

SDNPA – SDLMG Meeting Minutes

Held at: South Downs Centre, North Street, Midhurst, GU29 9DL
15:00 – 17:00 22 May 2014

Present:

Margaret Paren (MP)	Mike Tristram (MT)
Trevor Beattie (TB)	William Woolmer (WW)
Tim Richings (TR)	James Cooper (JC)
Andrew Lee (AL)	Chris Passmore (CP)
Phil Belden (PB)	Stan Abbott (SB)

Apologies:

David Taylor	Megan Cameron
Andrew Thomas	Sabrina Harcourt Smith
Nigel Clutton	Tom Ormesher
Simon Ward	Robin Edwards

1. Welcome

Margaret Paren welcomed all to the meeting

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record. MT did raise the point that the Future thinking was to be on this agenda AL advised this would be picked up in point 5

3. Changes in the SDLMG AGM and Committee MT asked if all members had seen the last AGM minutes these outlined the main achievements and changes that had taken place over the past year. A list of SDLMG Executive Committee Members was circulated with their areas of interest. (List attached)

4. Local Plan/CIL Consultation – Tim R gave a update of where we are with the Local Plan/CIL Consultation

- About 157 respondents had replied to Local Plan Options Consultation Document, and 37 responses on the CIL Charging Schedule.
- Analysis by officers is underway. The intention is now to have a report available for the next LPMWG meeting on 17th June and then to report to the full NPA on 26th June.
- Those who had responded had on average responded on in excess of 30 questions.
- Most respondents supported the proposed approaches.
- Next stage will be to prepare Preferred Options, early next year, with policies and site allocations.
- The level of response on the CIL was higher than generally received for CIL consultation exercises. The lack of a fully worked up Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and progressing the implementation of CIL ahead of the adoption of the Local Plan were two themes from the responses.

Tim asked if there were any key issues-
AT outlined three areas of concern:

- Policies in chapter 8 are directing polices to 'meet' or 'be consistent with' the purposes of the park and restrict development – SDLM felt that this may be restrictive and asked if there could there be a change of wording to 'not in conflict with' or 'do no lasting harm'.
- SDLM were very concerned at the inclusion of option 3b – specifying the types of development appropriate in NIA, as assurances had been given that NIA would not be used to restrict planning.
- Farm diversification policies were welcomed but NPA were urged to follow FARMA guidance on the proportion of non-local goods that can be sold through farm shops.

AL advised that in terms of the NIA, the NPA are following the NPPF guidelines, which are at odds with the original Defra guidance. JC asked if there were other NPs with NIA's and can we learn from this? AL advised there are other parks with NIA but that they are different to ours.

Option 21b all supported this option but asked if a less restricted approach should apply.

JC asked how the joint partnership working with the local authorities on planning applications are going. TB advised that we have just signed up with new Service Level Agreements with the 10 local authorities for the next 3 years with the option for LA's to opt out of the agreement after the first year; so far this is working well. JC also asked how much impact with the LA's have on an application, TB advised we have Link Officers who interact with the LA's also members and rangers for the LA's areas. TB asked the group that if they have any concerns on an application that they must write in to us so we can follow this up, this can be anonymous. Bringing this to the NPA attention gives us the ability to pursue an issue and also to see that the SLA is working
ACTION: AT to filter this information to all of the SDLMG.

DA asked if the settlement boundaries will be reviewed. TR informed that this will be completed by the NPA and the local communities. MP said we are keen to keep the involvement in communities, LA's who have involved communities from the start have a had a more successful start. TR – early autumn visits to the parish councils for the larger settlement boundary to discuss the SLHAAR sites. Would the £200 per sq meter CIL would be charged on the farmers and workers dwellings? Gareth Giles to advise.

5. SCF Grant Scheme - Disclosure of accounts - a review has recently been carried out, including looking at other government grants and rural payments agency processes. This now is with H  l  ne Rossiter the Director of Corporate services. NPA found no evidence that disclosure of accounts was a barrier and felt that it would be unfair to relax this requirement for one section of the community and not others. The conclusion of the review was that the SCF is performing efficiently so there is no need to change at present but this will be reviewed in 3 years. It was suggested that landowners may be better off applying to Area Teams for funding for environmental improvements. MT informed that the rangers funding is not enough compared to the SCF funding

6. Role of the SDLMG in facilitating joint working in delivery frameworks for PMP

AL informed that with the Management Plan in place and a good set of farming policies, we now need to explore how we can go from the general to the specific. For instance, how to stimulate conservation grazing, local produce and the understanding of the importance of farming. How to target NELMS or spread the work of the Farmland Bird Initiative to other farms. Meeting with the SDNPA would focus how we can make this happen we need to bring farmers together in groups the SDLMG June General meeting with the SDNPA would focus on how we all work

together AL keen to involve more farmers in discussions via the SDLM. DA suggested that one practical way in which NPA could help conservation grazing would be to facilitate practical help to farmers via college students to assist with things like TB testing It was suggested that co-delivery should start with the rangers It was noted that smaller farmers would find it difficult to attend workshops. Water issues: there is a need to work with the water authorities.

ACTION: AT to coordinate this meeting.

ACTION: NPA to bring forward a list from the management plan to present to the meeting.

7. Mechanism for sharing information on Key projects. MT informed the group that SDLM key contacts for various projects are listed on the website www.southdownsland.com NPA are bringing in quarterly reporting process for all projects, which will be shared with key contacts.

ACTION: SDLM to be included, via AT for circulation to the Executive Committee and wider Membership via the Newsletter

ACTION: NPA to give the SDLMG a list of current projects

8. NELMS – Maximising the value for the National Park. PB is waiting on Defra for details of the new scheme. Nigel James is the lead on this project and is going to visit the other NP's and feedback to PB. This is to be rolled out in January 2015.

MT informed that AT gave a presentation at the last AGM meeting on the NPA restructure but felt that it would be useful to have identified leads within the NPA. PB outlined the Ops leads as: Jeremy Burgess – Access; Nick Heasman – Forestry; Bruce Middleton – Heathland; Nigel James – Agri-environment; The appropriate Area Manager also leads on various projects within their area such as Arun & Rother Connections – Bruce Middleton

WW asked if NPA were able to put pressure on Natural England to seek higher levels of grant funding within the NP area, following the precedent set by FC WIG funding

ACTION: PB to email AT with information on the area rangers

9. AOB

NIA: PB advised the NIA framework contract is to be reviewed and lesson learnt as to how this is taken forward into the next round of NIA as well as the heathland project

Broadband: TB advised that the NPA is currently mapping actual broadband coverage, the result of which will be used to seek further funding. He suggested that the consultants undertaking the work present their findings to the next Liaison Meeting.

Undergrounding: In response to a question regarding undergrounding of power lines within the Park. PB advised that £500m had been allocated nationally to underground high voltage lines this is dealt with by a National Steering Group. Scottish and Southern also have funding for undergrounding lower voltage lines. Pete Currell leads on this now.