

24 March 2015

## ITEM 4

### EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the Exmoor National Park Authority held on Tuesday, 24 March 2015 at 10.00am in the Committee Room, Exmoor House, Dulverton.

#### PRESENT

Miss A V Davis (Chairman)  
Mr N Holliday (Deputy Chairman)  
Mr J Bray  
Mr R C Edgell  
Mr J Freeman  
Mr C Morgan  
Mrs F Nicholson  
Mr S J Pugsley  
Mr R J Webber  
Dr J Wibberley  
Mr A Wright

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs L Blanchard, Mr R Brown, Mr W J Dyke, Dr S Head, Mrs C Lawrence, Mr R Milton and Mr T Taylor.

**53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** There were no declarations of interest.

**54. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The Chairman advised that Mr J Gurney had resigned as a Member of North Devon Council and was therefore no longer that Council's appointee to Exmoor National Park Authority.

#### 55. MINUTES

- i. **Confirmation:** The Minutes of the Authority's meeting held on 3 March 2015 were agreed and signed as a correct record, subject to amendment to Minute 39 – Application No. 62/50/14/002 – Lower East Middleton, Parracombe, Barnstaple, Devon – Proposed agricultural livestock building, access and planting, to record that Members raised the issue of potential conflict with other road users and the need to keep the road clear from mud or other debris associated with the agricultural use of the building. Members acknowledged this was a matter for the Local Highway Authority which had not raised concerns; however it was requested that an informative note be added to any planning consent advising that the public highway should not be adversely affected through use of the new building.
- ii. **Matters arising** (excluding matters arising in relation to the Authority's role as sole local planning authority): There were no matters arising.

**56. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:** There were no speakers at public question time.

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**Items relating to the Authority's role as sole local planning authority for the National Park area including determination of planning applications.**

#### 57. MINUTES

**Matters arising** from the minutes of the Authority meeting held on 3 March 2015 in relation to the Authority's role as sole local planning authority: There were no matters arising.

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## **58. PUBLICATION DRAFT LOCAL PLAN, DUTY TO CO-OPERATE PROTOCOL AND DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The Authority considered the report of the Head of Planning & Sustainable Development.

It was noted that the policies of the Local Plan had been prepared following extensive consultation and the Plan aimed to ensure that Exmoor's future was socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.

While development of the Local Plan was required to take account of national changes in planning policy, it retained an emphasis on supporting the needs of Exmoor's communities through policies to support local needs affordable housing and to allow specialist housing, extended family housing, principal residence housing, rural workers housing and succession farming.

The Plan introduced greater flexibility in relation to business development including policies to support home-based businesses, agricultural and forestry development and by clarifying the approach to the change of use of serviced accommodation to residential housing.

In regard to Exmoor's settlements and following changes by the Government to the thresholds for affordable housing, it was noted that reference to Rural Communities had been removed from the Plan and these settlements were considered as open countryside. However it was recognised it was important to have a settlement strategy that was right for Exmoor, and the policies of the Plan would enable self-build local affordable dwellings in very small rural communities (not defined in the settlement hierarchy) which had service provision in the form of a shop, or a pub or a community meeting place/hall. It was also noted that the policy would not exclude a church from being considered as a community meeting place where this was the case. It was likely that in rural areas outside the National Park, and in the absence of a comparable enabling policy, similar very small communities would be considered in planning terms as open countryside where no development would be permitted.

Members were informed that it would be possible to review individual elements of the Local Plan during the Plan period to 2031; however this would involve a prescribed and not uncomplicated process, including requirement for approval by a Planning Inspector.

The meeting was advised that any further necessary revisions would be delegated to the Chief Executive including any changes required to the estimated figures for housing provision need. The meeting was also advised that it was aimed to consult on the Publication Draft Local Plan with the Statement of Community Involvement during summer 2015 and that a glossary and plain English summary version of the Plan would be prepared for circulation during the consultation period.

It was agreed to put in place a communications strategy to help convey the aims and objectives of the Plan to promote and encourage sustainable development, enabling communities and businesses to thrive, while conserving and enhancing the National Park's special qualities.

Members and Officers were thanked for their hard work in preparing the Local Plan.

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**RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the Publication Draft Local Plan for consultation and to delegate to the Chief Executive authority to:
  - (a) Make any necessary revisions as required.
  - (b) Make amendments to accord with any Sustainability Appraisal or Habitats Regulations Assessment recommendations
  - (c) Agree evidence base documentation which underpins the Local Plan.
2. To approve the Exmoor-Wide Duty to Co-operate Protocol.
3. To approve the Statement of Community Involvement for consultation concurrent with the Publication Draft Local Plan.
4. To delegate to the Chief Executive authority to respond to the Publication Draft / Pre-Submission North Devon Local Plan

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**59. ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF URGENCY:** There was none.

The meeting closed at 10.55am

(Chairman)