

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 19 OCTOBER 2023 AT 10.00 AM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, LYMINGTON TOWN HALL, AVENUE ROAD, LYMINGTON SO41 9ZG

Present:

Members

David Bence (Chair)

Victoria Mander (Deputy Chair)

Gordon Bailey

Zoe Clewer

Mary Davies (left at 2.10pm)

Patrick Heneghan

Mel Kendal

Keith Mans

George Meyrick

Gavin Parker

Neville Penman

Caroline Rackham

Joe Reilly

Ann Sevier

Brice Stratford

Michael Thierry

Derek Tipp

Officers

Alison Barnes

Chief Executive

Steve Avery

Executive Director

Howard Bone

Solicitor

Nigel Stone

Head of Resources (Chief Finance Officer)

Paul Walton

Head of Environment and Rural Economy

David Stone

Corporate Services Manager

Sarah Applegate

Senior Policy Officer

Vicki Gibbon

Member Services Administrator

51. Election of Chair and Deputy Chair

- 51.1 Alison Barnes, Chief Executive opened the meeting and asked for nomination for an interim Chair, Keith Mans was proposed and elected. Mr Mans then oversaw the election of Chair of the Authority, David Bence was proposed and elected for the ensuing year with Victoria Mander elected as Deputy Chair.

52 Apologies for Absence

- 52.1 Apologies for absence were received from Richard Clewer, David Harrison, Dan Poole, Stephen Tarling and Steve Trow.

53. Declarations of Interest

- 53.1 Mel Kendal, Keith Mans, Neville Penman and Michael Thierry declared an interest under Part 2 section B (non-pecuniary interests) of the NPA's Code of Conduct in minute item 63 as members of Hampshire County Council.

George Meyrick declared an interest under Part 2 section B (non-pecuniary interests) of the NPA's Code of Conduct in minute item 63.

54. Chair's Announcements

- 54.1 The Chair thanked the outgoing Chair and Deputy Chair, Gavin Parker and Patrick Heneghan respectively.

55. Minutes

- 55.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2023 were approved as a true record.

Resolved, that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2023 be approved as a true record.

Voting: None voting against

56. Public Question Time

- 56.1 None

57. Chief Executive's Report (AM 660/23)

- 57.1 The Chief Executive reminded members that her report covered the period since the Authority meeting on 13 July 2023 and that the report would fit within the Re:New Forest themes from the newly agreed Business Plan.
- 57.2 Under the *Protect* purpose, Ms Barnes was pleased to announce that a bid for £1.2 million from the National Lottery's Climate Action fund was successful and therefore the Youth for Climate and Nature scheme (YouCan) was launched. This would be a three-year scheme led by the Authority in conjunction with six regional partners. The Our Nature Story campaign was launched on World Environment Day and captured people's favourite ways and places to connect with nature, there were over 300 #OurNatureStory posts on social media throughout June and July.
- 57.3 The Chief Executive informed members on the work of the Planning team, with recent applications including the Ashurst Hospital scheme and a commoner's dwelling at Rockford. The team had also recently commented on a consultation on permitted development rights and were in the process of drawing up a new Article 4 Direction in relation to campsites.
- 57.4 Under the *Enjoy* purpose, Ms Barnes highlighted the 2 PSPO's which had recently come into force; 700 people had been spoken to, but no fines had been issued to date. Over the summer months the Rangers had been involved in a range of activities including guided walks, family activities, information provision and many local events.
- 57.5 The volunteers had recently contributed to 14 sessions, 1,600 hours, cutting back vegetation to improve footpaths across the National Park and the New Forest Ambassadors had recently carried out a beach clean and survey for the Marine Conservation Society at Hurst Spit. The next volunteer fair would take place on Sunday 28 January 2024 at Brockenhurst Village Hall.
- 57.6 Under the *Prosper* purpose, the Chief Executive highlighted the focus on supporting young people with the Intern programme and early green careers network. Along with the Education team attending school visits, Brockenhurst College Freshers day and youth and volunteering sessions. Ms Barnes was pleased to inform members that Ranger Hayden Bridgeman collected her scholarship award from the Alfred Toepfer

Foundation as part of the Europarc Conference in the Netherlands. The New Forest Tour had now come to an end for the season and had won runner up in the UK Open-Top Bus cup 2023.

- 57.7 Under the *Excellence* purpose, Ms Barnes remarked on this years successful New Forest Show, it was the 10th Year of the CLA awards, PEDALL welcomed 800 riders to try the all-ability bikes and the New Forest Marque area proved hugely popular with guests. Nominations were now open for the New Forest National Park Building Design Awards which would take place in the Spring. Ms Barnes also advised of the various MP visits the Authority had recently held to discuss issues affecting the National Park. Members then noted the report.

Following brief discussion, members noted the report. A copy of the presentation is available on the website.

58. Oral Report from Resources, Audit and Performance Committee – 4 September 2023

- 58.1 Patrick Henegan, Chair of the above Committee referred to items discussed at the meeting including the income and expenditure position at that stage of the financial year, the pay award to staff which had not yet been finalised, and an update on the work of the Land Advice Service. Referring to this last item, he suggested that it would be useful for a presentation to be made to members on the work of the New Forest Land Advice Service on a suitable members day.

Action - a presentation be made to NPA members on the work of the Land Advice Service on a suitable members' day.

59. Appointment of Committees (AM 661/23)

- 59.1 David Bence, Chair, introduced the report advising members that, in accordance with its Standing Orders, the Authority was required to appoint members on committees at its Annual Authority meeting. Following the results of a recent survey requesting members complete their committee choices. The Resources, Audit and Performance Committee had sufficient membership however the Planning Committee had 2 Local Authority vacancies which would be carried until such time sufficient membership could be achieved. Members then approved the recommendations as detailed below.

Resolved that:

1. the membership of the Planning Committee as set out in Annex 1 of the minutes, be appointed for the period until the Annual meeting of the Authority in 2024 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to amend the membership, it being noted that the Committee membership was inclusive of two vacancies.
2. the membership of the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee as set out in Annex 1 of the minutes, be appointed for the period until the Annual meeting of the Authority in 2024 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 of the minutes, be appointed for the period until the Annual meeting of the Authority in 2024 or until such earlier time as the NPA wishes to amend the membership.

Voting: Unanimous

60. Election of Chair and Deputy Chair on Authority Committees

- 60.1 A vote took place to determine the Chair and Deputy Chair for each of the Authority Committees, as detailed below:

Resolved that:

1. Gordon Bailey be elected as Chair and Steve Trow as Deputy Chair of the Planning Committee;
2. Patrick Heneghan be elected as Chair and David Bence as Deputy Chair of the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee;
3. Ann Sevier be elected as Chair and Mel Kendal as Deputy Chair of the Standards Committee.

Voting: unanimous

61 Appointments of Authority Representatives on External Organisations (AM 662/23)

- 61.2 It was advised that this report was for members to consider appointments to external organisations for the period until the next Annual Authority meeting in 2024. Annex 1 of the report detailed those members who were proposed to represent the Authority on each outside body.

Resolved, that appointments be made to external organisations as detailed in Annex 2 attached to the minutes for the period up to the Annual meeting of the Authority in 2024 or such earlier time as the NPA wishes to amend the appointments.

Voting: Unanimous

63 Revised Hampshire Minerals and Waste Local Development Scheme (LDs) (AM 663/23)

- 63.1 Sarah Applegate introduced her report reminding members that as a minerals and waste planning authority, the authority was currently working with partners to revise the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan to reflect changes in national policy and to ensure policy criteria enables suitable developments to come forward.
- 63.2 Ms Applegate explained that this report sets out the revised timetable and programme for the partial update of the Minerals and Waste Plan. The decision to undertake a partial update of the plan was made by each partner organisation and work commenced in 2021, in line with the original LDS. She advised that the reason for the revised timetable was due to the plethora of Government consultations that had been issued in relation to the plan and the need to consider the advice which had been issued by Natural England on nutrient impacts on habitats.

Resolved, that the Hampshire Minerals & Waste Local Development Scheme, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved it being noted that this sets out the revised timetable and programme for the partial update of the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (2013) and becomes effective immediately.

Voting: Unanimous

64 Working with UK National Parks – Net Zero with Nature (AM 664/23)

- 64.1 Paul Walton presented his report advising that UK National Parks had been working for over a year towards joining the UN backed 'Race for Zero' initiative to halve global greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and to build a healthier future. He explained that the UK National Parks family wanted to act together in joining the 'Race to Zero' by the end of 2023 and his report asked members to approve this.
- 64.2 Following discussion, members felt that this would open a lot of opportunities for the Authority and would see a potential for collaborative work. However, it was also felt that as this was a voluntary approach, if the Authority believed the programme wasn't working or was impacting the day-to-day work of the Authority the Authority would be able to leave the programme. Members then approved the recommendation as detailed below.

Resolved, that the New Forest National Park Authority join the United Nations backed 'Race to Zero' initiative and pledge to 'maximise effort toward or beyond a fair share of 50% global greenhouse gas emissions reduction needed by 2030, and to reach net zero by 2050 latest'.

Voting: 15:2

65 Public Question Time – Vernon Dene

- 65.1 Lord Willie Manners, Philip Emmel and Richard Harwood OBE KC made presentments to the Authority in regard to Vernon Dene.

66 Vernon Dene (AM 665/23)

- 66.1 Steve Avery gave a detailed presentation on the background of the Vernon Dene case, outlining the grounds for revocation and the relevant expediency considerations, as set out and detailed in his report. He explained that whatever decision was made by members it was likely to be challenged. He also advised that it would be necessary to move into Part II for a more detailed discussion on the financial and legal considerations before returning to Part I for a formal decision.
- 66.2 Following discussion in Parts I and II of the meeting, and having considered the earlier presentments, members resolved that it was considered that the grounds for revocation of the certificate had been met and that it was expedient to revoke the Certificate on the basis of all the reasons as outlined in the Part I report.

Resolved, that

1. the Authority considers that the grounds for revoking the certificate have been met
Voting: 15:0, 1 abstention
2. having considered the latest representations from the site owners and members having been fully appraised of the associated financial and legal risks, the Authority revoke the CLU issued on 1 August 2008 in accordance with the provisions of S.193(7) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and delegate authority to the Executive Director of Strategy and Planning to carry out all actions as necessary in this regard.
Voting: 14:0, 2 abstentions

(Mary Davies left the meeting at 2.10pm and therefore did not take part in the vote or discussion on this item)

67. Date of next meeting

67.1 Thursday 25 January 2024 at 10.00am – Council Chamber, Lymington Town Hall, Lymington

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 Paragraph 3 and Paragraph 5, 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 and business affairs.

68 Vernon Dene (AM 667/23)

68.1 Members resolved to enter a Part II confidential session which was duly minuted as such.

The meeting closed at 3:00pm.

Signed: Date: (Chair)