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# MINUTES

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| Meeting: | **National Park Authority** |
| Date: | Friday 26 September 2025 at 10.00 am |
| Venue: | Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell |
| Chair: | K Smith |
| Present: | Prof J Dugdale, N Adams, M Beer, R Bennett, P Brady, M Buckler, M Chaplin, C Farrell, C Greaves, L Hartshorne, S Mabbott, A Martin, A Nash, K Potter, V Priestley, K Richardson, K Rustidge, Dr R Swetnam, S Thompson and Y Witter |
| Apologies for absence: | H Corran, B Hanley, A Hart, I Huddlestone, C Kelly, M Smith and J Wharmby |

## 88/25 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 2025

There was an amendment to agenda item 5e. Virginia Priestley is now a member of the Governance Review Working Group and Prof Janet Dugdale is no longer a member.

The minutes of the meeting of the National Park Authority held on 11th July 2025, with the above amendment, were approved as a correct record.

## 89/25 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

## 90/25 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

## 91/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present to make representations to the Committee.

## 92/25 CHAIR'S BRIEFING

The Chair provided the following verbal update to Members regarding his attendance in addition to the weekly briefing meetings with the Chief Executive and Deputy Chair, and attendance at the Planning Committees:-

- 15th July – the Chair along with the CEO attended National Parks England vision meeting in London.
- Through July and August attended a series of steering group meetings for Local Plan.
- 21st July – the Chair attended initial meeting of Peak District Research Framework Project which is a 2 year project funded by Historic England to produce a research framework for the Peak District National Park focussing on Cultural Heritage in the National Park.
- 23rd July – the Chair and the CEO met Cllr Alan Graves (new leader of Derbyshire County Council).
- 29th July – the Chair attended a NPE board meeting.
- 5th August - the Chair met with Marie Tidball MP at Langsett.
- 28th August – the Chair attended a NPE board meeting.
- 29th August – the Chair attended lunch at Chatsworth Country Fair.
- 3rd September - the Chair along with CEO attended a meeting regarding the Buxton Very Light Rail initiative.
- 21st /22nd September – the Chair along with the CEO attended the National Parks England Board meeting at New Forest NP reviewing the form and function of National Parks England.

The Chair mentioned the new member induction programme delivered this year by Northumberland NP and that this training event is scheduled to run this November. This year the uptake is not as large as previously despite there being a large percentage of new members. The training is not mandatory but it is recommended. Chair encouraged Members to get in touch with the Democratic Services Officers if they would like to attend.

## 93/25 CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

The Chief Executive delivered the following updates to his report:-

- The Protected Landscapes Partnership search for a Chair has had a good response and DEFRA will follow the process to appoint a Chair.
- The NPE update is around the new duty which we have had for around 2 years now, the Government is seeking to remove this duty. The Authority is currently writing to all local MP's to raise awareness and profile of this situation.
- DEFRA recently launched 2 new research projects – Culture, Visions and Governance research and reviewing the Capital Expenditure.
- There is still no news on the settlement from DEFRA.
- The CEO attended EMCCA – where Mayor Claire Ward spoke. The aim is for East Midlands to be the fastest growing visitor economy in the country (growth in numbers and also in spend) and also the aim for this region to have the greenest visitor economy in the country – Growth and Sustainability.
- Wild Fires – The CEO participated in a call to try and develop a UK wide response/position/strategy on Wild Fires and the intention is to develop a collective position and strategy.
- Members asked if it is known how much has been allocated to maintain Snake Pass. This is something the regional mayor is saying is one of the priorities of the budget. Exact numbers are not known currently.

- There was a question regarding the section on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and how we are going to progress the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. We are taking Nature Recovery forward in lots of ways.
- The Chair and CEO were thanked for their updates. Tribute was paid to Sarah Bird who has played a very important role for her work with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Members asked how it would be possible to grow the visitor economy in a green and sustainable way with reduced funding. The CEO has already input into the Destination Management Plan for the region which is the strategic document for the economy and the CEO has also fed information into the Mayors' Nature Task Force and the Local Visitor Economy Partnership.

## 94/25 NPMP AIM CLIMATE CHANGE

The Data, Strategy and Performance Officer presented their report.

The following areas were discussed:-

- It was noted that this is an annual report which previously went to the Programmes and Resources Committee. This report is now coming to Authority so that all members can understand the key work that the Authority and Partners are doing.
- There has been a Peak Partnership Summit with the Mayoral Combined Authorities and reps from constituent authorities. The Summit is hoping to progress public transport into the park and to discuss the visitor economy.
- Looking to the next management plan, the staff are not actively working on it at the moment but the work being carried out at the moment forms the framework for the future management plan. This maps across to Targets and Outcomes Framework. At general level in terms of budget changes the "welcoming place" element is the slowest to progress. There was a question regarding climate change and overall the Authority is on schedule to achieve all of the targets.
- Progress regarding the Authority's own carbon management plan will be brought to the next Authority meeting.

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

**RESOLVED:**

1. **That this progress report in delivering to the National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan climate change aims and targets be noted.**

2. **That the development work to assist the Authority in meeting net zero, climate change reporting and developing the approach to climate change adaptation for the Authority and National Park be noted.**

## 95/25 LANDSCAPE CONNECTIONS - BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR "CORRIDOR CONNECTIONS" - NATURE RECOVERY AND LANDSCAPE CONNECTIONS IN THE WHITE PEAK

The Chief Executive presented the report.

- Members thanked the partners for putting together such a strong bid. This funding is a new stream from Lottery funding. PDNPA have received the first stage of the bid which allows funding to work up the detail to put in the development stage. The intentions are to focus on the trails in the White Peak in particular and to enrich the nature along these trails. It is not just limited to these trails. The money will allow for there to be ecological surveys and works to identify where the funding would be most beneficial. It would be about replicating enhancements like Ruby Wood amongst other initiatives. There would also be money for engagement in order to see new audiences coming to the trails which can handle the increased numbers. It would allow for programming to connect people and improve their understanding along with some audience development work combined with some heritage enhancements.
- Members asked about the phrase "communities unserved by the White Peak" and what does this mean? This would be an opportunity for new audiences to access nature and protected areas e.g. people coming from the conurbations in the south, it would involve working with community groups and would be a similar model to Mosaic.
- Members asked if it is correct to assume there will be more interaction with EMCAA, and the funding will help to get partners like EMCAA involved in the next phase. This initial pot of money does not need matched funding, if the Authority gets through to the next phase then would need matched funding from Partnerships like EMCAA.
- Members asked about how well received are the changes in farming practice and changes in regenerative farming. Overall seen really strong engagement through FiPL and Morridge Hill Country Project. The Authority does have another White Peak Landscape Recovery Project to build the development of this in White Peak. The farming engagement team work very closely with the farmers to promote regenerative funding.
- Concern was raised about the likelihood of receiving the funding as using up limited resources to submit these bids. There is a high chance that will receive this funding based on the positive feedback. The money we receive from these projects does not offset the decline in the government grant.
- Members asked if there are other ways of working in partnership so that other organisations can be recipients of the funding too.
- There was much discussion about the White Peak and these communities, and Members asked what about the Dark Peak? The initial research honed down on the White Peak due to the density of the existing trails there.

The recommendations as set out in the report were moved, seconded, put to the vote and carried.

**RESOLVED:**

1. **That acceptance of the funding award for the Landscape Connections project of up to £248,455 be approved. Approval of the terms of funding be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Finance Manager and Authority Solicitor.**

2. **That approval be granted to (1) incur expenditure up to £279,955 (excluding overheads) to progress the project pursuant to Part 3, C3 (c) of Standing Orders, and (2) enter into contracts and/or agreements as required for the delivery of the project, subject to compliance with the Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders generally.**

3. **To note that a recruitment exercise will be undertaken to appoint temporary posts (to be funded out of the external funding award) to progress the project.**

*The meeting was adjourned at 10:55am and reconvened at 11:05am*

## 96/25 LOCAL PLAN - PREFERRED OPTIONS

The Policy and Communities Team Leader presented the report.

- Any issues raised today or at the end of the training last week will be discussed with the Head of Planning.
- The Local Plan Steering Group were very involved and thanked for their considerable input.
- Members are asked to agree the consultation document, Members are not being asked for a response to the document at this stage. The document is not yet finished, but contains draft proposals.
- Conclusion of this process will be by end of December 2026.
- This document is going out as directed from the Authority. There are background documents that feed into this. Strategic Planning Documents (one of which is the Design Guide) have to be reviewed. This is a 20-year document overtime there will be revisions and iterations over its life. Broadly indicative of the direction of travel that Authority wants to make. It is still a draft, need insights from others which will inform the final document. Currently seeking endorsement that this draft document goes out as it is now and then Members can submit comments.
- There was concern about the settlement strategy regarding the splitting of the settlements into Larger Villages and Smaller Villages and it was explained that the housing need is broadly related to the population. There shall be a topic paper alongside with all the evidence of how come arrived at the paper conclusions.
- There was concern regarding the listing of the Recreation Hubs. This list is based on research done in the field and there are 2 categories, the obvious ones and then the ones that provide an important role in the landscape. The top tier would be where there would be improvement to the visitor facilities and the bottom tier would just be about parking and information improvement for example. It was felt it was not helpful to list the sites and Members would like these lists removed from the consultation and just to have the conditions which would be more flexible and easier for Planning Committee to deal with.
- Members would like a process map of where it goes after consultation. This would be helpful to Members as a timescale would be good.

*11:45am Cllr Hartshorne left the meeting.*

- The structure of how the consultation will happen and the process was discussed.
- Members were encouraged to remember that this is a document that gives a set of policies that have to be applied by planning process, planning committee and at planning appeal and have to fit with national planning guidelines so that they can be enforced.
- Members requested that the recommendations include one to ensure that the relevant topic papers are reviewed by the Local Plan Working Group.

The recommendations with the additional recommendation regarding the review of the topic papers were moved, seconded, put to the vote and carried.

Cllr Potter and Cllr Brady abstained from the vote.

**RESOLVED:**

1. **That the *Local Plan Preferred Approach* consultation document (Appendix 1) be approved for public consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, and that any minor changes may be made by the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Local Plan Review Steering Group.**

2. **That approval of the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal (currently being prepared by consultants) and the Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement (to be prepared by the Landscape and Nature Team) be delegated to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Local Plan Steering Group, and that these documents are subject to public consultation with the *Local Plan Preferred Approach*.**

3. **That the topic papers be reviewed and approved by the Local Plan Working Group.**

## 97/25 BOARDROOM APPRENTICE PROGRAMME 2026

The Business Centre Manager presented the report.

- The application was submitted by the deadline od 12th September 2025. Not yet had a response from DEFRA.
- The selection process was discussed.
- The main intention of the programme is to bring diversity to the Board.
- It was noted that the Boardroom Buddy was a very valuable resource.
- The programme included 7 days of comprehensive training.
- Members suggested that the Boardroom Apprentice should not be limited to attending the Resources and Authority Committee but should be able to attend the Planning Committee twice a year as an observer and also invited to the Planning Training to increase their knowledge.
- The costs of this programme to the Authority were discussed.
- If a new Boardroom Apprentice is recruited to the PDNPA then a new Boardroom Buddy with experience would be needed from the current Members.

The recommendations, with an amendment to include the provision to attend 2 planning committee meetings per year as an observer, were moved, seconded, put to the vote and carried.

**RESOLVED:**

1. **That the application to become a Host Board for a Boardroom Apprentice for 2026 is agreed.**

2. **That it is agreed to support any matched Apprentice by inviting them to attend meetings of the Authority and the Resources Committee as a non-voting member. This is subject to satisfactory completion of the Memorandum of Understanding, signing up to the Members Code of Conduct, signing a non-**

**disclosure agreement, compliance with Standing Orders and completion of a register of interests.**

3. **That the Apprentice be invited to attend 2 meetings per year of the Planning Committee as a non-voting member along with the option to attend the Planning Training.**

4. **That a Member is selected as a Boardroom Buddy to mentor any matched Apprentice.**

5. **That any matched Apprentice would be eligible to claim for the payment of travel and subsistence allowances as set out in Schedule 2 of the Members' Allowances Scheme when attending meetings of the Authority, Resources Committee and any training or other events as necessary is agreed.**

## 98/25 NATIONAL HIGHWAYS PEATLAND RESTORATION - M62 & A628 CORRIDORS

The Business Development Manager MFFP presented the report and explained due to the time constraints that it had been submitted for approval by the Authority rather than the Resources Committee.

- All of the land covered by this project falls within the National Park Boundary.
- There is funding available within this project to promote the work.
- The reasons why the land has degraded were explained along with the process of regeneration.
- The team were thanked for their work on the bid and the feasibility study.

The revised recommendations tabled at the meeting were moved, seconded, put to the vote and carried.

**RESOLVED:**

1. **That approval be granted to enter into contracts under the National Highways Social Enterprise Dynamic Purchasing Scheme Framework for the A628 Crowden Moor restoration project, together with five separate detailed restoration plans across the M62 and A628 corridors in the Dark Peak and Southern Pennines, up to a value of £500,000.**

2. **That approval be granted to enter into partnering and funding agreements with National Highways, including the acceptance of funds, for the delivery of peatland restoration projects across the A628 and M62 corridors in the Dark Peak and Southern Pennines over the RIS 3 period (2026-2031) up to a value of £5M.**

3. **Approval of the terms and conditions of the contracts and agreements detailed in paragraphs 1 and 2 be delegated to the Head of Assets and Enterprise in consultation with the Finance Manager and Authority Solicitor.**

4. **That approval be granted to (1) incur expenditure up to the maximum values detailed in paragraphs 1 and 2, and (2) enter into any associated contracts as required for the delivery of the projects, subject to compliance with the Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders generally.**

5. **That the projects be monitored by Resources Committee, or such other committee or group as may be appointed with this same remit.**

## 99/25 REPORT FROM CHAIR OF PLANNING COMMITTEE-VERBAL UPDATE

The Chair of the Planning Committee gave an update on the business of the last two planning committees held on 18th July 2025 and 5th September 2025. The Planning Committee scheduled for 8th August 2025 was cancelled.

- An application for repairing the damage on top of Kinder Scout was mentioned.
- A visit to Sough Mill had been made by the Planning Committee.
- There are 2 neighbourhood plans in progress one for Hartington and one for Longstone (both Great Longstone and Little Longstone combined).
- Over the last 3 months less applications have been submitted compared to last year and the year before.

## 100/25 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES - NONE SUBMITTED

No reports from Outside Bodies had been submitted.

## 101/25 EXEMPT INFORMATION S100(A) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

**RESOLVED:**

**That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 16 to avoid the disclosure of Exempt Information under S100 (A) (3) Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A paragraph 1 "information relating to any individual" and paragraph 3 "information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)" .**

## 102/25 PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

The meeting ended at 1.30 pm