

## NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RESOURCES, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2018 AT 10:00 HOURS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, LYMINGTON TOWN HALL, AVENUE ROAD, LYMINGTON

#### **Present:**

##### *Members:*

David Harrison (Chairman)  
Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre  
Richard Frampton  
Patrick Heneghan  
Neville Penman

##### *Officers:*

Alison Barnes	Chief Executive Officer
Rosalind Alderman	Monitoring Officer
Steve Avery	Executive Director Strategy and Planning
Nigel Stone	Chief Finance Officer
Nigel Matthews	Head of Recreation Management and Learning
Paul Walton	Head of Environment and Rural Economy
David Stone	Corporate Services Manager
Hilary Makin	Communications Manager
Frances Connolly	Executive Assistant

##### *Also in attendance:*

Antony Harvey	Assistant Head of Partnership - Southern Internal Audit Partnership
Amanda Chalmers	Audit Manager – Southern Internal Audit Partnership

#### **14. Apologies for absence**

14.1 Apologies for absence were received from Marian Spain, John Sanger and Edward Heron.

#### **15. Declarations of Interest**

15.1 Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to minute item 7 as a Trustee of the New Forest Trust.

#### **16. Chairman's announcements**

16.1 There were no announcements on this occasion.

#### **17. Minutes**

17.1 The minutes of the meeting on 10 September 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

**Resolved, that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2018 be confirmed as a correct record.**

*Voting: none voting against*

**18. Public Question Time**

18.1 There were no questions or statements from the public.

**19. Internal Audit Progress Report 2018-19**

19.1 Members were introduced to Amanda Chalmers the Audit Manager of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership.

19.2 Antony Harvey reported on the progress of the 2018/19 Internal Audit Plan. He went through the background and purpose of the audit and what the New Forest National Park Authority's position was with regard to the delivery of the audit plan and explained the categorisation of assurance opinions. He said it was a requirement for the Partnership to be externally assessed every five years under the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). A successful assessment had been undertaken in 2015 by the Institute of Internal Auditors and a further self-assessment had been completed in April 2018 with a satisfactory conclusion. The assurance opinion in respect of completed audits was reported as 'Reasonable' and there were no items of significance to report.

19.3 Members noted the report

**20. Half-Year Progress Report 2018-19**

20.1 David Stone introduced the report (NFNPA RAPC 376/18) which comprised second quarter progress against the actions in the 2018/19 Work Programme. Progress against the second quarter key performance indicators, both national and local, were also set out in the report.

20.2 The Committee considered and discussed the sections of the Work Programme. The Chairman expressed his thanks on behalf of the Committee to all the staff that had helped with the work experience and placement students over the quarter (Enjoy 4), Craig Daters (Ranger Team) for his excellent support to the John Muir Awards and National Citizenship Programme (Enjoy 8) and Andy Brennan in reinvigorating the Forest Visitor Giving Scheme (Prosper 3).

20.3 Members were advised that UK Cycle Events staff had done litter sweeps after their cycle events (Enjoy 12). NPA staff and other authorities continue to encourage cycle event organisers to achieve the high standards set out in the Cycle Event Organisers' Charter. Members recorded their thanks to UK Cycle Events for this positive work.

20.4 The report was then noted by the Committee.

**21. Half-Year Budgetary Control Report 2018-19**

21.1 Nigel Stone presented his report and drew attention to the overall income and expenditure budgets for 2018/19. He informed members that 47% of the budget had been spent over the first six months of the financial year, and 44% of the budgeted income had been received over the same period.

21.2 A potential pressure was for the costs of the Local Plan examinations that were to take place this month. A budget of £40,000 had been set aside and £10,000 had been

spent/allocated to date. Mr Stone said that the Inspector's total costs were not yet finalised, so a variance was possible.

21.3 There were no other issues to raise with members in the second quarter.

**21.4 Resolved that Members note the current income and expenditure position, including potential savings and pressures identified**

*Voting: None voting against*

**22. Oral Update on Grants Scheme**

22.1 Nigel Stone updated members on the current Authority grants and mentioned that officers were considering a clearer and fairer scheme where the value of third party delivery methods were clear, logical and transparent when giving grants or contributions.

22.2 He said that issues which would need to be considered in any new scheme included terms of reference, themes/topics, financial limits, the level of detail required in the application processes and oversight of the scheme. He then referred to resource requirements which may be necessary following a review of the existing processes and mentioned staff, IT and communications (to publicise and encourage applications). There would also need to be transparency of decision making and outcomes.

22.3 A report outlining various scheme options and recommendations would be submitted to the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee on 4 February. Over the next few months officers and members would be consulted on various options and the evaluation of these would be fed into the RAPC report. The preferred scheme would then be incorporated into the 2019/20 budget ready for approval at the RAPC meeting on 4 March and thereafter the full Authority on 28 March.

22.4 Following brief discussion, members noted the plan as described.

**23. Landscape Enhancement Initiative - Grant Funding for Franchises Lodge**

23.1 Paul Walton presented the report to members to inform them that the National Park Authority was working with the RSPB to put together a funding application for landscape enhancement at Franchises Lodge as part of National Grid's Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI). He clarified that the National Grid's Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI) was separate to National Grid's Visual Impact Provision regarding the undergrounding of electricity cables at Hale Purlieu.

23.2 Mr Walton informed members that there was a fund of up to £4m per year with up to £200,000 available for each project. He said the Authority had supported applications so far from local communities in Holbury and Landford and there would be potential for a third, much larger application from RSPB to fund work at Franchises Lodge to maintain the woodland. The funding would help mitigate the visual impact of National Grid's existing infrastructure by removing and controlling rhododendron.

23.3 It is thought that the RSPB would seek a grant of £200,000 from the LEI towards contractors and maintenance costs and would take up to three years to complete the project and it was unlikely that any work would start on the site before January 2020.

23.4 Members noted the report

## **24. Corporate Risk Log**

24.1 David Stone introduced the report (NFNPA RAPC 379/18) and advised that a review of the current risk log was being undertaken by officers to ensure that this included possible risks associated with the projects and objectives set in the new Business Plan. The revised log would be brought back to the Committee on 4 February 2019 for consideration.

24.2 Following brief discussion, members noted the report.

## **25. Approval of Health and Safety Policy**

25.1 David Stone introduced the report (NFNPA RAPC 380/18) and advised that input into reviewing this key policy had been received from relevant officers, NFDC's Health and Safety Advisers and Unison and had also be considered by the Health and Safety Forum and the Executive Board.

25.2 The updated Policy now contained a strong emphasis on training and resourcing for health and safety and ownership by management and staff.

25.3 The Chairman as Lead Member for Health and Safety expressed his thanks to Unison for their involvement and input in updating the Policy.

**Resolved, that the updated Health and Safety Policy, attached as Annex 1 to the submitted report, be approved.**

*Voting: none voting against*

## **26. Any other items that the Chairman decides are urgent**

26.1 There were no urgent items on this occasion.

## **27. Date of next meeting**

27.1 Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 4 February 2019.

**PART II ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ON THE GROUNDS THAT EXEMPTED INFORMATION MAY BE DISCLOSED**

**Resolved, that the public be excluded from the meeting during the following item of business, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, namely the need to avoid disclosing sensitive information relating to the Authority’s financial affairs.**

**28. Planning for the Future**

28.1 The above item was considered under Part 2 of the Agenda.

The meeting closed at 11.20 hours

**Signed .....** **Date.....**  
**(Chairman)**