

**COUNCIL**

18 March 2010

**Agenda Item 70**

Brighton &amp; Hove City Council

**Subject: Member appointment to South Downs National Park Authority****Date of Meeting: 18 March 2010****Report of: Director of Strategy and Governance****Contact Officer: Name: Elizabeth Culbert Tel: 29-1515****E-mail: [elizabeth.culbert@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:elizabeth.culbert@brighton-hove.gov.uk)****Wards Affected: All****FOR GENERAL RELEASE****1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

1.1 The South Downs has now been formally designated as a National Park. A National Park Authority is required to be established in order to manage the National Park and relevant local authorities have been asked to each nominate one member to be appointed to the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). This report provides the relevant background including details of the roles and responsibilities of the National Park Authority members in order to enable the Council to agree the appointment.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

2.1 That the Council appoints one member to the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA);

**3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION / CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

3.1 On 12<sup>th</sup> November 2009, the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs formally confirmed the designation of the South Downs as a National Park. The National Park designation will replace the two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. A National Park Authority is currently being established to manage the National Park.

3.2 National Park Authorities exist to further the statutory National Park purposes in their area, namely :

- Conserving the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area and
- Promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.

3.3 Members of the National Park are to be appointed from three separate sources:

- Local authority members, who must be serving councillors of a district, county, or unitary authority with land in the National Park, and are appointed by their Council. Every district, county or unitary authority has the right to at least one seat;
- Parish members, who must be serving councillors of a parish having land in the National Park. They are chosen by the parish councils collectively (though formally appointed by the Secretary of State);
- National members who are appointed by the Secretary of State, in consultation with Natural England. (These are selected through an open recruitment process which is regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA)).

The combined number of local authority and parish members must outnumber the 'national' members.

3.4 The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) consulted a wide range of bodies on the proposed size of the SDNPA in July 2009. The council responded to the consultation document as set out in the Environment Cabinet member meeting report 'Consultation on the membership of the future South Downs National Park Authority' in September 2009.

3.5 In December 2009 the Secretary of State determined that the overall size of the SDNPA will be 27. This will mean that each local authority will have one member except for Adur and Worthing which, at the request of those councils, will share a member. Brighton & Hove City Council will have one member. The number of national members will be 7, parish members 6 and local authorities 14.

3.6 Defra have now announced the appointment of the national members who are:- Sir Sebastian Anstruther; Kenneth Bodfish OBE; Jeremy Leggett; Margaret Paren; Sue Saville; Thomas Tupper and Susan Warren.

3.7 Parish Council Associations are arranging a selection process through a combination of ballot and hustings. Local authorities now need to nominate their members.

3.8 The Guidance enclosed at Appendix 1 has been sent to all local authorities by the Interim Chief Executive of the SDNPA as a framework of skills to be considered when nominating members for the SDNPA. The time commitment set out in that framework is expressed as approximately two to three days per month and possibly more depending on any special roles.

3.9 It should be noted that the overall purpose for the members is to ensure that the SDNPA fulfils its objectives and does so in a way that best suits the special characteristics of the National Park

The key requirements are that members;-

- act with independence;
- use skills, experience, local, regional and national knowledge for the benefit of the NPA;
- collectively participate in the development of policy direction, strategic thinking and innovation within the NPA, through the development of management policy, business plans and participation in the activities of the NPA's Working Groups;
- independently scrutinize the workings and policies of the NPA;
- are committed to working in the best interests of the NPA;
- influence the NPA to help it to come to informed and balanced decisions;
- seek clarification of policy and action proposals if appropriate;
- accept collective responsibility for the decisions of the NPA;
- approve and monitor programmes to implement the NPA's policies;
- contribute opinions and advice from the national perspective;
- work with members, staff and stakeholders to apply the principles of sustainable development and the principles of NPA's to all decision-making;
- act as an ambassador for the NPA; and
- help to promote the profile and effectiveness of the family of National Parks through the work of the NPA, co-operative action such as peer support and review, and co-operation with the work of Defra, Natural England, the English National Park Authorities Association and the UK Association of National Park Authorities.

3.10 Council is requested to nominate a member to represent Brighton & Hove City Council on the South Downs National Park Authority, taking into account the role and responsibilities referred to above.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

4.1 The Council responded to the consultation on the proposed membership of the National Park and no further consultation has been carried out.

#### **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

##### **5.1 Financial Implications:**

There are no direct financial implications for the council arising from the recommendation in the report. Any costs associated with expenses or training would be met by the SDNPA.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Name Peter Francis Date: 10.03.10*

## 5.2 Legal Implications:

The framework for the appointment of a Local Authority member to the National Park Authority has been set out in the body of the report. The South Downs National Park Authority (Establishment) Order 2010 will formally establish the SDNPA and this requires one member to be appointed from Brighton & Hove City Council.

*Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert*

*Date: 14/02/10*

## 5.3 Equalities Implications:

There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report.

## 5.4 Sustainability Implications:

There are no specific sustainability implications arising from this report.

## 5.5 Crime & Disorder Implications:

There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## 5.6 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

There are no specific risk or opportunity management implications arising from this report.

## 5.7 Corporate / Citywide Implications:

There are no specific corporate/citywide implications arising from this report.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. South Downs National Park draft Skills and Knowledge Framework

### **Documents In Members' Rooms**

DEFRA document 'Consultation on the membership of the future South Downs National Park' July 2009.

**Appendix 1: South Downs National Park Authority: draft Skills and Knowledge Framework**

Job Description	Meaning:	Skills set needed or to be developed	
		Knowledge of:	Skills in:
<p><b>Strategic and External Leadership</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using understanding of the external environment and relationships within which the NPA operates to further achievement of NPMP outcomes;</li> <li>- being an external advocate/champion of the National Park</li> <li>-influencing policy direction and programmes</li> <li>- Being an advocate for how the NPA contributes to the achievement of NPMP outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Park Management Plan and outcomes</li> <li>National Park Authority performance and business plan</li> <li>Local Development Framework</li> <li>Partnership protocols and structures</li> <li>Cross cutting impact of National Park purposes and duty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership working</li> <li>External advocacy including being a champion for the South Downs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Governance, Performance and Scrutiny</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding the different roles of members and staff and fulfilling the strategic governance role of the member</li> <li>- interpreting and having access to performance data so can assess how well the Authority is doing</li> <li>- independently scrutinising the workings and policies of NPA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Park Strategies/ Action Plans</li> <li>NPA Planning policies and processes</li> <li>Performance management framework including risk management</li> <li>Equality and Diversity policies</li> <li>Standing orders and financial regulations</li> <li>Medium term financial planning, budgets and capital strategy</li> <li>Asset Management Plan</li> <li>Workforce policies and plans</li> <li>Role of Internal and External Audit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny and constructive challenge</li> <li>Using data and evidence to inform decisions</li> <li>Open and transparent decision making</li> <li>Sharing experiences from elsewhere and bringing an 'outside' view</li> </ul>

Job Description	Meaning:	Skills set needed or to be developed	
		Knowledge of:	Skills in:
<b>Personal Contribution and Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using existing skills, knowledge and abilities to help ensure the NPA fulfils its purposes</li> <li>- Developing skills, knowledge and abilities to help the NPA fulfils its purposes</li> <li>- Understanding how to contribute effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Member role and how it relates to the officer role</li> <li>Members' code of conduct and protocols</li> <li>Meeting procedures</li> <li>Targets for participation in formal committees and training events</li> <li>Need to give time of approx 2/3 days per month and more depending on any special roles</li> <li>Procedure for handling complaints against members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership</li> <li>Chairing meetings</li> <li>Effective behaviour in committee and other meetings</li> <li>Constructive questioning &amp; challenge</li> <li>Listening</li> <li>Building relationships</li> <li>Contributing to team working</li> <li>Basic computer literacy</li> </ul>
<b>Communications &amp; Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accessing and understanding the communications received from the NPA about the National Park purposes, NPMP outcomes and the NPA's priorities</li> <li>- Communicating well to different audiences and partners about the National Park purposes, NPMP outcomes and NPA priorities</li> <li>- Communicating to their appointing body about National Park purposes, NPMP outcomes and NPA priorities</li> <li>- Helping the NPA to engage with communities to understand and respond to their needs and aspirations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The duty of all relevant authorities, under Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995, to have regard to National Park Purposes in carrying out functions that may relate to or affect land in a National Park.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public speaking</li> <li>Dealing with the media</li> <li>Listening and engaging with community groups</li> <li>Facilitating dialogue and conclusions that have wide ownership</li> </ul>

Job Description	Meaning:	Skills set needed or to be developed	
		Knowledge of:	Skills in:
<b>Values</b>	<p>- The new Authority will want to identify values that underpin its work with communities, stakeholders, customers and staff. From initial discussions the following will be important for the South Downs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspirational and innovative</li> <li>• Adding value and building capacity</li> <li>• Unifying and giving leadership</li> <li>• Enabling and empowering</li> <li>• Responsive and flexible</li> </ul>	The Authority's values	Demonstrating the NPA's values through the role of the Member

