

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY HELD ON THURSDAY 12 JULY 2018 AT 10.30 HOURS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, LYMINGTON TOWN HALL, LYMINGTON

Present:

Members

Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre (Chairman)

Edward Heron (Deputy Chairman)

Gordon Bailey

David Bence

Richard Clewer

Richard Frampton

David Harrison

Patrick Heneghan

Penny Jackman

Mel Kendal

Phil Marshall

Harry Oram

Gavin Parker

Leo Randall

Barry Rickman

John Sanger

Marian Spain

Richard Taylor

Pat Wyeth

Officers

Alison Barnes

Chief Executive Officer

Steve Avery

Executive Director, Strategy and Planning

Nigel Stone

Chief Finance Officer

Julia Mutlow

Senior Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

Nigel Matthews

Head of Recreation Management and Learning

Jo Murphy

Information and Data Protection Officer

Rosalind Alderman

Rosalind Alderman (Member Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Vicki Gibbon

Member Services Administrator

In attendance

Kevin Suter

Ernst & Young

Emily Farley

Ernst & Young

1 Election of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the New Forest National Park Authority

- 1.1 The Chief Executive facilitated the election of Pat Wyeth as Interim Chairman to oversee the appointment of the Chairman. Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre was nominated and duly seconded as Chairman of the New Forest National Park Authority (NPA) for the ensuing year. There being no further nominations, the nomination was put to the vote and carried by show of hands. Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre was accordingly elected as Chairman.

Resolved, that Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre be appointed as Chairman of the Authority for the period up to the next Annual meeting of the Authority in 2019.

Voting: Unanimous

- 1.2 Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre thanked members for their support and confidence in appointing him as Chairman. He then oversaw the appointment of the Deputy Chairman. Edward Heron was proposed and seconded and elected by show of hands as Deputy Chairman of the NPA for the ensuing year.

Resolved, that Edward Heron be appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Authority for the period up to the next Annual meeting of the Authority in 2019.

Voting: Unanimous

2. Apologies for absence.

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Neville Penman, Keith Mans and George Bisson.

3. Declarations of Interest.

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

4. Chairman's announcements.

- 4.1 The Chairman reported that NPA officers were in the process of arranging a tour by members of the Partnership Plan group of a range of project sites included within the 2015-20 Partnership Plan – the tour would take place on Tuesday 4 September and members were asked to save this date in their diaries.
- 4.2 He also mentioned that he, and a select group of Chairmen representing National Parks England, met recently with Julian Glover who is leading the new government review of National Parks – this was a very positive meeting. Mr Glover and members of his team would be visiting all National Parks over the summer and, once more information was known about the nature of the visit to the New Forest, it would be shared with members. He added that this was an extremely important review celebrating more than 50 years of great achievements for National Parks and looking ahead to the future.
- 4.3 The Chairman advised that the current meeting would be the last meeting for Julia Mutlow, the Authority's Monitoring Officer and Senior Solicitor who was taking up a post with Eastleigh Borough Council. He thanked Julia for her advice and support over the last 12 years and, on behalf of members and officers, wished her well for the future.

5. Minutes

- 5.1 The minutes of 22 March and 15 June 2018 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

6. Public Question Time

- 6.1 There were no public questions received on this occasion.

7 Appointments of Committees (NFNPA 551/18)

- 7.1 The Chairman presented the report, and listed and proposed the local authority and Secretary of State appointed members on the Planning Committee and Standards Committee. Members unanimously agreed the membership in respect of these two committees as set out in the report. A ballot was then held in respect of the Secretary of State membership of the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee for which five expressions of interest had been received in respect of four seats on the Committee. Following the ballot, the Monitoring Officer announced that Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre, Patrick Heneghan, John Sanger and Marian Spain had been appointed as the Secretary of State component of the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee.

- 7.2 Members then endorsed the Committee appointments which are summarised in **Annex 1** to these minutes.

Resolved, That:

1. appointments be made to the Planning Committee as set out in Annex 1 to these minutes for the period until the next annual meeting of the NPA in 2019 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to amend the membership;
2. appointments be made to Standards Committee as set out in Annex 1 to these minutes for the period until the next annual meeting of the NPA in 2019 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to amend the membership; and
3. appointments be made to the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee as set out in Annex 1 to these minutes for the period until the next annual meeting of the NPA in 2019 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to amend the membership;

Voting: Unanimous

8 Election of Committee Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the New Forest National Park Authority (NPNPA 551/18)

- 8.1 Consideration was given to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman positions in respect of the three Committees whose membership had now been determined.

Resolved, that:

1. Leo Randall be appointed as Chairman of the Planning Committee for the period until the annual meeting of the NPA in 2019 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to review the position;
2. Gordon Bailey be appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Planning Committee for the period until the annual meeting of the NPA in 2019 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to review the position;
3. David Harrison be appointed as Chairman of the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee for the period until the annual meeting of the NPA in 2019 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to review the position;
4. Marian Spain be appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee for the period until the annual meeting of the NPA in 2019 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to review the position;
5. Phil Marshall be appointed as Chairman of the Standards Committee for the period until the annual meeting of the NPA in 2019 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to review the position; and
6. George Bisson be appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Standards Committee for the period until the annual meeting of the NPA in 2019 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to review the position.

Voting: the above positions were voted on by only the membership of each committee with none voting against and no abstentions.

9 Appointments of Representatives to External Organisations (NFNPA 552/18)

- 9.1 Members resolved to re-appoint members to all those appointments for which there was no change or the correct number of volunteers had expressed an interest. A ballot was held in respect of the Recreation Management Strategy Advisory Group where two expressions of interest had been received for the representative role. The final representation agreed is summarised in the schedule attached as **Annex 2** to these minutes.

Resolved, that the appointments to external organisations for the period up to the Annual meeting of the Authority in 2019, as listed in Annex 2 to these minutes, be approved.

Voting: Unanimous

10. Chief Executive's Report (NFNPA 553/18)

- 10.1 The Chief Executive presented her report reminding members that this was the first report of the new Business Plan which was still arranged around the Authority's four themes of Protect, Enjoy, Prosper and Achieving Excellence.
- 10.2 Under the Protect programme Ms Barnes informed members that the Our Past, Our Future scheme was now halfway through and highlighted some of the achievements which had been made to date, a report in the form of a newsletter would be available shortly. A special mention was given to the Land Advice Service who had helped 101 commoners submit their claims for rural farmers on time, this was thanks to the dedication and hard work of the team.
- 10.3 Ms Barnes advised that the Beaulieu river catchment had been making excellent progress and the partnership had been working really well monitoring the water quality and campaigning to encourage local communities to reduce pollution. Since the acquisition of Franchises Lodge a lot of work had been taking place and a Memorandum of Understanding had been signed, community engagement walks and meetings had taken place and a fundraising campaign had been launched.
- 10.4 Under the Enjoy programme the Chief Executive brought members attention to the Future Forest Consultation which was launched on 18 June and would run until 12 August, 238 responses had been received so far with the majority being from individuals. Ms Barnes advised that the recreation team had been extremely busy with the concierges and seasonal rangers out in the Forest, the introduction of the bark ranger school which encourages dog owners to walk their pets responsibly and wild play days at the beach.
- 10.5 A recent campaign had been launched with partners #keepyourdistance to encourage both residents and visitors not to approach animals in the Forest. The New Forest Tour season began on 7 July and would run until 9 September, all drivers had been fully trained and the on-board commentary been amended.
- 10.6 Under the Prosper programme Ms Barnes advised that a planning application had been submitted for the Burley housing and heritage scheme and this would likely be heard at the September Planning Committee meeting.
- 10.7 Under the Achieving Excellence programme Ms Barnes commented on the staff discovery days which had taken place this was an excellent opportunity for staff to network and learn about various topics within the Forest. A draft copy of the Annual Report was tabled for members who were asked to send in their comments as soon as possible.

- 10.8 The Chief Executive concluded her report by thanking Jo Murphy and Rosalind Alderman for all their hard work on GDPR, she then asked members to note her report.

11. Oral Report – Members Day on 12 June Regarding Increased Liaison between the Forestry Commission and the Authority.

- 11.1 In summarising the members' day on 12 June for those members who had not been able to attend, the Chief Executive advised that members met with the Deputy Surveyor, Bruce Rothnie, and agreed to explore opportunities for increased liaison between the two partners. She would therefore be working with Bruce Rothnie and Alison Field from the FC's Forestry Services to look at various options to put before members, i.e. set up arrangements for Bruce Rothnie and Alison Field to attend a meeting of the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee to update members on relevant issues once per year.

- 11.2 She reported that an Accord between the Forestry Commission (England) and National Parks England had recently been signed and would be formally launched at the New Forest Show. This accord could provide a reporting framework for the Forestry Commission in its updates to RAPC. However, she needed to discuss this and other options in more detail with Mr Rothnie. She added that further members' sessions could be held to look at similar opportunities or develop member connections with other partners.

- 11.3 She concluded by saying that there had been a very positive commitment from Bruce Rothnie and his team at the members' day to set up increased and regular liaison between the Forestry Commission and the Authority as members had suggested. She invited members to contact her with any further suggestions for strengthening joint working and exploring shared ambitions with partner organisations.

- 11.4 Members noted the report.

12. Oral Report from Resource, Audit and Performance Committee

- 12.1 David Harrison reported on the issues considered by the Committee at its meeting on 14 May 2018 including the joint working proposals by New Forest District Council, the annual internal audit performance and opinion report, quarterly progress against the annual work programme, the financial outturn and treasury report and the update report on the New Forest Centre.

- 12.2 Members noted the report.

13 Ernst & Young – Audit Results Report 2017/18 (NFNPA 555/15)

- 13.1 Nigel Stone introduced the Auditors, Kevin Suter and Emily Farley.

Kevin Suter then presented his report to the Authority highlighting several areas that every audit examines, including risk of fraud or error. He was pleased to conclude that there was no evidence of fraud, there were no issues on valuation of property, plant or equipment and they had found just one issue regarding the pension liability valuation estimate, but that this had been agreed as immaterial to the overall Accounts. He also thanked Nigel Stone and his team for their support and professionalism throughout the audit process.

Members then noted the report.

14. Draft Financial Report (NFNPA 556/18)

- 14.1 Nigel Stone presented the draft Financial Report 2017/18 and Annual Governance Statement to members advising that the document had been subjected to full external audit scrutiny; and that the financial results and draft Annual Governance Statement had previously been considered and recommended for approval by the Resource Audit and Performance Committee. He presented an updated version of the Letter of Representation, amended to take note of his decision not to amend the Accounts in light of the immaterial pension estimation variance found by the Auditors. Mr Stone thanked the Auditors and his team and then asked members to approve the report.

Resolved, that
the Financial Report, the Annual Governance Statement contained therein and the updated Letter of Representation be approved.

Voting: unanimous

15. Any other items the Chairman decides are urgent

- 15.1 There was no further business.

The meeting closed at 11.55am.

Signed:
(Chairman)

Date: