

# **MINUTES OF BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY HELD AT VIRTUAL MEETING ON MONDAY, 5TH JULY, 2021**

## **PRESENT:**

### **Powys**

Cllr Ratcliffe (Chair), Cllr M Jones, Cllr E Roderick, Cllr McNicholas and Cllr McIntosh

### **Monmouthshire**

### **Carmarthenshire**

Cllr A James

### **Merthyr Tydfil**

### **Rhondda Cynon Taff**

Cllr G Thomas

### **Torfaen**

Cllr S Evans

### **Blaenau Gwent**

Cllr J Hill

### **Members appointed by the Welsh Government**

Mr Christopher Coppock, Mr James Marsden, Liz Davis (Deputy Chair), Canon Aled Edwards, Sue Holden and Mr Julian Stedman

### **In Attendance**

Angharad HawkesStephanie Evans, Transition Director  
Sean O'Connor, Monitoring Officer  
Julia Gruffydd, Democratic Services Manager

### **Apologies**

Cllr A Webb and Cllr Amos

#### **94/21 Correspondence**

Apologies were noted. Officers continued to address connectivity issues for new member Cllr Julian Amos.

#### **95/21 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

#### **96/21 Public Speaking**

There were no requests to speak.

#### **97/21 Chair's Announcements**

The Chair had no announcements to make.

#### **98/21 Transition Director's Announcements**

The Transition Director advised that Sir David Henshaw (Chair, Natural Resources Wales) had accepted an invitation to address members on the phosphates issue.

She introduced two new members of staff: Marc Ronan (Solicitor, Monitoring Officer and Data Protection Officer) and Jodie Bond (Public Affairs Manager). Both officers addressed the meeting briefly.

#### **99/21 Definition of Authority Governance Bodies**

Members considered proposals to clarify the definition of the Authority's committees, groups and fora, and were asked to agree a method of appointing Members to groups. External groups involving stakeholders were not part of this report.

The Chair advised that he had refused a request to withdraw items 6 and 7 but proposed to let all members debate the issues.

Concern was expressed about the timing of this report and the fact that the Governance and Member Development Working Group had not had the opportunity to give their views prior to this meeting. It was also noted that the working group was to meet on 9 July to discuss roles and responsibilities of members in relation to the Audit Wales action plan.

There was a full debate on the merits of appointing to groups through the 2:1 balance required for committees or through self-nomination, and it was felt that no limit should be put on the number of groups on which a member could sit, in order to encourage

skills and experience to be used widely. There was support for the view that if a member was interested and had the time then they should be able to join a group. The point was made that members not on a particular group would still have the opportunity to comment when the matter was debated at the Authority meeting.

Cllr S McNicholas joined the meeting and confirmed that she did not have any declarations of interest.

There were references to the paper at item 7 on the agenda and views were expressed that the working groups had not met regularly, or at all in some cases. In response to a comment that officers were deciding when they wanted member involvement the Transition Director advised that the new Chief Executive would no doubt take a view on how best to deliver the vision and what structures were needed, which was an operational matter.

The Chair advised that the paper was brought by officers in good faith but he was now withdrawing the paper and asked Governance and Member Development Working Group to consider the matters. He stressed that this would not be immediate.

## **100/21 Proposed amendments to Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation**

Members considered recommendations to review the status of some governance bodies and proposed changes to the terms of reference.

The Chair proposed to omit recommendation (a) from the debate.

There was some discussion about the draft terms of reference for the Policy Programme Management Group and a view was expressed that it shouldn't be limited to three members. The Transition Director advised that this was a delivery group rather than an opportunity to develop policy, which was the remit of the Policy Forum. While members' views were valued there needed to be a balance between operational and strategic.

The point was made that logistics should not come into it now that meetings could take place virtually, and this enabled more members to get involved without needing to travel.

### **RESOLVED:**

- a) To approve a change to the terms of reference of the Appointments Committee as set out in paragraph 1.2.3;**
- b) To approve the terms of reference for the Policy Programme Group subject to amending the composition to up to six members, and removing the requirement for 2:1 balance between local authority appointed and Welsh Government appointed members.**

### **101/21 Proposed amendment to Standing Order 8.9**

The Monitoring Officer proposed a change to Standing Order 8.9 to clarify the voting procedure.

A member queried the phrase 'written ballot' in view of the fact that virtual meetings did not enable this. The Officer agreed that replacing this with 'secret ballot' would cover this. He advised that Standing Order covered virtual meetings which would anyway override 8.9.

**RESOLVED: To amend Standing Order 8.9 to read: “if more than one nomination is received for any particular role then the role shall be elected by the Member candidate receiving the highest number of votes in favour. Votes shall be cast by secret ballot. Where no single Member candidate holds the highest number of votes in favour, then the Member candidate with the lowest number of votes shall be removed until one of the Member candidates has received the highest number of votes cast.**

### **102/21 Member Reports**

Members noted a short report from the Landscape and Biodiversity Member Champion which had been published in the library.

### **103/21 Gifts & Hospitality**

No declarations were made.

### **104/21 Any Other Business**

No further business was discussed.

Signed as a correct record  
Chairman of the National Park Authority