decide not to establish committees to discharge its decision-making responsibilities and/or not appoint to outside bodies. However, the proposed committees and outside body appointments represent what is considered the most effective way of exercising the powers and influence of the Authority.
- 6.2 The costs associated with the administration of the decision-making structures of the Authority are met from within the Authority's core budget.

7. Next steps

- 7.1 Officers will take the necessary administrative steps to deliver the new committee memberships and outside body appointments.

8. Other Implications

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	<p>The administration and meeting costs of Committees is covered by existing Authority staff and budgets.</p> <p>Attendance at Outside Bodies' meetings will be a valid duty for the purpose of travel and subsistence allowances.</p> <p>Members of the Authority are paid allowances in accordance with the Authority's Scheme of Allowances.</p>
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	Effective decision making contributes to the efficient running of the Authority.
Which PMP Outcomes/ Corporate plan objectives does this deliver against	Effective decision-making contributes to the delivery of all PMP Outcomes and Corporate Plan objectives.
Links to other projects or partner organisations	SDNPA Members are appointed to a number of roles on outside bodies.
How does this decision contribute to the Authority's climate change objectives	Effective Committees at the Authority play an important role in sustainable practices and development, as set out in the Partnership Management Plan, Local Plan and various Supplementary Planning Documents, and in monitoring the performance of the Authority against its Climate Change Action Plan.
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	None
Have you taken regard of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	All Members are eligible to be considered for Committee places and outside bodies. The operation of Committees meets the obligations of the Equality Act 2010 and reasonable adjustments will be made to support Members and members of the public to participate.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Data	Personal data relating to this decision has been and will continue to be managed in accordance with the Authority's information

Implication	Yes*/No
Protection implications?	security policy and in compliance with Data Protection legislation.

9. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

- 9.1 Members who have been newly appointed to Committees may be required to undertake training in the role and responsibilities of such Committee.
- 9.2 The Authority is the planning authority for the South Downs National Park, and any new appointees to the Planning Committee must undertake the required level of training before they can take part in the decision-making process.
- 9.3 Where the membership of a Committee includes ex officio appointments, for example the Chair of the Authority, this means that the person currently appointed or elected to the relevant office will also serve as a member of the Committee. Depending upon the person elected or appointed to the relevant office, it could mean that, at any given time, the membership of the Committee may arguably not comply with the requirements of the legislation referred to in paragraph 1.3 above (requiring there to be slightly more Local Authority Members than Secretary of State Members). However, the reasoning for an ex officio appointment is that it is considered important for the particular senior Members of the Authority to serve on the Committee. This is particularly pertinent for the Appointments, Management and Standards Committee as the remit of the Committee includes the recruitment and management of the Chief Executive.

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- Appendices
1. Committee Terms of Reference
 2. Committee appointments 2024-25
 3. Proposed Committee Appointments 2025-26 (to be tabled at the meeting)
 4. Proposed Chairs and Deputy Chairs of Committees 2025-26 (to be tabled at the meeting)
 5. Proposed new co-opted member of Policy & Resources Committee
- Appendix 5 is not for publication as it contains exempt information within Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, being information relating to an individual and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exempt information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. This is because whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of Authority proceedings and the appointment of Co-opted Members, it is felt that on balance this is outweighed by the public interest in ensuring that an individual's right to privacy prior to their appointment is respected.
6. Outside Body appointments 2024/25
 7. Proposed Outside Body Appointments 2025-26 (to be tabled at the meeting)

SDNPA Consultees	Chief Executive Officer, Director of Planning, Director of Landscape and Strategy, Director of Growth and Business Development, Chief Finance Officer, Head of Corporate Services and Finance, Legal Services.
External Consultees	None
Background Documents	Authority Standing Orders

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

PLANNING COMMITTEE: TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To exercise all development Management functions which are conferred upon the local planning authority except where, and to the extent that, the exercise of such functions has been delegated to local councils.
2. To decide Planning policy matters of local, or non-strategic, significance, including neighbourhood plans, Supplementary Planning Documents and development orders but excluding non-planning related community-led plans. Planning policy matters of strategic significance are to be determined by the Authority after having been reported to the Planning Committee for comment.
3. To decide matters in relation to any review of the South Downs Local Plan, except the key milestone stages of: (1) Launch of the review, (2) Regulation 18 public consultation, (3) Regulation 19 pre-submission publication, (4) Main modifications (as required by the Inspectors during examination), and (5) Adoption, which are to be determined by the Authority after having been reported to the Planning Committee for comment.
4. To decide matters in relation to any review of Minerals and/or Waste Plans for the South Downs National Park, except the key milestone stages of: (1) Launch of the Review, and (2) Adoption, which are to be determined by the Authority after having been reported to the Planning Committee for comment. If the Planning Committee considers any matter of planning policy under consideration as part of a plan to be of such a controversial nature that it could cause significant objection amongst other Members of the Authority, it should report the matter to the Authority to be determined at a meeting of the Authority.
5. To provide an Authority response to consultations from neighbouring authorities on planning matters, unless the response is of strategic significance.
6. To provide an Authority response to government and other consultations on planning matters unless the response is of strategic significance.
7. To approve consultation documents and arrangements on SDNPA policy matters such as development briefs, conservation area appraisals, joint LDF consultation documents where either the policy issues are of local or non-strategic significance, or no policy commitment is implied.
8. To authorise enforcement action which requires prosecution, the service of a “Stop Notice” or any other Notice or action which in the opinion of the Director of Planning might potentially have significant financial risks for the Authority.
9. To determine administrative and procedural matters relating to planning, such as Statements of Community Involvement and Local Development Scheme.
10. To determine the arrangements for charging the community infrastructure levy.
11. To determine the allocation of resources received through the community infrastructure levy.
12. To authorise the preparation of planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 on such applications that are before the Committee.
13. To consider and report to the Authority on any other matter delegated to it by the Authority.

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE: TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. AUDIT

- 1.1 To meet the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in respect of:
 - Conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control;
 - Conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of internal audit;
 - Reviewing the outcome of annual review of governance arrangements and approving the Annual Governance Statement, ensuring it contains any actions for improvement; and
 - Considering and approving the Authority's annual Statement of Accounts
- 1.2 To ensure the robustness of risk management and performance management arrangements.
- 1.3 To provide assurance as to the adequacy of arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption.
- 1.4 To agree the internal audit plan and annual report, and receive progress and other relevant internal audit reports.
- 1.5 To agree the External Auditor's Annual Audit Plan, and receive the District Auditor's Audit Results Report and other relevant reports.
- 1.6 To provide assurance as to compliance with the Authority's Treasury Management Policy, Financial Regulations and Procedures and Capital Strategies
- 1.7 Consider and recommend to the Authority the approach to the appointment of the Authority's external Auditor
- 1.8 To recommend to the authority any material and/or substantial changes to the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures

2. STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

- 2.1 To recommend annually to the Authority:
 - The Corporate and Business Plans including strategies and priorities, appropriate objectives, and key performance measures; Treasury Management Policy and Capital Strategies.
- 2.2 To review and recommend to the NPA the adoption or revision of the Partnership Management Plan and monitor and review its delivery.
- 2.3 To approve appropriate resource plans (including workforce plans, information strategies, procurement, and estates strategy), and policies, procedures, and systems to support effective resource management.
- 2.4 To develop and consider policies and strategies for recommendation to the NPA save for when these are delegated to another Committee or Officer.
- 2.5 To consider, and where the Committee considers it appropriate, endorse Whole Estate Plans.
- 2.6 To consider, and where the Committee considers it appropriate, endorse non-planning related community led plans, including Parish Plans, Market Town Health Checks and Landscape Character Assessments
- 2.7 To decide applications for, or reviews, of directions for restrictions on Access Land referred to the Committee by the Chief Executive

3. GRANTS AND PROJECTS

- 3.1 To have oversight of bids for grant funding including to receive updates on the submission of bids for grant funding and the application of grants funds received.
- 3.2 To have oversight of the Strategic Fund including approving project bids to the Fund in excess of £50k up to a maximum SDNPA contribution of £100k. To recommend for approval by the NPA any Strategic Fund project bid where the SDNPA contribution exceeds £100k.
- 3.3 To receive updates from the South Downs National Park Trust on the financial position and operational activities of the Sustainable Communities Fund.

4. PERFORMANCE AND PROCUREMENT

- 4.1 To monitor and identify improvements arising from the outcomes and evaluation of projects identified by the Committee, audits, survey, and other feedback and make recommendations as appropriate.
- 4.2 To monitor and review the performance, including financial performance, of the Authority in the context of its business delivery, and the management and maintenance of the Authority's assets in accordance with the Authority's agreed budget, Corporate Plan and other approved plans including the Seven Sisters Country Park Operational Plan, and make recommendations for changes as appropriate.
- 4.3 To monitor the Authority's compliance with relevant health and safety policies and plans adopted by the Authority.
- 4.4 To monitor and review the Authority's communications and engagement activities, including in relation to the Authority's brand and identity, and make recommendations to the NPA as appropriate.
- 4.5 To agree arrangements for the procurement and ongoing monitoring of external contracts for support services, and to authorize entering into contracts of a value of £200k or greater in accordance with Contract Standing Orders.

5. OTHER

- 5.1 To consider and report to the Authority on any other matter delegated to it by the Authority.

APPOINTMENTS, MANAGEMENT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE: TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To determine the terms and conditions of employment of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer), including relocation payments, etc.
2. To determine the remuneration, annual pay award/performance pay, any accelerated progression of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) (taking into account the contractual and other pay remits and agreements entered into in respect of the wider staff establishment)
3. To set the performance objectives and assess the performance of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) annually.
4. Subject to the provisions of Appendix 6 of these Standing Orders, to manage all other aspects of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer)'s and SDNPA's contractual employment relationship, including, but not limited to, performance during the probationary period, capability, conduct and grievance matters, and matters relating to extension of ill-health leave (including the extensions of sick pay) or other terminations of employment. In respect of any allegation made relating to the conduct or capability of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer), the Committee shall determine whether the allegation warrants further investigation and, if appropriate, shall appoint an independent investigator to investigate the allegation and make recommendations to the Committee. The Committee may make a decision to suspend the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) for the purpose of investigating any such allegation. Any such suspension shall be on full pay and shall be reviewed by the Committee no more than two months after the day on which the suspension takes effect.
5. Where the Authority proposes to appoint a Chief Executive (National Park Officer) and it is not proposed that the appointment be made exclusively from among its existing officers:
 - a To undertake the actions required by paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 of Appendix 6 of these Standing Orders to bring the post to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it and to interview applicants, together with any other appropriate action in the recruitment and selection process; and
 - b To appoint a Chief Executive (National Park Officer).
6. Before making an appointment of a Chief Executive (National Park Officer) or assigning additional responsibilities to a person holding such an appointment, to consult with Natural England and to extend an invitation to the consultee to attend the relevant meeting of the Committee.
7. Where the Committee considers it appropriate, to extend an invitation to a Member of the Authority to attend a particular meeting of the Committee.
8. To promote training and advice to Members and Co-opted Members on the Code of Conduct, relevant protocols adopted by the Authority, and related matters to enable high standards of conduct to be maintained.
9. To advise the Authority on the revision or replacement of its Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members, and on the review of protocols relevant to ethical standards.
10. To advise the Authority on the arrangements to be applied for the investigation and determination of allegations of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members, including advice on the involvement of at least one independent person in those arrangements, and to handle and determine such allegations in accordance with the approved procedures.

11. To consider and determine an application by a Member or Co-opted Member for the grant of a dispensation under Section 33 Localism Act 2011, relieving the restrictions on participation in, and voting on, a matter in which the Member or Co-opted Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest.
12. To consider and determine a request by a Member or Co-opted Member for approval of their reasons for not attending meetings for a period of six consecutive months for the purposes of Section 85(1) Local Government Act 1972, provided that such a request is made and approved before the expiry of the six-month period of non-attendance by the Member or Co-opted Member.
13. To consider and report to the Authority on any other matter delegated to it by the Authority.

Committee Appointments 2024/25

Planning Committee (13)	Policy & Resources Committee (11)	Appointment, Management and Standards Committee (5)
Alun Alesbury (SoS)	Tim Burr (SoS)	Authority Chair
Heather Baker (SoS)	Peter Diplock (LA)	Authority Deputy Chair
Paul Bevan (SoS)	Chris Dowling (LA)	Jerry Pett (LA)
Antonia Cox (SoS)	Mark Fairweather (LA)	
John Cross (LA)	Theresa Fowler (LA)	Substitute members:
Debbie Curnow-Ford (LA)	Joan Grech (LA)	Melanie Hunt (SoS)
Janet Duncton (LA)	Melanie Hunt (SoS)	Daniel Stewart-Roberts (LA)
John Hyland (SoS)	Jerry Pett (LA)	
Gary Marsh (LA)	Mark Potter (SoS)	
Stephen McAuliffe (LA)	Steve Ridgeon (SoS)	
Robert Mocatta (LA)	Vicki Wells (LA)	
Andrew Shaxson (SoS)	Stephen Whale (SoS)	
Daniel Stewart-Roberts (LA)	+ x5 co-opted members	

Appointments to Outside Bodies 2024/25

External Body	Appointment	Representation only or decision making
National Parks England	Authority Chair	Decision making
National Parks UK	Authority Chair	Decision making
Transport for the South East (TfSE)	Authority Deputy Chair	Representation
Campaign for National Parks	Tim Burr	Representation
South Downs Local Access Forum	Andrew Shaxson	Representation
South Downs Local Access Forum	Tim Burr	Representation
Hampshire Rural Forum	Debbie Curnow-Ford	Representation
West Sussex & Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Board	Heather Baker	Representation
East Sussex Strategic Planning Group	Daniel Stewart-Roberts	Representation
South Downs National Park Trust	Authority Deputy Chair	Trustee
South Downs National Park Trust	Janet Duncton	Trustee
South Downs National Park Trust	Stephen McAuliffe	Trustee

