

Minutes of the meeting held at the offices of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, Yoredale, Bainbridge, Leyburn DL8 3EL on Tuesday 28 March 2023.

Present:

John Amsden, Libby Bateman, Lizzie Bushby, Mark Corner, Nick Cotton, Richard Foster, Richard Good, Liz Hall, Neil Heseltine (in the Chair), Robert Heseltine, Julie Hutton, David Ireton, Allen Kirkbride, Sandy Lancaster, Carl Lis, Sue Metcalfe, Ian Mitchell, Andrew Murday, Yvonne Peacock, Jenny Purcell, Karin Sedgwick, Neil Swain and Derek Twine.

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

Robert Heseltine read a tribute to the late Richard Harvey, first National Park Officer, who had recently died. A minute's silence was held in his memory.

On behalf of the Authority, the Chair thanked those Members leaving the Authority for their service – namely Sue Metcalfe, Kevin Frea, Sandy Lancaster, Richard Good, John Amsden, Nick Cotton and Carl Lis.

01/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Kevin Frea and Jim Munday.

02/23 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2022, having been printed and circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

03/23 PUBLIC QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS

Mike Evershed, Chair of Hudson House Ltd, read out a public statement on the future of Hudson House. Ruth Annison read out a public statement regarding public transport. Statements received from Liz Lockey, Chief Officer of Hambleton Community Action on behalf of Harbus, and Paul Harrison, Chair of Friends of DalesBus were read to the meeting, also on the topic of public transport. The Chair replied to these statements and said the issues highlighted could be discussed when considering the relevant agenda item later in the meeting.

04/23 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING

No declarations of lobbying were received. Yvonne Peacock declared an interest namely her private hire operator's business and also that she has an interest in the Little White

Bus. Richard Good declared an interest as a founding director of Hudson House and left the meeting for the discussion on item 5 (budget).

05/23 BUDGET

The Authority CONSIDERED the report and presentation of the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance/Treasurer.

In reply to Members' questions, the Chief Executive confirmed that:

- The "one off" payment of £440,000 promised from DEFRA had not yet been received. No decision on how to allocate this money had yet been made;
- Westmorland and Furness Council had indicated an initial acceptance in principle to provide funding to assist the Authority to continue with its Rights of Way programme.

Some concern was expressed over the proposal to remove the Authority's presence from Hudson House. The benefits of having a local ranger presence in Swaledale were highlighted by some Members. The Chief Executive confirmed that no decision had yet been made - the request was simply for Members' support for the Authority to enter into discussions with Hudson House Ltd, given the budgetary pressures facing the Authority. Following conclusion of such discussions, the matter would be brought back before Members for a decision.

RESOLVED: to approve:

- a) the draft budget for 2023/24;
- b) the indicative budgets for 2024/25 and 2025/26; and
- c) the Reserves Strategy.

06/23 DEVELOPING THE NEW LOCAL PLAN – POLICY DRAFTING DECISIONS

The Authority CONSIDERED the report of the Head of Sustainable Development. The Member Champion for Sustainable Development thanked officers for the extensive work undertaken to date.

In response to Members' queries, the Head of Sustainable Development advised that:

- Information was awaited from Homes England as to their grant requirements as it will be important to ensure that policies for "exception sites" will be compatible with such grant conditions. Exception site policies will be brought back to Members for decision at a later point; and
- A policy was being developed to enable the net biodiversity gain funding to be used in a different location to the development site. The "credits" to be used to enhance priority habitats (which by their very nature would not be considered suitable for development).

Discussion included:

- Members agreed that a 30% discount on “First Homes” rather than a 50% discount would make schemes more viable and with the potential to free up more funds to cross-subsidise other, more affordable, types of affordable housing;
- A Member raised a contradiction between the proposed general policy whereby financial viability is not normally to be a material planning consideration, and yet when some applicants seek permission for farm development they often put forward a case which includes the necessity of the development to ensure the financial viability of the farm enterprise;
- The viability of farming, particularly in the upland Dales, was likely to be impacted by the loss of the Basic Payment Scheme particularly if uptake of, and payments under, the new Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS) were low. This could result in greater intensification and amalgamation of smaller farms. It would be important to be sensitive when setting planning policies, to ensure, where possible, the viability of smaller, less intensive, more environmentally friendly farms.

RESOLVED: That, in preparing policies for the emerging Local Plan, the Authority:

- a) Adopts the national standard for Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 10% in Local Plan Policy CP3 (Biodiversity);
- b) Amends proposed Policy E2 (Rural Land Based Enterprises) to:
 - remove the need for financial scrutiny of proposals;
 - make it clear that farm businesses that need to undertake environmental improvements to maintain existing stocking levels will be supported; and
 - revert to the current policy position of requiring evidence of need and mitigation measures to justify a proposal to expand production significantly in ways that could create environmental issues or threaten harm to the qualities of the National Park; and
- c) Sets the discount on “First Homes” across the National Park at 30% below open market valuation.

07/23 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME UPDATE

The Authority CONSIDERED the report of the Local Plan Project Officer and NOTED the progress made to date with the development of the new Local Plan and the key next stages.

In response to Members’ queries, it was confirmed that:

- The Publication Draft Local Plan was the point at which all the policies and site allocations were brought together;
- There was a number of potential reasons for the lower number of responses to the call for sites in the Richmondshire area of the National Park than in the Craven area, including differences in land values, proximity to large settlements, ease of access, and differences in terrain affecting ease of build. Officers had

undertaken an exercise to identify additional potential sites and liaise with landowners to increase the number of sites put forward.

RESOLVED: To AGREE the revised Local Development Scheme for the period 2023 – 2026 (as annexed to the report) and to publish it on the website as the Authority’s programme for reviewing the Local Plan.

08/23 YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY’S PUBLIC TRANSPORT STATEMENT

The Authority CONSIDERED the report of the Chief Executive, who advised Members that both North Yorkshire Council and Westmorland and Furness Council had recently accepted invitations to become full members of the National Park Management Plan (NPMP) Steering Group.

Members noted the current limited provision of public transport within and to the National Park and agreed that the Authority should use any influence with the relevant Councils to provide improved services.

Members made various suggestions on what further action the Authority could consider. It was suggested that, in view of the urgency of the situation, the timetable for the development of the new NPMP should be brought forward – if not, the existing Plan should be revisited. Other suggestions included having a stronger role as a convenor and influencer of the relevant partners; and the production and publication of a comprehensive timetable to cover all the services in the National Park.

It was noted that the Authority is one of many partners in the NPMP Steering Group, which would need to be consulted. The Authority currently did not have the resources to undertake work in this area and if more emphasis were to be placed on the Authority’s role in this matter then resources would need to be transferred from other work programmes. The Chief Executive advised Members to consider organisational priorities “in the round” rather than in isolation.

The Chief Executive would submit the Statement to the three statutory Highways Authorities and would issue an invitation to the portfolio holders for transport at both North Yorkshire Council and Westmorland and Furness Council to come and speak with Members.

Members thanked Mark Corner for his work on this issue.

RESOLVED: to AGREE the draft statement in the Annex to the report as the Authority’s broad position on public transport.

09/23 APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES (1 April to 27 June)

The Authority CONSIDERED the report of the Chief Executive. A typo on page 57 was corrected – Nick Cotton’s appointing body is CCC not CDC.

RESOLVED: To APPOINT Members to Committees from 1 April to 27 June 2023 as set out in the Appendix to that report and to DELEGATE authority to the Chief Executive, in conjunction with the Chair, to fill those Committee vacancies allotted to Westmorland and Furness Council appointees once their formal appointments to YDNPA have been received.

10/23 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER CHAMPION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CONSIDERED - the report of the Chief Executive and the statement of Richard Foster.

RESOLVED: That Richard Foster be appointed as Member Champion for Sustainable Development from 1 April 2023 for a term of 3 years.

[Members expressed thanks to the current Member Champion for Sustainable Development, Carl Lis, for all his work in this role]

11/23 SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2023/24

CONSIDERED - the report of the Committees Officer.

RESOLVED: To ADOPT the Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2023/24.

12/23 REVIEW OF STANDARDS PROCEDURES AND INDEPENDENT PERSONS' PROTOCOL

CONSIDERED – the report of the Director of Corporate Services.

RESOLVED:

- a) To ADOPT the revised Local Assessment Procedure, Determination Procedure and Independent Person Protocol set out at Annex 1 of the report; and
- b) To ADOPT the revised Scheme of Delegation set out at Annex 2 of the report.

13/23 INDEPENDENT PERSON – EXTENSION OF TERM

CONSIDERED – the report of the Director of Corporate Services.

RESOLVED: to extend the term of office of Lynda Fothergill, Independent Person, for three years until June 2026.

14/23 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL STRATEGIES

The Authority CONSIDERED the report of the Treasurer and NOTED the changes made to the Authority's approach to Treasury Management and Capital Finance, following the introduction of revised codes covering these matters.

RESOLVED:

- a) To APPROVE the Annual Treasury Management and Capital Strategies as set out in the Annexes to the report; and
- b) To APPROVE the change in responsibility for monitoring Treasury Management and Capital Finance reporting, from the Audit and Review Committee to the Finance and Resources Committee.

15/23 CHAIR'S REPORT

CONSIDERED and NOTED the report of the Chair, Neil Heseltine.

16/23 REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CONSIDERED and NOTED – the report of the Chief Executive.

**17/23 MEMBER FEEDBACK ON PARTNERSHIP REPRESENTATION AND
MEMBER CHAMPION REPORTS**

CONSIDERED and NOTED – the report of the Committees Officer and the reports contained therein.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 3:25pm.