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## MINUTES

Meeting: **National Park Authority**

Date: Friday 21 May 2021 at 10.00 am

Venue: Cliff College, Calver, S32 3XG

Chair: Cllr A McCloy

Present: Cllr W Armitage, Cllr P Brady, Cllr M Chaplin, Cllr D Chapman, Cllr C Furness, Cllr A Gregory, Prof J Haddock-Fraser, Cllr Mrs G Heath, Cllr C McLaren, Cllr Mrs K Potter, Cllr V Priestley, Cllr K Richardson, Miss L Slack, Mr K Smith, Cllr P Tapping, Ms Y Witter and Cllr B Woods

Apologies for absence: Cllr J Atkin, Cllr C Farrell, Mr Z Hamid, Ms A Harling, Cllr A Hart, Mr R Helliwell, Cllr I Huddleston, Cllr B Lewis, Cllr R Walker, Cllr G D Wharmby and Mrs C Waller.

### **26/21 ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS PRESENT, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Item 18

Most Members had received emails from Patricia Stubbs, Matt Denham and David Leng.

### **27/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 19TH MARCH 2021**

The minutes of the last meeting of the Authority Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021 were approved as a correct record.

### **28/21 URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

### **29/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No members of the public had given notice to make representations to the Committee.

*Cllr Brady joined the meeting at 10:10*

### **30/21 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chair updated Members on the following:-

1. The Government has made some important announcements on nature recovery in particular the England Tree Action Plan and the Peat Action Plan for England which has been published, which promises funding for the Great North Bog Project. Sarah Fowler to circulate the link to Members so they can follow it up.
2. Joined the Peak District National Park Foundation Trustees and Staff on the Monsal Trail for a litter pick to launch the Peak District Proud Fund which the Foundation was taking forward to buy community litter picks for the Peak Park Communities.
3. Took part in a photo call to launch the Hope Valley Explorer Bus with Robert Largan MP, representatives from Visit Peak District and Stage Coach.

### **31/21 CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT (SLF)**

Members noted the Chief Executive's report that included updates to Members on key items since the previous Authority meeting.

#### **RESOLVED:**

**To note the report.**

### **32/21 EXTERNAL AUDIT 2020/21 AUDIT STRATEGY (JW)**

The report was introduced by Mark SurrIDGE and Tom Greenshill from Mazars, the Authority's External Auditors, and Members were asked to consider the 2020/21 External Audit Strategy Memorandum.

The Chair of the Authority thanked Mark SurrIDGE and Tom Greenshill for the report, and asked whether the CoVID restrictions would cause any issues; Tom Greenshill reported that one problem that had been identified which would limit the audit would be the inability of the auditors to carry out a physical inventory as they would not be present at the properties to do a stock take.

The recommendation as set out in the report was moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the 2020/21 External Audit Strategy Memorandum was considered and acknowledged.**

### **33/21 INTERNAL AUDIT BLOCK 2 (JW)**

Ian Morton from the Internal Auditors was welcomed to the meeting then presented his report to Members and the agreed actions for consideration.

Ian Morton reported that no major concerns had been detected in the 3 audits contained within Block 2 and as such there was nothing he wished to highlight to Members.

The recommendation as set out in the report was moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1. That the internal audit reports for the three areas covered under Block 2 for 2020/21 (in appendices 1-3 of the report) be received and the agreed actions considered.**

**34/21 INTERNAL AUDIT 2020/21 ANNUAL REPORT**

Ian Morton, Internal Auditor tabled his report. Members were informed the focus of the audits carried out during the 20/21 period were those most greatly impacted by Covid - 19 and concentrated in the main on financial and information system where controls have changed due to homeworking and remote access. The overall opinion of the Head of Internal Audit on the framework and governance, risk managements and control operating in the Authority was that it provides Substantial Assurance and there were no significant control weaknesses which in the opinion of the Head of Internal Audit needed to be considered for inclusion in the Annual Governance Statement. However it was noted that Covid-19 had significantly affected the Authority and is was not possible for the Head of Audit to conclude on the full extent of the impact of the pandemic on the operations of the Authority. Ian Morton thanked Officers for their support over the last year which hadn't been easy.

The Chair thanked Ian Morton for his report.

The recommendation as set out in the report was moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1. To note and accept the 2020/21 Annual Report from the Internal Auditors as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.**

**35/21 2020/21 OUTTURN REPORT (JW)**

The Chief Executive presented the report on behalf of the Head of Finance and Chief Finance Officer, reminding Members that the outturn was the look back at the financial performance of 2020/21 which was also a key part of the year end statement of accounts process.

The Chief Executive reported on an amendment to the table on Page 97 of the report which had a line missing showing the Furlough Income figures, which should read 127,175 and 48 going left to right.

The Chief Executive then went onto highlight some key points from the outturn report.

- Reflection on an exceptional year due to CoVID
- Loss of trading, lower than expected
- National Park Grant (NPG) is at same level 2020/21
- Still awaiting outcome of the Glover Review

The Chief Executive reminded Members that whilst the Authority was in a good financial position now, there still remained the threat of budget reductions in the future. If the NPG remained at a flat cash level, inflationary impacts on costs and pay increases would have to be absorbed by current budgets. However, Officers are already starting scenario

planning into the future, as we did in the last financial year and this will be shared with Members when Officers are in a position to do so.

The recommendation as set out in the report was moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1. That the outturn be noted, and the slippage requests and specific reserve appropriations shown in Appendix C of the report be approved.**
- 2. The two new proposed reserves also shown in Appendix C of the report be approved, with delegated authority given to the Chief Executive Officer to bring options back to Authority for the new Resilience Reserve.**

**36/21 TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY (A1327/JW)**

The Chief Executive presented the report on behalf of the Head of Finance and Chief Finance Officer to seek approval from Members to approve the Treasury Management Policy Statement and the Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy.

The CEO informed Members that our surplus funds are invested by North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and we had an Service Level Agreement with them, which was renewed in 2020 for three years to April 2023. This approach provides a strong professional approach to investment of our funds with a rate of return, which is currently the best we can expect given the very low interest rates.

In respect of borrowing, we only borrow in line with the approved Capital Strategy and only externally with the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), within the Authorised limit. Currently, it is more cost effective to borrow internally from our own surplus balances. This is because the rate of return on investing our money is lower than the actual interest we charged by borrowing from PWLB. Therefore, the interest we lose by using our own money is less than it would cost in interest if we borrowed externally.

The Bank of England cut the bank base rate cut from 0.25% to 0.10% in March 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. If rates remain this low, the investment return could fall by another £15k to £10k, which will be considered at the mid-year review and is included in assumptions for the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The recommendations as set out in the report was moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1. To approve the Treasury Management Policy Statement in Appendix 1 of the report.**
- 2. To approve the Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy in Appendix 2 of the report, with specific approval of the Prudential Indicators and borrowing limits (paragraphs 5-13), and the policy on Minimum Revenue Provision (paragraphs 14-15), and adopts the Investment Strategy of North Yorkshire County Council (Appendix 3 – NYCC Appendix C, Schedules 1 to 6).**

*The meeting adjourned for a short break at 10:50am and reconvened at 11:05am*

**37/21 NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2020/21 (MM)**

The Head of Information and Performance Management introduced the report which was to provide Members with monitoring information for the year end of the third year of the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23, and to seek Members approval to adopt the agreed definition of thriving and sustainable communities.

Members were informed that progress had been made against most of the intentions identified in the NPMP with 31 delivery actions on target, 3 not achieved due to CoVID and 6 rated amber, so there may be a delay in their delivery.

The Head of Information and Performance Management informed Members that since the report was written, last minute feedback had been received from Oldham Council on the definition of Thriving and Sustainable Communities, but because of the lateness, Officers hadn't had time to look at them in detail. As officers were minded to take the feedback into account, a fourth recommendation was proposed, to change the word from "Churches" to "Places of Worship" and to consider strengthening the wording on biodiversity net gain.

The CEO informed Members that a high level public consultation had gone out to the public yesterday to seek views on priorities.

Members thanks Officers for their report.

A motion to support the recommendation was proposed and seconded, put to the vote and carried.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1. That approve the National Park Management Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2020/21.**
- 2. That any necessary changes to the proposed wording of the Annual Monitoring Report and the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23 delivery plan be delegated to the Chief Executive.**
- 3. To approve and adopt the definition of the thriving and sustainable communities.**
- 4. To delegate to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Authority minor revisions to the definition of thriving and sustainable communities to replace churches with places of worship and strengthen references to biodiversity net gain.**

**38/21 2020/21 YEAR END PERFORMANCE REPORT, 20/21 PERFORMANCE AND BUSINESS PLAN AND 2021/22 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER (HW)**

The Head of Information and Performance Management introduced the report which was to provide Members with a set of performance monitoring information for review and approval.

It was reported that when you took out the KPIs that had performance issues that had been impacted on by Covid, 3 targets had not been met. They were KP6, KP7 and KP2. Members asked whether KPI 7 was too ambitious, as it may never be met.

A motion to support the recommendation was proposed and seconded, put to the vote and carried.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1. That the Q4 and year end performance report, given in Appendix 1 of the report, is reviewed and any actions to address issues agreed.**
- 2. To approve the Performance and Business Plan content in Appendix 2 of the report and completion of details is delegated to the Chief Executive, to allow publication by the statutory deadline of 30 June.**
- 3. That the 2020/21 year end corporate risk register given in Appendix 3 of the report is reviewed and the status of risks accepted.**
- 4. That the start of year 2021/22 corporate risk register given in Appendix 4 of the report is reviewed and the proposed risks agreed.**
- 5. To note the status of complaints, Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations requests, given in Appendix 5, of the report.**

*Cllr Furness and Cllr Heath left the meeting at 11:50am*

**39/21 RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY (A91941/HW)**

The Head of Information and Performance Management introduced the report which was to seek approval from Members to approve the revised Risk Management Policy following the recent management restructure and changes to the Authority's performance reporting.

A motion to support the recommendation was proposed and seconded, put to the vote and carried.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1. To approve the updated Risk Management Policy in Appendix 1 of the report, Risk Register Template in Appendix 2 of the report, and Risk Scoring System in Appendix 3 of the report.**

**40/21 CREATION OF A MEMBER TASK AND FINISH GROUP FOR REVIEWING THE NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN AND CORPORATE STRATEGY (EF)**

The Head of Information and Performance Management introduced the report which was to seek approval to establish a Member Task and Finish Group for reviewing the National Park Management Plan and Corporate Strategy.

The Group would consist of 6 Members and would report to the Member Forum and Authority meetings as appropriate. Any Authority Members that would be interested in

joining the group would be invited to provide a short written statement setting out the reason(s) they would like to join the Group and what they could contribute to the Group in the way of skills, knowledge and experience.

If more than six Members express an interest in joining the Group then the Chief Executive would consult with the Chair of the Authority in order to determine the membership of the Group, ensuring that there was a good representation across the categories of Members.

Members asked that the wording in Recommendation 4 be changed to delete the wording 'of the Committee', which was agreed.

A motion to support the recommendations as amended was proposed and seconded, put to the vote and carried.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1. To establish a Member Task and Finish Group until October 2022 for reviewing the National Park Management Plan and Corporate Strategy.**
- 2. To approve the Draft Terms of Reference for the Group (set out in Appendix 1 of the report)**
- 3. To implement the appointment arrangements as described in the report. This includes delegating authority to the Chief Executive to determine the membership of the Task Group, following consultation with the Chair of the Authority, should more than six Members express an interest in joining the Task Group..**
- 4. To confirm that attendance at meetings of the Task and Finish Group is an approved duty for the purpose of claiming travel and subsistence allowances.**

**41/21 PROGRAMMES AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE PROGRAMME PLAN FOR 2021-22 (SLF)**

The Chief Executive introduced the report which was to approve the programme themes for the Programmes and Resources Committee (P&R) for 2021-22 and onwards.

The four programme themes have been aligned to the National Parks England's Delivery Plans which will then enable the P&R Committee to consider a forward work plan. The four deliver themes with the Head of Service Leads identified in brackets are:

- Climate Leadership (Head of Information & Performance Management)
- Wildlife and Nature Recovery (Head of Landscape)
- Sustainable Farming and Land Management Head of Landscape)
- Landscapes for Everyone (Head of Engagement)

Members welcomed the paper.

A motion to support the recommendations was proposed and seconded, put to the vote and carried.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1. To approve the proposal that the four programme themes for the Programmes and Resources Committee from 2021-22 will align to National Parks England four delivery priorities of:**
  - a) Climate Leadership (Head of Information & Performance Management)**
  - b) Wildlife and Nature Recovery (Head of Landscape)**
  - c) Sustainable Farming and Land Management (Head of Landscape)**
  - d) Landscapes for Everyone (Head of Engagement)**
- 2. To note that once the themes are approved for Programmes and Resources Committee, the Committee will be able to then consider a forward work plan for the themes to enable it to maintain its oversight on work to move them forward.**

**42/21 MEMBERSHIP OF THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS PANEL (RC)**

The Head of Law introduced the report which was to confirm the membership of the Member Appointment Process Panel. The Panel makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the Annual Meeting by attempting to resolve any potential issues beforehand so the Authority would like that to continue.

The current 3 Members of the Panel had indicated that they wished to continue their appointments, however the Panel was currently carrying a vacancy for a Local Authority Member.. Nominations for a further Local Authority Member were requested but none were made.

The Panel is currently carrying a vacancy for a Local Authority Member so expressions of interest was needed.

A motion to support the recommendations was proposed and seconded, put to the vote and carried.

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1. To appoint the following Members to the Member Appointment Process Panel – Cllr P Tapping, Ms Y Witter and Cllr B Woods.**
- 2. To confirm that the Panel will look at expressions of interest in the context of the appointment principles set out in paragraph 6 of the report.**

**43/21 GREEN LANES IN THE PEAK DISTRICT (A7622/SAS)**

The Chair introduced the report which provided Members with an update on the progress relating to the implementation of the Authority's strategy for the management of recreational motorised vehicles in 20/21.

The Chair thanked the Local Access Forum on their work and advice.

Members were concerned that there was no reference to Cultural Heritage in the Green Lanes Communications Action Plan which the Chief Executive agreed to feedback to the Rights of Way Officer.



**RESOLVED:-**

**To note the report.**

**44/21 EXEMPT INFORMATION S100(A) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 20 to avoid the disclosure of Exempt Information under S100 (A) (4) Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, paragraph 3 'information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).**

**45/21 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19TH MARCH 2021**

The exempt minutes of the Authority meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021 were approved as a correct record.