
MINUTES

Meeting: **National Park Authority**

Date: Friday 19 July 2019 at 10.00 am

Venue: The Board Room, Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell

Chair: Cllr A McCloy

Present: Cllr D Chapman, Cllr W Armitage, Mr J W Berresford, Cllr P Brady, Cllr M Chaplin, Cllr C Farrell, Cllr C Furness, Cllr A Gregory, Dr J Haddock-Fraser, Mr Z Hamid, Cllr I Huddleston, Cllr B Lewis, Cllr C McLaren, Cllr Mrs K Potter, Cllr V Priestley, Mr K Smith, Cllr P Tapping, Cllr R Walker, Mrs C Waller, Ms Y Witter and Cllr B Woods

Apologies for absence: Mr P Ancell, Cllr J Atkin, Cllr D Birkinshaw, Cllr Mrs G Heath, Mr R Helliwell, Miss L Slack and Cllr G D Wharmby.

36/19 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed the following new Members to their first Authority meeting:

Cllr Andrew Gregory, Cheshire East Council
Dr Janet Haddock-Fraser, Secretary of State appointee
Ms Yvonne Witter, Secretary of State appointee

The Chair also welcomed Ian Morton from Veritau, Internal Auditors, and John Pressley from Mazars External Auditors.

37/19 URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

38/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

39/19 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

40/19 AUTHORITY CHAIR UPDATE

The Chair gave the following updates:

- The Chair had attended the Campaign for National Parks Park Protector and Year of Green Action National Parks Awards ceremony on 10 July. Our nomination for the *Skills Builder project* was short-listed for these Awards but unfortunately did not win. Skills Builder is a pilot project funded by Big Lottery. It is a partnership between a rehabilitation company based in Nottingham (DLNR), the Peak District National Park Authority and Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, it recruits offenders on probation onto a 12-week training programme of conservation-related activities. The project was praised at the ceremony by Lord Gardiner who had visited the project and met some of the participants.
- The Authority had recently launched the Hope Valley Explorer bus service to be operated by Stagecoach. This is a seasonal bus service which will link Sheffield and Chesterfield to the Peak District with stops at rail stations in the Hope Valley area at times convenient for people arriving by rail. The service will run as a pilot for 3 years and is a flexible hop-on, hop-off service.
- An interim report on progress so far on the independent review of National Parks and AONBs by Julian Glover, due to submit a full report to the Government in the autumn, had been released earlier in the week. The Chair had sent a link to the interim report by email to all Members. The interim report gave some interesting hints at what may appear in the final report, including a recommendation to create a new National Landscape Service, a clear belief that National Parks should be leading the national response to climate change, as well as some critical comments on governance. It was noted that the deadline for comments on the review had closed but the Chair would check if comments on the interim report could be passed on.

41/19 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT (SF)

The Chief Executive's report gave the following updates:

- Our Achievements in 2018/19 – a copy of the printed booklet 'How are we doing?' had been tabled for each Member. It was noted that this would only be available digitally next year, however if any Members still required a hard copy next year they were requested to let the Democratic and Legal Support Team know by the end of October 2019.
- Government response to House of Lords report on Rural Economy.
- Tourism sector deal launched by Government – 28 June 2019.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

42/19 PROGRAMMES AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2019-20

Members considered the report on the annual work programme for the newly formed Programmes and Resources Committee. It was agreed at the Authority meeting on 24 May that this annual programme would be set by the Authority and would compose of four themes. The recommended themes for the first year of the Committee were areas

where Members on the previous Audit, Resources and Performance Committee had said they wanted to see progress on and areas that fitted with the year 1 strategic interventions of the Corporate Strategy 2019-24.

It was noted that the four themes recommended in the report would be extra to the items previously outlined for the Committee's remit which included finance and human resources. The four themes would be added to the forward plan for the Committee.

In response to Members' comments on the report it was noted that once the Programmes and Resources Committee commenced it would be able to review its work plan and propose a plan for the following year to the Authority.

RESOLVED:

To approve the following four themes to be included in the annual programme plan for the Programmes and Resources Committee:

- **climate change;**
- **volunteering;**
- **landscape programmes monitoring and delivery;**
- **recreation hubs and visitor engagement.**

43/19 EXTERNAL AUDIT 2018/19 ANNUAL REPORT

Members considered the annual report of the External Auditors' (Mazars) for 2018/19. John Pressley, of Mazars, was present to introduce the report and answer any questions from Members.

RESOLVED:

1. **To note the External Auditor's report at Annex A of the report.**
2. **To note the letter of management representation at Appendix A of Annex A of the report to be signed by the Chief Finance Officer.**

44/19 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2018-19 (A.137/21/PN)

The Chief Finance Officer introduced the report which requested approval for the audited Statement of Accounts for 2018-19. He highlighted paragraph 5 of the report which gave details of minor changes made since the Outturn report in May.

It was noted that the Chair of the Authority would sign the Statement of Accounts not the Chair of Audit, Resources and Performance Committee as stated on page 13 of the report.

RESOLVED:

To approve the audited Statement of Accounts for 2018-19 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report and to note the amendments made to the draft accounts itemised in Appendix 2 of the report.

45/19 2018/19 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (JS)

Members considered the report on the audited Annual Governance Statement for 2018/19.

The Annual Governance Statement highlighted areas for further action in accordance with the Authority's approach to achieve continuous performance improvement and it was noted that an action plan was shown on pages 88 and 89 of the report. The External Auditors had confirmed that they were happy that the Annual Governance Statement met the requirements and found no issues on the general control regime.

RESOLVED:

To approve the audited Annual Governance Statement for 2018/19 for sign off by the Chief Executive Officer and the Chair of the Authority.

46/19 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2019/20

Ian Morton of Veritau, Internal Auditors, was present to introduce the report and answer any questions from Members.

Members considered and agreed the report on the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2019/20.

RESOLVED:

To approve the Internal Audit Plan 2019/20.

47/19 NATIONAL PARK GRANT FUNDING AGREEMENT (PN)

The Chief Finance Officer introduced the report which requested delegated approval to the Chief Executive to sign the National Park Grant Funding Agreement (the "Agreement"). The parties to the Agreement are the Peak District National Park Authority ("the Authority") and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs ("Defra").

RESOLVED:

To delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Head of Law, authority to sign the new National Park Grant Funding Agreements issued by Defra, covering National Park Grant payments from 1st April 2019.

The meeting ended at 10.50 am