

Lake District National Park Authority

MINUTES of a meeting of the Lake District National Park Authority held at the National Park Office, Murley Moss, Kendal at 10.00 am on 11 December 2024.

Present

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| Ms T Hunt MBE (Chair) | |
| Mr M F Carter (Deputy Chairman) | |
| Mr M P Brereton | Mr R G Minshaw |
| Mr J Jackson | Ms S Mosner |
| Mrs L Jones-Bulman | Mr D F Rathbone |
| Mr M Kidd | Mr P Walter |
| | 2 vacancies |

Apologies

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| Mr W Clark | Mr N Hughes |
| Ms V Hughes | Ms Lansbury |
| Mr R Outhwaite | Mr I C Wharton |

No Apologies Received

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| Ms J A Drake | Mr A Pratt |
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49/24 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Clark, Mr Hughes, Ms Hughes, Ms Lansbury, Mr Outhwaite and Mr Wharton.

50/24 Minutes

Decided: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

51/24 Chair's Announcements

The Chair informed of changes to the Authority's membership with Ms Lansbury joining as a new member and Mr Hughes leaving. She thanks Mr Hughes for his contribution to the Authority and wished him well for the future.

The Chair noted that Ms Fretwell, Head of Resources, was stepping down from the role and wished to record thanks for all the work she had undertaken for the Authority during her tenure. Congratulations were given to her successor Mr Notley on his promotion. The Chair also thanked officers on behalf of Members for all the work they had undertaken during 2024.

The Chair advised of her attendance at a number of recent events: UK National Parks' conference hosted by Northumberland National Park, the Archaeology Conference, Parish Council Cluster Engagement Meetings. Meetings with the Parish Councils had been well-received and more meetings with the Parish Councils would be arranged in the coming year to ensure continued dialogue.

The Chair also noted that she and Mr Capstick, Chief Executive, had attended meetings of National Parks England and the Lake District National Park Partnership. At these meetings she had spoken with the Defra Minister who was particularly interested in water quality.

The Chair announced to Members and members of the public that the meeting was being livestreamed and that a digital sound recording of the meeting would be made.

52/24 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of a registrable interest or disclosable pecuniary interest relating to any of the business of the Committee.

53/24 Questions

There were no questions relating to the business of the Authority.

54/24 Public Participation

There were no questions, petitions or depositions of a general nature relating to the business of the Authority.

55/24 Chief Executive's Update

The Chief Executive advised that the Parish Council Cluster Engagement Meetings had been well attended. Parish Councillors had been able to explain their concerns and discuss topics of interest to them. The Chief Executive had clarified the Authority's statutory powers and limitations on the activities for which the Authority is responsible. It was clear that the Authority and Parish Councils shared the same concerns, and it was hoped that all could work together to address these issues.

The Chief Executive also noted that the business plan process was ongoing within Defra. Defra had indicated the worst-case scenario is that NPAs would receive a flat cash grant with no capital uplift and no support for National Insurance contributions. This aligns with the Authority's budget strategy although the Chief Executive advised Members that this would be a very challenging financial settlement for the Authority to manage.

Decided: Members noted the update on key topics since the last meeting.

56/24 Minutes of Committees

The Minutes of the meetings of the following Committees were laid separately before the meeting and in respect of each Committee it was agreed that the Minutes should be approved and recommendations relating to the functions not delegated to a Committee should be confirmed.

a) Governance Committee

Mr Carter presented the minutes of the meetings held on 31 July and 3 October 2024;

b) Resources Committee

Mr Jackson presented the minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2024;

c) Development Control Committee

Mr Kidd presented the minutes of the meetings held on 4 September, 2 October and 6 November 2024; and

d) Park Strategy and Vision Committee

Mr Carter presented the minutes of the meetings held on 10 September and 23 October 2024.

57/24 Members Representation on Outside Bodies and Partnerships

Verbal updates were given from Members on meetings attended as the Authority's representative:

The Chair attended the final meeting of the Cumbria LEP. The LEP's work was formally handed over to Enterprise Cumbria. Meetings will take place to establish what role the Authority will play in the future.

58/24 Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document

The Director of Sustainable Development gave a presentation of the report and thanked officers for the work that had been undertaken.

Members noted that it was becoming more expensive to make planning applications. Applicants seeking to develop new housing needed to pay for an ecologist's report and monitoring fees. Whilst the requirements for biodiversity and associated costs were not within the Authority's control, the increasing requirements and rising costs were concerning.

Decided:

- a Members adopted the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document set out in Annex 1 of the report.

59/24 Appointment of Independent Persons

The Authority Solicitor presented the report in which the Authority was invited to re-appoint Mr D Tweddle and Mr T Southorn as Independent Persons for the Authority to be effective from 17 April 2025 to 16 April 2029.

Decided:

- a Members appointed Mr David Tweddle and Mr Timothy Southorn to serve the Authority as Independent Persons from 17 April 2025 to 16 April 2029.

60/24 Appointment of Section 151 Officer

The Chief Executive presented the report in which the Authority was invited to confirm the appointment of the new Head of Resources as the Section 151 Officer of the Authority with effect from 13 December 2024.

Decided:

- a The Authority confirmed the appointment of the new Head of Resources, Mr Peter Notley, as the Section 151 Officer of the Authority with effect from 12 December 2024.

61/24 Appointment of Member to serve on Governance and Resources Committees

The Chair presented the report in which the Authority was invited to appoint Ms S Lansbury to the current vacancies on the Governance and Resources Committee until 30 June 2025.

Decided:

- a Members agreed to the appointment of Ms Sally Lansbury to the Governance and Resources Committees until 30 June 2025.

The Committee passed the following Resolution:

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items. This was because exempt information, as defined in Schedule 12A of the Act, may be disclosed during discussions.

The meeting was adjourned and reconvened after a 10-minute break.

**Part 2
Staff in Confidence**

62/24 Amendment to Strategic Leadership Team Structure

The Chief Executive presented the report which, following the unsuccessful recruitment exercise for the vacant Director of Visitor Services and Resources post, proposed the deletion of that role and consequential adjustments to the officer Senior Leadership Team roles and structure.

The paper also recommended temporary adjustments to the structure to reflect workload and resource intensive projects in the coming years, and to provide robust and suitable succession planning for the Director of Sustainable Development.

Decided:

- a Authority notes the permanent adjustments to the establishment and senior officer structure proposed within the paper.

- b Authority notes the addition of a temporary role of Assistant Director of Sustainable Development to the establishment in 2025/26 and 2026/27 (with any successful appointee also succeeding the Director of Sustainable Development upon his retirement).
- c Authority delegates the oversight of the recruitment exercise for the Assistant Director role to the Executive Performance Committee, with that Committee bringing a recommendation for appointment back for Authority consideration.

Commercial in Confidence and Staff in Confidence

63/24 Brockhole Delivery Options

The Chief Executive presented the report which recommended changes to the current Brockhole operating model and staffing structure, reducing exposure to unpredictable losses.

Decided:

- a Members approved the operational changes proposed within the report, including LDNPA withdrawing from delivering services in the Brockhole 'White House' and the direct delivery of catering through the grounds set out in the report.
- b Members approve the associated structural change proposals that are outlined in the report subject to final review by the People and Organisation Development Team and approval by the Executive Board on 6 January 2025.
- c Members delegate authority to the Chief Executive to make non-significant / minor changes to a and b following consultation with staff and UNISON.

64/24 Brockhole Space and Usage Options

The Chief Executive presented the report which, as reported at Resources Committee in June, and following the soft market testing exercise, (which was agreed to be conducted at that committee), presented the results and recommendations for the future operating model of Brockhole.

Decided:

- a Members approved the future operating model at Brockhole to seek to lease the whole site, with public access retained.
- b Members approved the procurement exercise and associated timescales for delivery; and, subject to consultation with the Chair of Resources on the terms of the final contract, project plan and value of the contract with Savills, a budget of £100k for the external support required for the procurement exercise.

Commercial in Confidence

65/24 Chief Executive Briefing Report on Use of Urgency Powers Coniston Bluebird Café – Lease Proposal

In accordance with the Authority's Scheme of Delegation, the Chief Executive reported his use of urgency powers to approve proposed Heads of Terms to grant a new 25-year lease of the existing Café premises at Coniston Boating Centre, to enable the construction of an extension to the premises by the current tenant.

Decided:

- a Members noted the use of urgency powers by the Chief Executive to grant a new lease to the existing tenants of Coniston Bluebird Cafe, on the surrender of their existing lease.

(The meeting finished at 12.28 pm)