



MINUTES

Meeting: **National Park Authority**

Date: Friday 24 January 2025 at 10.00 am

Venue: Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell

Chair: K Smith

Present: J W Berresford, M Beer, P Brady, M Chaplin, Prof J Dugdale, C Greaves, L Hartshorne, I Huddleston, C O'Leary, K Potter, V Priestley, K Richardson, K Rustidge, Dr R Swetnam, S Thompson, and Y Witter

A Martin attended to observe and speak but not vote.

Apologies for absence: R Bennett, M Buckler, C Farrell, A Gregory, L Grooby, B Hanley, A Hart, G Heath, D Murphy, A Nash, J Wharmby and B Woods.

1/25 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

2/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

3/25 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 6

All Members had received an email from the Peak Park Parishes Forum (PPPF).

Patrick Brady, Martin Beer and Kath Potter declared an interest as they were all Members of the PPPF.

4/25 CHAIR'S BRIEFING

The Chair introduced Mandy Martin, the new Boardroom Apprentice to the Members, and invited Mandy to say a few words by way of introduction.

The Chair then provided the following verbal update to Members:

- Along with the CEO, attended a meeting with Barry Lewis at Derbyshire County Council on the 13th November 2024 principally around his role on the East Midlands Combined Authority.

- Attended a planning meeting with National Parks UK on the 24th November 2024 which had presentations from UK National Parks on nature, climate, diversity and communications and branding.
- Attended a National Parks UK Chairs and CEO Meeting on the 6th December 2024.
- On the 16th December 2024, attended the 75th Anniversary celebration of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, where he met up with the grandson of John Silkin who had driven the legislation.
- Along with the Deputy Chair, attended at meeting with Lord Burlington at Chatsworth and discussed transport, access, engagement with young people and economy & local impacts.

5/25 GOVERNANCE REFORM RECOMMENDATIONS TO DEFRA

The Chief Executive presented the report which was to inform Members of the Authority the proposal to write to the Secretary of State to emphasise the Authority's willingness to support potential governance changes by suggesting a reduction in the number of Members, and for the Authority to have more of a say in the way Members are appointed which could allow for more diversity.

Currently the Peak District National Park Authority has the highest number of Members compared to other National Parks and the government is looking at reducing the number, so the Authority needs to be on the front foot with any proposed changes.

Members agreed that the Authority did have a high number of Members, but that they were all there for a reason, which was to work for the benefit of the National Park collectively, and the current membership had a lot to offer.

There was a concern from some Members that if the numbers were reduced, there would need to be a review of committee functions. There was concern by some Members on the effect this could have on planning which is one of our statutory functions.

Members felt that if the Authority was to set down principles on how Members were appointed, then it needed to look at conflicting interests and be clear on how they were going to be addressed. If you picked out just one element (e.g. diversity) and do not understand how the rest of the interests are going to be accommodated, then the Authority could get into some difficulty.

Some Members were concerned that local communities would not be supported if local authorities combined, thus reducing the number of Members on the Authority. There was a need for Parish Members which provided a local voice. There was also some concern on the idea of co-opted Members as it was unclear on what the Authority had in mind. If someone was interested in being a Member, then they should be encouraged to apply to the Secretary of State.

Members proposed that recommendation 2 of the report be deleted and that the draft letter to the Secretary of State be brought back to Members at a future Authority Meeting prior to it being sent.

The Chief Executive thanked the Members for their feedback and confirmed that the draft letter would be brought back to Members at a future Authority meeting. He would also speak to DEFRA to see if they would be able to attend the next Authority meeting.

The recommendation, subject to the deletion of recommendation 2 was moved and seconded, put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

1. That a representation is made to the Secretary of State setting out the Authority's support for a reduction in the number of Members the Peak District National Park Authority has and changes in the ways in which Members are appointed.

6/25 EXEMPT INFORMATION S100(A) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED:

That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 9 to avoid the disclosure of Exempt Information under S100 (A) (4) 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)".

7/16 PART B

8/16 Organisational Change Report