

SDNPA – SDLMG Liaison Meeting Minutes

Memorial Hall,
South Downs Centre, North Street, Midhurst, GU29 9DH
14:00 – 16:00
25 May 2016

Present:

Chair; Margaret Paren (MP)	Trevor Beattie (TB)
Andrew Lee (AL)	Mike Tristram (MT)
Chloe Beckerson (CB)	Simon Ward (SW)
Lucy Howard (LH)	James Cooper (JC)
Alison Tingley (AT)	William Wolmer (WVo)
Thomas Ormesher (TO)	Andrew Thomas (AT)

Apologies:

Nigel Clutton (NC)	William White (WWh)
David Uren (DU)	

1. Welcome & Minutes of last meeting - MP

Margaret Paren welcomed everyone to the meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 24 February 2016, were discussed and found to be accurate. There were no matters arising.

2. SDLM organisational review update – AT/MT

Newsletter went out to all 260 Members including an article about the farmer's breakfast, food and drink portal and Arun and River Rother catchment project. Whole Estates Plans, development of farm clusters barn owl boxes and farmland bird initiative. SDLM are looking to work together more closely in an integrated way with NFU and CLA for the future to include all Members in their communications network, to enable more sustained engagement with the landowners in the National Park. This subject to Members agreement at the AGM on 6 June.

3. Local Plan Timetable – LH

Temporary pause on the local plan timetable mainly due to the high volume of responses received; over 2600 detailed responses on the preferred options document. These have now been summarised and are available on the Internet. There has been some staff turnover but new planning policy officers will be in place as of next month. One of the advantages of the pause has been to enable Neighbourhood Plans to be more fully developed- there are 48 Neighbourhood Plans in various stages across the National Park and their housing allocations will form a significant part of the Local Plan.

The next formal stage of consultation will be the Regulation 19 consultation (September 2017) which will be on the soundness or otherwise of the proposed submission document. From November there will be a round of informal consultations with parishes around new allocations. **ACTION** – Dan Ashe to send SDLM draft agricultural policies and to attend a workshop session suggested date 31 August. The NPA are looking to cut existing data to focus on 5 broad areas plus river valleys in the local plan to facilitate the ecosystem services audit.

4. Whole Estate Plans (WEP) – TB

WEP guidance package will be circulated middle of June. **ACTION** – SDLM to circulate document to members and feed back to Jody Slater. The response on Local Plan draft proposals on WEPs was positive and supported. Main messages from the consultation; many supported that it was landscape

lead and supported eco systems services. Criticism received; unclear on how certain parts were to be delivered or implemented.

5. SDNPA Restructure - TB

The restructure comes into effect as of 1 June 2016. This will integrate Strategy and Partnerships and work on the ground (formally Operations) - creating a new directorate; Countryside Policy and Management of which Andrew Lee was successful in being selected as Director and will now head up this team. There will be five Managers reporting to Andrew; Anne Rehill (Performance and Projects), Andy Beattie (Strategic Lead for Heaths and Cultural Heritage), Nick Heasman (Strategic Lead for Woodlands and Tourism), Nigel James (Strategic Lead for Water and Access) and Vicky Lawrence (Strategic Lead for Chalk, Education and Volunteering). There will be four new Lead Rangers, apprentice rangers, and a woodlands post, and recruitment will soon commence for a sustainable tourism officer to replace Conal Stewart (Sandra Grant currently acting as interim). The planning team is largely unaffected by the restructure.

Following the restructure Phil Belden and H el ene Rossiter will be leaving the Authority. Phil's last day will be 31 May and H el ene will leave at the end of June. AL provided detail within his new team explaining that Jeremy Burgess will take the lead across the National Park on water issues.

ACTION – AL to circulate organogram and directorate descriptions- Before and after organogram would also be helpful.

6. AOB

Big Chalk- a Big Chalk logframe Workshop with AONBs took place to work through the overall structure of what the current outline bid at first stage might look like. Land managers involvement would be beneficial late September after full bid – Ministerial engagement has been with Rory Stewart who was very supportive.

Income generation- The SDNPA strategy is for the Authority to become less dependent on Government grant and generate new sources of income. As part of the restructure, SDNP will therefore be recruiting a new Head of Income Generation. This underpins a more commercial way of thinking; building on the National Park brand and ideas for a South Downs Charitable Trust which will be going to Members in June.

The SDNPA has looked at two charitable trust models: North York Moors NP has spent the last two years establishing a charitable trust, and a better model is that of Northumberland which has developed a trust model based around the appeal for the Sill Visitor Centre. Chichester Harbour AONB also has a good model The Shared identity will be used to develop commercial revenue. A trading arm is also part of the long-term strategy.

JC raised issues around planning – he did not feel the SDNPA was gaining value for money with Chichester District Council who are also facing a restructure. TB said he had had a meeting with CEO Diane Shephard and they discussed the issues that CDC face – and she had given reassurances that measures are in place to address these problems.

Landscape scale farm clusters are fundamental for the future, with or without DEFRA funding.

ACTION – CB to send AT a copy of the clusters map.

7. Date of next meeting

19 October 2016 15:00-17:00 South Downs Centre, Midhurst