

**NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 28 OCTOBER 2019 AT 14:00 HOURS
IN IBSLEY ROOM, LYMINGTON TOWN HALL, AVENUE ROAD, LYMINGTON**

Attending:

Committee: George Bisson (Chairman)
David Harrison (Deputy Chairman)
Leo Randall

Officers: Rosalind Alderman Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
Jo Murphy Information and Data Protection Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 An apology for absence was received from Edward Heron.

2 Declarations of Interest

2.1 There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

3 Minutes

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2017 were approved as a correct record.

4 Public Question Time

4.1 There were no public questions on this occasion.

5 Review of the Authority's Governing Documents (Standards)

5.1 Ms Alderman introduced the report (NFNPA/SC 49/19) and drew Members' attention to the proposed substantive changes to the Standing Orders that were set out in paragraph 2 of the report. She explained that each Committee of the Authority would review the documents which related to matters within their Terms of Reference, for example the Resources Audit and Performance Committee would review the Financial Regulations and the Planning Committee would look at the planning delegations and the Development Control Charter.

5.2 Ms Alderman informed Members that the proposed change to the date of the annual Authority meeting had been requested by Defra, to allow more time to appoint new Secretary of State Parish members following the elections which are usually held in May. Ms Alderman also advised that the changes proposed to Standing Orders 4.11 and 5.12 were necessary to comply with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.

5.3 Members debated Standing Order paragraph 7, the election of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Authority and were concerned by the new recommendation that nominations for the Chairman should be received before 5pm on the working day prior to the Annual Authority Meeting. It was felt that this was too restrictive and would prevent an alternative Chairman being proposed at the meeting, particularly if no nominations were received by the deadline. It was agreed to remove this proposal from paragraph 7.2 of the Standing Orders.

Action: Delete the proposed amendment at 7.2 of the Standing Orders which reads 'before 5.00 pm on the working day prior to the Annual Meeting'.

5.4 Members agreed some further minor amendments to the documents, as detailed below:

- 18.3 of the Standing Orders – remove 'remain seated and';
- Page 1 of the Code of Conduct – suggested that we have a generic email for the Monitoring Officer, rather than a personal email; and
- Paragraph 9 of the Protocol for Member and Officer Relations – ensure that his/her is consistently used throughout the document.

Action: The Monitoring Officer to make the listed amendments to the documents prior to them being considered for adoption at the Authority Meeting.

5.5 Members also debated the advances in technology and the recent use of Skype by a member to participate in an Authority meeting remotely. Members considered that this was an area which would need further review and discussion as technology continued to evolve and in order to facilitate access to the Authority's meetings. It was agreed that the subject should be re-visited in 12 months' time and that the ICT team be asked to conduct a feasibility study of what is possible and bring a proposal to the Standards Committee for consideration at the meeting in October 2020.

Action: ICT to do a feasibility study on the use of technology at statutory meetings, including livestreaming and remote access via technology for the public and members, and report back to the Standards Committee in October 2020.

5.6 Members debated whether members' allowances should be a matter for the Standards Committee or the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee. It was decided that it should remain within the Terms of Reference for the Standards Committee.

Resolved, that it be recommended to the full Authority that the amendments discussed and agreed by the Committee, the revisions to the Authority's Standing Orders (Annex 1), the Code of Conduct (Annex 2), the Arrangements for dealing with allegations (Annex 3), the Local Protocol for Member and Officer Relations (Annex 4) and the Scheme of Delegations to Officers and Committees (Annex 5) be approved.

Voting: Non-voting against

6 Dispensations under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 – oral update

6.1 Ms Alderman explained that in order for members with a disclosable pecuniary interest in land in the National Park, could participate and vote on the adoption of the Local Plan at the Authority Meeting held on 29 August 2019, it was necessary for them to be granted a dispensation under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011. She explained that Alison Barnes, Chief Executive, had granted the dispensation under her emergency powers as it was not practicable to convene a Standards

Meeting. In accordance with the Standing Orders, the Chief Executive is required to report her actions to the Standards Committee at the next meeting.

6.2 Members noted the actions taken by the Chief Executive.

7. Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent

7.1 Members debated the frequency of the Standards Committee and agreed that it should be held twice a year, in October and April.

8 Date of next meeting

8.1 As per item 7.1 above.

The meeting ended at 15.15 hours.

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Chairman

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Date