

## **NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY HELD ON THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2019 AT 10.00 HOURS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, LYMINGTON TOWN HALL, LYMINGTON**

#### **Present:**

##### *Members*

Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre (Chairman)  
Patrick Heneghan (Deputy Chairman)  
Gordon Bailey  
David Bence (by Skype link)  
David Harrison  
Edward Heron  
Mel Kendal  
Keith Mans (until agenda item 9)  
George Meyrick  
Harry Oram

Gavin Parker  
Neville Penman  
Barry Rickman  
John Sanger  
Ann Sevier  
Richard Taylor  
Steve Trow

##### *Officers*

Alison Barnes	Chief Executive Officer
Steve Avery	Executive Director, Strategy and Planning
Rosalind Alderman	Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
Nigel Stone	Head of Resources
Paul Walton	Head of Environment & Rural Economy (from agenda item 9)
David Illsley	Policy Manager
Hilary Makin	Communications Manager
David Stone	Corporate Services Manager
Holger Schiller	Partnerships and Community Officer
Denise Allen	Member Services Administrator

#### **27. Apologies for absence**

- 27.1 Apologies for absence were received from Sue Bennison, George Bisson, Richard Clewer, Caroline Rackham and Leo Randall.

#### **28. Declarations of Interest**

- 28.1 Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre, Ann Sevier and Steve Trow declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5 (public question time, Minute item 31) as members of Friends of the New Forest.

#### **29. Chairman's announcements**

- 29.1 The Chairman extended a very warm welcome to George Meyrick as the new Secretary of State member on the Authority.
- 29.2 The Chairman reminded members that the next Authority meeting has been brought forward to 18 December 2019, and also asked members to diarise 4 November 2019 for an extra Members Day focusing on planning developments on the Waterside.

**30. Minutes**

- 30.1 The minutes of 29 August 2019 Authority meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**31. Public Question Time**

- 31.1 Brian Tarnoff (Friends of the New Forest/New Forest Association) was unable to attend the meeting but submitted a written statement to members expressing the Association's response to the Landscapes Review: National Parks & AONBs 2019. A copy of the statement is available by request from Member Services.

**32. Chief Executive's Report (NFNPA 583/19)**

- 32.1 The Chief Executive reminded members that her report covered the period from the last Authority meeting in July 2019 and centred around the Authority's four themes of Protect, Enjoy, Prosper and Achieving Excellence.
- 32.2 Under the Protect programme the Chief Executive congratulated the Planning team on the formal adoption of the Local Plan and advised members that stakeholders have been notified and a training session held for town and parish councils. Ms Barnes reported that the Hythe & Dibden Neighbourhood Plan referendum and the New Milton Neighbourhood Plan consultation would take place later in October. Also highlighted were: completion of footpath and car park enhancements at Holbury under the National Grid LEI, a £28,000 award to fence 1,000 acres at Landford Bog, a £200,000 grant application pending for rhododendron removal and other enhancements at Franchises Lodge, the Special by Design joint initiative looking at the 'New Forest story' and consistency of partner messages, and publication of the Forest Farming Group report detailing how the New Forest provides public goods to the nation – in this regard, the Chairman undertook to forward a copy of the Forest Farming Group report to Lord Gardiner.
- 32.3 Ms Barnes referenced the publication of the Landscapes Review (to be discussed fully by members at a separate meeting to follow) noting a greater emphasis on enhancing the beauty of our natural heritage, that health and wellbeing was now a more centralised purpose, and that the New Forest NPA was recognised on several topics: the importance of commoning, the affordable housing scheme at Bransgore, innovative health and wellbeing programmes, and the success of its volunteering programmes.
- 32.4 Under the Enjoy programme, Ms Barnes highlighted some of the many public and community engagement activities marking the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of National Parks with the Year of Green Action such as: more than 8,000 face to face contacts by rangers this quarter, 11,000 children benefitting from Authority education programmes, a record 4,000 visitors to the Authority stand at the New Forest Show, and a new Young Environmental Champion category in the National Parks Awards with the CLA. Ms Barnes stated that the four year Our Past Our Future scheme is now in its final year with successes including 19 new and young commoners receiving mentoring support, 21 private woodlands managed for wildlife, and three wild play sites established. The final two apprentice rangers had now started and Ms Barnes drew members' attention to the widespread support for finding funding to extend the apprentice ranger programme in the future.

- 32.5 Under the Prosper programme, the Chief Executive reported positive meetings with Local Enterprise Partnerships where the natural environment and natural capital have featured as themes to underpin both future thinking and funding focus. Members were requested to draw attention to the Solent LEP funding opportunities as appropriate.
- 32.6 Under the Achieving Excellence programme, Ms Barnes commended the recent Partnership Plan Tour where partners visited successful landscape scale conservation projects such as Foxbury, Franchises Lodge nature reserve, airfields and scheduled ancient monuments. Ms Barnes asked members to encourage public participation in the New Forest Walking Festival which was due to start on 12 October and run for three weeks. Members' attention was also drawn to the #Add3Minutes animal accidents reduction campaign which would commence shortly.

The Chief Executive asked members to note her report.

- 32.7 Several members voiced concerns, particularly in relation to new masts, about the Government's proposed reforms to the permitted development rights to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage. Whilst members were keen to support wider broadband and mobile coverage, the impact of telecommunications infrastructure on the landscape and scenic beauty of our nationally protected landscape must also be carefully considered. It was agreed that a collective response through National Parks England would be most appropriate. It was also noted that operators were under a legal obligation to share their infrastructure wherever this was reasonably practicable.
- 32.8 Members then noted the report

### **33. Appointments to committees (NFNPA 584/19)**

- 33.1 The Chairman advised that members had been canvassed to ascertain the scope to review the membership of the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee and Planning Committee to accommodate the appointment of the two new Secretary of State members to these committees. Ann Sevier (local authority member on the Authority) had volunteered for membership of the RAP Committee creating the potential to increase the size of the Committee and thus the appointment of George Meyrick as additional Secretary of State member on that Committee. Members supported this approach and the Chairman advised that the membership of all the Authority's committees would be appointed at the Annual Authority meeting at which time there would be further opportunities to accommodate member preferences on committees.

#### ***Resolved*, that**

1. the membership of the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee be increased to 11 members and that Ann Sevier and George Meyrick be appointed as additional local authority member and Secretary of State member respectively.
2. That the above changes be effective for the period up until the Annual Authority meeting in 2020 or until such time as the NPA wishes to amend the membership.

*Voting: Unanimous*

**34. Oral report from the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee meeting on 9 September 2019 (*Draft minutes circulated separately*)**

- 34.1 David Harrison, Chairman of the Resource, Audit and Performance Committee reported on the issues discussed at the Committee meeting on 9 September 2019 including quarterly progress against the annual work programme, and commitments by officers to review actions under this programme and to consider changing the RAG status of some objectives from green to amber. Mr Harrison also drew attention to costs associated with the Local Plan Inspection.
- 34.2 Members expressed concern as to the increased cost to the Authority of a Local Plan Inspection every five years, as now required, and requested this additional cost burden be raised with DEFRA. The opportunity to collaborate further with local partners to offset costs, along with a review of how data and evidence is collected and maintained, were also raised as subjects for further consideration.
- 34.3 Members noted the report.

**35. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – Update (*NFNP 585/19*)**

- 35.1 David Illsley presented the report and advised that the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and associated guidance enabled local planning authorities to prepare Supplementary Planning Documents to provide further detail on policies within the development plan.
- 35.2 Following the adoption of the Core Strategy back in 2010, the Authority adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents to provide more detailed guidance. With the adoption of the new Local Plan on 29 August 2019, there was a need to review the status of the adopted Supplementary Planning Documents to determine the weight they could afford in future planning policies. He recommended that a short addendum be prepared for insertion with each of the relevant SPDs setting this out to inform future decision makers of the Authority's position.
- 35.3 He also pointed out that the review highlighted a limited number of areas where elements of the SPDs were no longer clearly linked to policies in the new Local Plan and in these cases he recommended that this be set out in the addenda to be inserted in each SPD. The Authority's future work programme sets out the timetable for the revision of the relevant guidance, with the Design Guide and the Habitat Mitigation Scheme both priorities for updating.

***Resolved,*** that

1. the conclusions highlighted in bold in Section 3 of the submitted report regarding the weight to be afforded to the respective Supplementary Planning Documents in future decision making be endorsed.
2. The principle of inserting a brief addendum in the front of each of the relevant Supplementary Planning Documents setting out the conclusions of this review to inform future decision makers be supported.

*Voting: Unanimous*

**36. State of the Park Report (NFNPA 586/19)**

- 36.1 Holger Schiller thanked partners and external colleagues for the data they had contributed to the report. He explained the report's objective to provide a transparent view of the data rather than to examine or interpret it at length, as well as to provide a base of evidence and trends for the upcoming review of the Partnership Plan. Mr Schiller sounded a caveat regarding the difficulty of combining data from multiple organisations who have different data recording methods. He reported no substantial changes in headline indicators, but some more significant changes in the non-headline indicator statistics. He also noted that the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre Report will provide additional input when published in December.
- 36.2 Members congratulated Mr Schiller on the report and requested a workshop session be arranged to review the report and discuss how the data will be used in the Partnership Plan, as well as in relation to the public, town and parish councils, landowners and NGOs.

**Actions:** Holger Schiller to arrange a member workshop session on the State of the Park report.

**Resolved,** that the content of the updated State of the Park report be noted and that it be endorsed for publication subject to any further changes resulting from the members' workshop.

*Voting: unanimous*

- 36.3 The Chairman urged members to read the State of Nature 2019 Report, particularly in relation to the essential conservation role of National Parks in the face of the relentless decline of wildlife nationally as evidenced within the report.

**37. Any other items the Chairman decides are urgent**

- 37.1 There were no further items of business.

**38. Date of next meeting**

- 38.1 The next meeting of the New Forest National Park Authority will be held at 10:00 am on Wednesday, 18 December 2019 in the Council Chamber, Lymington Town Hall.

The meeting closed at 12.00 noon.

Signed: ..... Date: .....  
(Chairman)