

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE OF THE NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY HELD ON THURSDAY 21 OCTOBER 2021 AT 10.00 AM AT THE LINDEN HALL, LYNDHURST COMMUNITY CENTRE, CENTRAL CAR PARK, HIGH STREET, LYNDHURST SO43 7NY

Present:

Members

Gavin Parker (Chair)

Patrick Heneghan (Deputy Chair)

Gordon Bailey

Sue Bennison

David Bence

George Bisson

Richard Clewer

Zoe Clewer

David Harrison

Alexis McEvoy

Victoria Mander

Keith Mans

George Meyrick

Neville Penman

Barry Rickman

John Sanger

Ann Sevier

Stephen Tarling

Richard Taylor

Michael Thierry

Steve Trow

Officers

Alison Barnes

Steve Avery

Rosalind Alderman

Nigel Stone

David Stone

Hillary Makin

Holger Schiller

Vicki Gibbon

Sam Greatorex

Chief Executive Officer

Executive Director, Strategy and Planning

Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

Head of Resources (Chief Finance Officer)

Corporate Services Manager

Communications Manager

Partnerships & Community Officer

Member Services Administrator

Systems Support Technician (Attending Remotely)

1. Election of Chair and Deputy Chair of the New Forest National Park Authority

- 1.1 The Chief Executive facilitated the election of David Harrison as Interim Chair to oversee the appointment of the Authority Chair.
- 1.2 Gavin Parker was nominated and duly seconded as Chair 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. Gavin Parker was accordingly elected as Chair.

Resolved, that Gavin Parker be appointed as Chair of the Authority for the period up to the next Annual meeting of the Authority in 2022.

Voting: Unanimous

- 1.3 Gavin Parker thanked members for their support and confidence in appointing him as Chair. He then oversaw the appointment of the Deputy Chair.
- 1.4 Patrick Heneghan was proposed and seconded and elected as Deputy Chair of the NPA for the ensuing year.

Resolved, that Patrick Heneghan be appointed as Deputy Chair of the Authority for the period up to the next Annual meeting of the Authority in 2022.

Voting: Unanimous

2. Apologies for absence.

2.1 An Apology for absence was received from Caroline Rackham.

3. Declarations of Interest.

3.1 George Meyrick declared an interest under part 2 section B (non-pecuniary interests) of the NPA's Code of Conduct in minute item 12, with a qualifying interest in pop-up campsites and the proposed Article 4 Direction.

4. Chair's announcements.

4.1 The Chairman made a presentation to Leo Randall in recognition of his service and commitment to the Authority during his years as a member.

5. Minutes

Resolved, that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 August 2021 be approved as a true record.

Voting: unanimous

6. Public Question Time

6.1 There were no public questions on this occasion.

7. Chief Executive's Report (AM 606-21)

7.1 The Chief Executive introduced her report, reminding members that the report covered the period from the Authority meeting in August 2021.

7.2 Under the *Protect* programme, the Chief Executive drew members' attention to the Farming and Protected Landscape scheme which had recently awarded the first grants to three manager led environmental projects; a further 35 were in the pipeline for consideration by the panel. Ms Barnes went on to highlight COP26 where internationally countries would seek to cooperate on climate issues. Within the National Park the Authority were working closely with communities to take an online pledge for action to be taken locally along with a relaunch of the Sustainable Communities Fund, and invites to run events for the Awakening Festival in February and Park Life articles have been issued.

7.3 Continuing on the Protect programme Ms Barnes was pleased to confirm an investment of over £800,000 into the Forest to deliver climate and nature projects along with 16 jobs being created / retained and around 50 local contractors employed. A further £120k grant had recently been approved to improve walking routes and restore landscape character in five areas affected by overhead power lines as part of the Landscape Enhancement Initiative.

7.4 The Chief Executive went on to explain that the Planning team was extremely busy with 131 applications being received over the last quarter with a 90% approval rate, 113 tree work applications and an increase in complaints to the enforcement team regarding holiday accommodation needing permission. They also had several ongoing large scale developments and consultations taking place. The team had also recently

launched a consultation on Pop-up campsites, the Design Guide SPD was also out for consultation and the Building Design Awards were also being launched.

- 7.5 Under the *Enjoy* programme, Ms Barnes highlighted the excellent work which had been carried out by the Archaeology team including the Scheduled Monument improvement programme, lending equipment to local groups and the festival of Archaeology which included two 'sell-out' walks for WW2 at Lepe. The Care for the Forest, care for each other programme continues apace with new digital roadside signage at key gateways to the Forest, along with targeted intervention at noted hotspots and tens of thousands of New Forest Codes being distributed. Ms Barnes was pleased to announce that the Ranger team were now back attending community events, assisting with both pony drifts and deer-rut patrols.
- 7.6 Under the *Prosper* programme, the Chief Executive advised that the New Forest Tour season was extended from nine to 15 weeks this year and passenger numbers were up 17% on 2019 when compared with the same period. The New Forest Marque recently hosted a Local Produce show which was very well attended, the Authority were now providing dedicated comms support to the Marque as part of the SLA.
- 7.7 Under the *Excellence* programme, Ms Barnes highlighted the recent visits by local MPs to the Forest including Sir Desmond Swayne, Julian Lewis, John Glen and Caroline Nokes. Finally, Ms Barnes reminded members that the Annual Review 2020-2021 was now available.
- 7.8 Members then noted the report.

8. Oral Report from Resources, Audit and Performance Committee (6 September 2021)

- 8.1 The Chair of the above Committee (David Harrison) advised that he was standing down as the Chairman and a member of the Committee and was taking up a position on the Planning Committee. He thanked staff and members for their input and contributions during his time as Chairman and in particular David Stone for his assistance and support in the efficient and smooth running of the Committee and to Nigel Stone for his support and sound advice on financial matters.
- 8.2 Members recorded their thanks to David Harrison and then noted the report.

9. Appointment of Committees (AM 607-21)

- 9.1 Members noted that in accordance with the Standing Orders the Authority must appoint its Committees at the annual meeting and further that to facilitate this process, members had been written to in September inviting them to state their preferred choice for Committee membership. The results of this process are set out in Annex 1 to the minutes. Members voted on the Committee memberships as detailed below.

Resolved, that

1. The membership of the Planning Committee as set out in Annex 1 to the minutes be appointed for the period until the Annual meeting of the Authority in 2022 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to amend the membership.

2. The membership of the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee as set out in Annex 1 to the minutes be appointed until the Annual meeting of the Authority in 2022 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to amend the membership.
3. The membership of the Standards committee as set out in Annex 1 to the minutes be appointed until the Annual meeting in 2022 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to amend the membership.

Voting: unanimous

10. Election of Chair and Deputy Chair on Authority Committees

- 10.1 Members voted on their preferred Chair and Deputy Chair for each Authority Committee as set out below.

Resolved that

The following members be elected Chair and Deputy Chair for each of the Authority Committees:

1. Gordon Bailey as Chair and Steve Trow as Deputy Chair of the Planning Committee;
2. Patrick Heneghan as Chair and Alexis McEvoy as Deputy Chair of the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee; and
3. George Bisson as Chair and Victoria Mander as Deputy Chair of the Standards Committee.

Voting: unanimous

11. Appointment of Authority Representatives on External Organisations (AM 608-21)

- 11.1 The Chair presented the report and listed and proposed the Authority appointments to outside bodies.
- 11.2 Members then endorsed the appointments which are summarised in Annex 2 to these minutes.

Resolved, that the appointments to external organisations for the period up to the Annual meeting of the Authority in 2022 as listed in Annex 2 to these minutes be approved.

Voting: unanimous

12. New Forest Partnership Plan – Response to the Consultation and Next Steps (AM 608-21)

- 12.1 Holger Schiller (Partnerships & Community Officer) introduced the report analysing the responses to the public consultation and next steps on the emerging new Partnership Plan. He said that following the 10-week consultation which ran from 23 June 2021, 347 responses from individuals and 27 responses from organisations had been received, representing a mix of public bodies, interest groups, sports clubs and nature conservation charities, as well as over 1,000 individual free text comments. He drew members' attention to aspects of the analysis, including responses under paragraph 2.3 of the report where respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the themes and proposals set out in the Plan and people who had provided comments on their preferred topic choices in free text format as set out in paragraph 2.4.

12.2 He then highlighted elements of the next steps on the proposed Plan including a detailed annual work programme setting out how the various actions identified would be delivered. The work programme for the first two years was currently being finalised and would be presented along with the revised Partnership Plan.

12.3 Members discussed the consultation responses set in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 to the report in detail as well as other aspects of the report, which was then noted.

13. Any other items the Chair decides are urgent

13.1 There were no further items.

14. Date of next meeting

14.1 Thursday 27 January 2022 at 10.00am – Venue – TBC

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

None

The meeting closed at 12:05pm.

Signed: Date:
(Chair)