

Broads Authority

Minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2025

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Present

Harry Blathwayt – in the Chair, Stephen Bolt, Peter Dixon, Andrée Gee, Alan Goodchild, Tony Grayling, Paul Hayden, Tristram Hilborn, Tim Jickells, Siân Limpenny, Leslie Mogford, Gurpreet Padda (from item 8), Matthew Shardlow.

In attendance

John Packman – Chief Executive, Natalie Beal – Planning Policy Officer (items 12-14), Andrew Farrell - Partnership & External Funding Manager (item 10), Andrea Kelly - Environmental Policy Adviser (item 11), Emma Krelle – Director of Finance, Hannah Norman - Catchment and Farming Officer (item 15), Rob Rogers – Director of Operations, Lorraine Taylor – Governance Officer, Marie-Pierre Tighe – Director of Strategic Services, and Sara Utting – Senior Governance Officer.

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

The Chair explained that the meeting was being audio-recorded. All recordings remained the copyright of the Broads Authority and anyone wishing to receive a copy should contact the Governance Team. The minutes remained the record of the meeting. He added that the law permitted any person to film, record, photograph or use social media in order to report on the proceedings of public meetings of the Authority. This did not extend to live verbal commentary. The Chair needed to be informed if anyone intended to photograph, record or film so that any person under the age of 18 or members of the public not wishing to be filmed or photographed could be accommodated.

Apologies were received from James Harvey, Martyn Hooton, Michael Scott, Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro, and Fran Whymark.

2. Chairman's announcements

The Chair reminded Members that the annual Member review process would commence in February, when they would receive a copy of their annual review form for completion and return. The Chair said that for Secretary of State appointees and Co-opted Members, this was mandatory under the terms of appointment and that there would be an option to follow up through a 1:1 meeting with the Chair/Vice-Chair if necessary. Further details would follow by email in due course. The Chair added that, as a Local Authority Member, he did find the process quite helpful, therefore if any Local Authority Members would like to engage with this process they would be more than welcome to.

3. Introduction of members and declarations of interest

Members indicated they had no further declarations of interest other than those already registered.

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4. Items of urgent business

There were no items of urgent business.

5. Public question time

No public questions had been received.

6. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

7. Summary of actions and outstanding issues

Members received the latest summary of actions and outstanding issues following decisions at previous meetings. The Chief Executive said that there were no updates to the report.

The report was noted.

8. Strategic priorities - update

Members received the report of the Senior Governance Officer. The Chief Executive (CE) said that the five strategic priorities for 2024/25 were all on track. Good progress was being made on the replacement of the online toll system, however, testing had highlighted a small issue in report generation which was being fixed. It was hoped that it would be ready to produce the toll renewal letters on time. The CE said that the new system would be much more robust than the previous system and would also be an improvement for those paying a toll for their boats. The system would be closer to that of the vehicle tax system, in that toll payers would be sent a unique identification number which would make it easier for tolls to be paid online.

A Member asked whether this payment system would be available for those who paid short-term tolls. The CE confirmed that this was not available yet, however, this was part of the work scheduled in phase 2 of the software upgrade.

A Member asked how the unique identification number would work where toll payers had more than one boat. The CE said that the identification number would be assigned to the person rather than a boat, therefore, those with more than one boat would only receive one identification number.

In response to a question on what the Broads Authority had planned in relation to promoting the new toll payment system, the CE said that it would be promoted within the Authority's Broad Sheet publication as well as social media and other channels.

A Member commented that they would like to congratulate the Head of Strategic Services (HSS) on a successful BFI Members workshop and asked whether there would be a future briefing or workshop to discuss the various outcomes. The HSS said that the team took on board all feedback given at the workshop and there was a further workshop planned which would be communicated in due course.

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Members noted the progress in implementing this year's strategic priorities.

Gurpreet Padda joined the meeting. She advised that she had no interests to declare.

9. Financial Performance and Direction, including proposed Budget 2025/26 and financial strategy to 2027/28

Members received the report of the Director of Finance (DF). The DF said that the report covered four items: the actuals up to the end of November 2024; the Quarter 3 prudential indicators that the Authority had to publish; an update on the Statement of Accounts audit for 2023/24; and the budget.

The DF said that at the time of writing the report, the December figures were not available, however, she was able to provide a verbal update. Table 1 of the report now showed a total variance of £605,675 at the end of December, a decrease of £81,325 following the pay award having been implemented. There were no changes to the latest available budget or the forecast. Earmarked reserves, set out in table 4, had decreased by £77,000 and the consolidated earmarked reserves now stood at £3,338,714.

Paragraphs 5.2 to 5.4 set out the increase of money into the earmarked reserves as a result of the Countryside Stewardship scheme, and the delay between when the monies would be received and the work was carried out. The proposal was for the transfer of the surplus income in the Fen Management budget to the Plant, Vessels and Equipment reserve. In addition, approval was sought from Members for the additional expenditure for work to Mutford Lock which was to be carried out before the start of the season.

The DF said that the prudential indicators were in table 5 of the report and this covered up to the end of quarter 3. It did look like there was still a lot of capital expenditure to happen, however, the DF said that the adjustments for the IRFS16 were still to be carried out but this would be completed before the end of the financial year.

Section 7 of the report set out the position for the 2023/24 Statement of Accounts audit and the need to have delegated approval from Members to meet the deadline as a result of the backstop legislation published in 2024. The DF said that she met with the Auditors on 23 January 2025 and that they had, so far, identified some adjustments around what was in the disclosures as well as some accruals that needed to be reversed. The Risk, Audit and Governance Committee would see the amended Statement of Accounts on 11 February 2025 that would take into account those adjustments identified, none of which were particularly significant. EY indicated that if the DF had delegated approval, they would like to have the accounts signed off on 11 February 2025 rather than leave it to the backstop date of 28 February.

The DF referred Members to section 8 of the report and the budget. The budget was based on flat cash for the National Park grant and the 5.9% increase, as agreed, for tolls. It made assumptions around boat numbers remaining at the same level - apart from the forecast reduction in private vessels, the pay increase for 2025/26, and savings that needed to be

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incorporated. The indication was that for 2026/27 a 3.5% toll increase would be needed, and 1% for 207/28, however, that would be refined as the year went on as additional savings would continue to be looked at. The DF said that pay now accounted for 74% of the budget in 2025/26 and this was a slight reduction from 77% in 2024/25.

The DF said that table 6 of the report provided a high-level overview of the 2025/26 budget, however, Appendix 3 provided more detail by reporting summary. Sections 9 to 11 provided details by Directorate, highlighted where there had been increases which was mainly around pay. The DF reminded Members that the assumption was that there would be no help from the Government regarding the National Insurance increase which would take effect from 1 April 2025. It also detailed decreases which was a slight change to Ranger patrolling and also the switch of operation technician staff between National Park and Navigation as a result of the Countryside Stewardship scheme.

Table 7 detailed the central costs for 2024/25 and then the budget for 2025/26 to 2027/28. The DF said that Members might notice that the 2024/25 costs as a percentage of the core National Park grant looked high, however, this was because of the delayed work to Yare House which had now been completed.

Section 13 of the report set out the key assumptions and the DF highlighted staff vacancies where there was often a delay between the time a staff member left and a new person started, and added that all vacancies were approved by the Management Team. Earmarked reserve expenditure was set out in section 14 of the report and expenditure for 2026/27 onwards should be viewed with a degree of caution as this would be refined during the year.

The DF said that despite there being a deficit on both sides of the budget, this would be balanced by the use of the General (National Park) reserve and the Navigation reserve. Both reserves remained above the minimum level for the three years forecast, however, savings, cost reductions and income opportunities would still be investigated in 2025/26.

A Member commented that he understood that there had recently been an additional expense in relation to a sunken vessel and asked whether this meant that the navigation reserves would dip below 10%, whether that caused any concern, and whether there was any possibility of recovering that money. The DF said that there was a potential, as a result of that work, that the reserve could dip below 10% and that would place a strain on the toll setting for 2026/27. The DF explained that the forecast was often not the same as the budget, because the time it took to set the budget and the work being undertaken – sometimes on the navigation side, works could be delayed due to unforeseen circumstances – so there was a lot of things that would need to be taken into consideration. However, if everything happened exactly as it was set out in the budget, the reserve would dip below 10% which would add 1% onto the tolls for 2026/27 to bring it back in line if there were no savings elsewhere.

The Director of Operations (DO) said that the vessel in question was in the navigation area but because it laid under water, it was not sure how deep the vessel is. The Authority was waiting for divers to attend the site to conduct an initial dive survey. All that was known at present was that the vessel had a steel hull, but it was not known why it sank. The vessel had been

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issued with a Removal of Wreck Notice; therefore, it had now become the Authority's vessel, and once it had been recovered, there was an opportunity to sell it to recoup some losses. Unfortunately, although the vessel was insured, it was only third-party cover, which did not include recovery costs.

A Member commented that he understood some third-party policies included the removal of wrecks. However, some did not and asked if the Authority's third-party requirement included the removal of wrecks. If not, the Authority needed to find a way to make sure that requirement was met to ensure anyone using a boat on the Broads was covered in this regard. The Chief Executive (CE) said that there was a need to take some legal advice about what scope there was within the 2009 Broads Authority Act - which brought in a requirement for the Broads Authority to require third party insurance - and the extent to which that allowed the Authority to widen the requirement to include recovery of wrecks.

A Member asked how many similar sized vessels within the Broads area could have the potential to cause a liability. The DO said that some work was planned to establish these numbers, and added that, in theory, any vessel over 10 metres with an enclosed hull were to sink it would weigh a lot and would cause the Authority a sizeable problem. A report would be presented to a future meeting of the Navigation Committee on that risk.

A Member commended the DF on an excellent report, and commented on the 2024/25 position where it was forecast to be by 31 March 2025, but thought it was important to recognise the good work of the Management Team in terms of managing budgets year to date of where the Authority expected to be. Many organisations were not in this position and thought that it represented prudent management. The Member said that the forward look did not look so positive, and having looked at multiple years ahead it was forecast to run deficit budgets which would run down reserves which would not be sustainable, and asked what the Authority's plans were going forward and what that would mean for the going concerns. The DF said that the Member was right that there would be a need to use National Park general reserves for the next three years, however, this could not go on forever and was therefore in the process of planning for future years. However, the difficulty was that the Authority had not yet had confirmation from Defra of what the National Park grant would be for 2025/26. As it currently stood, there was a need to reduce costs but it was not known as to what level. The Member asked whether for the near term, did this represent a significant risk. The DF said that to give Members some comfort, the reserves would maintain above 10% over the next three years.

The CE said that it was still not known what the Defra grant would be for the next year. On 13 January 2025, he and the Directors had met with senior officials within Defra for the annual review meeting where it was discussed whether some of the revenue income could be replaced with capital income. The difficulty, however, on the National Park side was that there was very little room to manoeuvre and most of the expenditure was revenue, for example 74% of costs were staff. The officials seemed to be happier about the years beyond the coming financial year and hoped that through the spending review that they would be able to make a good case that National Parks should have some of their funding reinstated.

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The CE said that the DF had always been prudent and that the 2024/25 pay award was lower than had been budgeted and this had made a big difference. The CE added that where staff vacancies arose, there was often a timing difference between when the person exited the post and when the new person could take up the post and therefore every time this happened there was a saving made.

A Member asked what the status of the Defra spending review was and would it be a five-year review. The CE said that the current process was a one-year review, however, this would lead into a three-year process. One of the things that Defra had indicated was that there could be a three-year settlement which would make a big difference and provide some certainty for the budgeting process.

A Member commented that the assumptions within the budget were right, but pointed out that Defra was an unprotected department and flat cash forecasts beyond 2025/26 might be optimistic given the economic situation and the Authority needed to be prepared for that.

A Member asked, if the proposed unitary authority were to happen, what impact would that have on the Broads Authority. The CE said that the most significant impact would be a change in the membership of the Authority. At present, of the twenty-one Members, nine were drawn from local authorities so those constituent local authorities would reduce in number and there would need to be some amendment to the legislation to change where the Authority's members came from. The CE added that if there were a smaller number of, but bigger, authorities there would be some opportunity to build a really constructive relationship with those who had an interest in the Broads and this could be beneficial.

Tristram Hilborn proposed, seconded by Alan Goodchild.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- i. To note the actual income and expenditure figures, prudential indicators and adopt the:
 - a. 2025/26 Budget, including the endorsement of the assumptions applied in the preparation of the Budget; and**
 - b. Earmarked Reserves and Financial Strategy for the period 2025/26 to 2027/28.****
- ii. Approve the year end transfer of an underspend in Fen Management budget to Plant, Vessels and Equipment reserve.**
- iii. Approve the additional earmarked reserve expenditure for Mutford Lock in 2024/25.**
- iv. Delegate authority to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Chair to approve the 2023/24 Statement of Accounts if no significant issues were identified at the Risk, Audit and Governance meeting on 11 February 2025.**

10. Landscape Connections expression of interest

Members received the report of the Partnership and External Funding Manager (PEFM). The PEFM provided an overview of the report and said that this was an opportunity for the Authority to submit an expression of interest for a much larger project than had ever been done before and this had the scope to go beyond the Broads and to the whole region. The PEFM said that he had been working with partners across Norfolk and Suffolk, set out in Appendix 1, to develop the expression of interest. This list of partners continued to grow and would continue to grow as the project moved forward.

The PEFM said that he had received a formal letter of support from the Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape to join with the Broads Authority, which would make a much stronger partnership to go to the heritage fund. Discussions were ongoing with the National Lottery Heritage Fund with the intention to move beyond three and five-year projects to ten-year projects to make impacts on the landscape and communities. The PEFM added that if the Authority was successful, it would provide funding for a number of years working with a number of strategic partners.

A Member commented that the central feature of the Broads was the water, and asked whether this project would look at getting disadvantaged people out onto the water. The PEFM confirmed that this was one of the objectives and that some of the partners involved in this project had expertise in this area. It was, however, a challenge and long-term funding was required to ensure that any projects were sustainable. A Member commented that there were no boating organisations included on the list of partners and asked whether water-based organisations could be contacted, such as the Nancy Oldfield Trust. The PEFM said that he was still engaging with potential partners and would look to include those organisations and added that the project was still in its early stages.

A Member commented that this was similar to an Environment Agency scheme in Essex where they worked with the NHS putting the emphasis on the value and benefit of being out in nature, and asked whether the Authority could look at working with NHS Trusts.

In response to a question on whether there was an opportunity to partner with commercial organisations, the PEFM said that they would be able to.

A Member asked that, on the perspective of race and socio-economic backgrounds, how would the Authority engage with organisations that represented those groups. The PEFM said that Authority already worked with partners who had established links with those groups. He added that the list of partners was not set in stone at the beginning of the project and would always look to bring other partners in along the way. The Member suggested that the PEFM contact organisations such as the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation who might have access to additional funding.

A Member asked to what extent would the Authority need to define what it wanted to achieve for this project in the initial submission. The PEFM said that one of the lessons learned from previous bids for funding was not to be too prescriptive and it was essential that flexibility was built into the bid.

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A Member asked whether co-operation with developers in the energy sector in the region for match funding had been explored. The PEFM said that communication was being had with this sector, in addition, meetings with water companies had been ongoing regarding partnerships.

A Member commented that there were many places in the Broads where those using a wheelchair were unable to get on and off boats and said that he would like to see places where wheelchair access could be built. The PEFM said that it was a priority to increase access for those in wheelchairs and was part of the larger Integrated Access Strategy that the Broads Authority was working on.

The Chair asked whether the PEFM would be engaging with Broads Local Access Forum (BLAF). The PEFM confirmed that they would. The Chair asked whether engagement with organisations such as the Hire Boat Federation would help with reaching those disadvantaged groups that the Authority might struggle with. The PEFM said that this was something that would be worth exploring.

Gurpreet Padda proposed, seconded by Leslie Mogford.

It was resolved unanimously to authorise the submission of an expression of interest to the National Lottery Heritage Landscape Connection Scheme and the subsequent development of an initial bid ready for submission at the end of 2025.

11. Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategies

Members received the report of the Environment Policy Adviser (EPA). The EPA gave an overview of the report and explained that the core purpose of the Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRs) was to agree the priorities for nature recovery in Norfolk and Suffolk and to map the most valuable areas, as well as those areas that could become valuable for nature. The pre-consultation phase would run up until 11 February 2025 and the EPA welcomed Members' comments. The EPA said that the LNRs would provide a real opportunity to link to the public and increase understanding about nature recovery. It would be important to link this with other projects that the Broads Authority were involved with such as the Landscape Connections project, and to look at private finance such as Biodiversity Net Gain.

The EPA said that the timetable as set out in table 1 of the report, might be subject to change due to a number of factors, including local authority elections. The Director of Strategic Services (DSS) said that there was a slight change to the recommended decision that needed to be made. The process was dependent on devolution discussions, the elections and what happened in relation to this. When the report was written, delegation was required to approve the final version of the LNRs, however, if the timescale changed, officers would like to bring a report back to Members to approve the final versions of the LNRs. The proposal was, therefore, to amend the words in (ii) to reflect a potential change in the timescales.

A Member said that this was a great piece of work and that the Members' briefing in December was an excellent session. A Member commented that the maps within the LNRs

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was an essential digital resource for the future which provided a baseline to assess the potential for changes in habitats and species over time as a result of climate change.

Sian Limpenny proposed, seconded by Tony Grayling.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- i. **Approve the public consultation of the draft Norfolk LNRS and Suffolk LNRS; and**
- ii. **To delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Authority, to approve the final versions of the LNRSs (if the timescales made this necessary).**

12. Norfolk RAMS endorsement – updated tariff and governance arrangements

Members received the report of the Planning Policy Officer (PPO). The PPO explained that RAMS stood for Recreation Avoidance Mitigation Strategy and its purpose was to offset the impact that new developments had. RAMS in Norfolk had been in operation for about three years, however, Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in Norfolk now wanted to review the strategy using consultants and a new strategy had been drafted with new tariffs and updated governance arrangements.

A Member commented that this was a significant strategy and the programme of investment could potentially be £22 million over a 20-year period. The new strategy and potential list of projects within it included some significant projects led by the Broads Authority, however, this would be subject to decision by the overseeing board.

The Chair said that he would like to ask other Local Planning Authorities to resist the temptation to use the RAMS money for new projects in Norfolk when there were existing projects that could benefit.

A Member asked whether the PPO could expand on the role of Norwich City Council (NCC), and would the council manage the pot of money. The PPO said that NCC had in the past been the lead authority in the commission of various studies. In addition, NCC hosted the Strategic Planning Officer in Norfolk and all LPAs in Norfolk paid an amount each year for that officer to co-ordinate the various duties and to collate joint evidence for Local Plans. Similar was planned for a new RAMS Officer where NCC would employ the officer using some of the money collected under this scheme. NCC would be the lead council and therefore be responsible for the collection of RAMS payments from other LPAs and convene the overseeing board.

A Member asked whether the impact of Nutrient Neutrality and the lack of building developments as a result of this had a bad effect on the collection of RAMS. The PPO replied that it had and that since Nutrient Neutrality was introduced it had an impact on the number of developments being considered. There was improvement, however, as there were schemes

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around Norfolk that enabled applicants to buy credits in order to offset their Nutrient Enrichment Impact.

A Member asked where the RAMS money would be going. The PPO said that the strategy had a call for projects which was set out in the Norfolk RAMS Action Plan. The money could go to wildlife rangers, education, or even infrastructure.

Tony Grayling proposed, seconded by Matthew Shardlow.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- i. **Endorse the new Norfolk Recreational impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Action Plan plus tariff and governance arrangements (as stated in the Memorandum of Understanding); and**
- ii. **Endorse the nomination of the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee to the Norfolk GI RAMS overseeing Board.**

Gurpreet Padda left the meeting.

13. Making the Chet Neighbourhood Plan

Members received the report of the Planning Policy Officer (PPO). The PPO said that this Neighbourhood Plan had reached the end of its production phases which included consultation, examination, and passed referendum. At its meeting on 10 January 2025, the Planning Committee recommended that the Chet Neighbourhood Plan be adopted. Once adopted it would form part of the Authority's and South Norfolk's Development Plan.

Tim Jickells proposed, seconded by Leslie Mogford.

It was resolved unanimously to make/adopt the Chet Neighbourhood Plan.

Gurpreet Padda rejoined the meeting.

14. Making the Trowse Neighbourhood Plan

Members received the report of the Planning Policy Officer (PPO). The PPO said that this Neighbourhood Plan had reached the end of its production phases which included consultation, examination, and passed referendum. At its meeting on 10 January 2025, the Planning Committee recommended that the Trowse with Newton Neighbourhood Plan be adopted.

Stephen Bolt proposed, seconded by Matthew Shardlow.

It was resolved unanimously to make/adopt the Trowse with Newton Neighbourhood Plan.

15. Biodiversity Net Gain – Off-site provision at Langley Abbey: Legal Agreement

Members received the report of the Catchment and Farming Officer (CFO) on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) off-site provision. All new developments needed to provide BNG uplift, however, with some developments that was not possible on-site and therefore they would need to purchase off-site BNG credits to offset any biodiversity loss on-site. In order to be able to do this, there needed to be off-site habitats whereby biodiversity had been uplifted. The Authority had been approached by Langley Abbey with the first of off-site provisions within the Broads which included ditches and grassland to be uplifted which they would then be able to sell as credits to developers. In order to do this, a legal agreement needed to be in place with either a local authority or a responsible body. The CFO said that having these sites within the Broads helped the Authority to work towards the strategic priorities for biodiversity. The Authority would be required to monitor the sites over the 30-year term of the agreement to ensure that the uplift was achieved as set out in section 4 of the report.

A Member asked whether Langley Abbey could claim other credits on the site, how this would work with South Norfolk Council, and who would be responsible for what. The CFO said that Langley Abbey would not be able to claim any other Government funding on the portion of land in question for the same work. The CFO confirmed that the area in question did not border South Norfolk's area and the separate South Norfolk agreement already in place was on another part of the Estate and therefore there would be no issue around this.

A Member commented that this was a great initiative and it had the potential to create 6.6 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat which would make a contribution to the Broads Authority's target in relation to the Nature Recovery Strategy.

A Member asked whether the Broads Authority considered becoming a responsible body and doing it as a conservation covenant for this purpose. The CFO said that the previous BNG Officer looked into this and it was decided not to go down that route. If the Authority was a responsible body, it could hold conservation covenants for land outside its area and it would become a much more onerous obligation.

A Member asked whether the Authority was happy that the land would not be changed which would make the BNG unsustainable. The CFO said that the Habitat Management Monitoring Plan, which had been produced alongside the Section 106 Agreement, set out what Langley Abbey would do to uplift the habitat, any mitigation and risks over the 30-year period, and how that might be adapted in case of any climate change impacts on the site.

A Member commented that he had some nervousness about off-site BNG projects as well as Section 106 arrangements and said that there was a possibility that they could go wrong. The Member did not agree that any further Section 106 agreements should be delegated to the Chief Executive for approval, and suggested that they are taken to the Planning Committee for approval instead. The Member said that the monitoring could be a large undertaking and any future agreements should be considered by the Planning Committee.

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Tim Jickells proposed, seconded by Tony Grayling.

It was resolved unanimously to approve the Section 106 for Langley Abbey off-site Biodiversity Net Gain unit creation.

16. Scheme of power delegated to Chief Executive and other authorised officers

Members received the report of the Senior Governance Officer (SGO). The SGO said that the report brought together a number of proposed changes to the Scheme of Delegation which covered five areas, as detailed in the report. Further to the comments in the previous item on the delegation of non-planning-related Section 106 agreements to the Chief Executive, the officer recommendation as set out in section 4 of the report was now to amend this to the Planning Committee. The SGO advised that the Terms of Reference of the Planning Committee would need to be amended to reflect this.

Tim Jickells proposed, seconded by Leslie Mogford.

It was resolved unanimously to adopt the revised Scheme of powers delegated to the Chief Executive and other authorised officers together with revised Terms of Reference (as amended) for the Planning Committee.

17. Committee timetable of meetings 2025/26

Members received the report of the Senior Governance Officer (SGO). The SGO said that, as requested by Members last year, the committee timetable of meetings had been brought to Members for approval earlier in the year. Changes have had to be made to the usual schedule to accommodate the statutory deadline for signing the Statement of Accounts, and this had resulted in a reduction of Authority meetings. In addition, it was proposed to reduce the number of Navigation Committee, Planning Committee and HARG meetings. This would enable cost savings to be made without impacting the Authority's duties or decision-making.

The Chair commented that if anything of importance arose, the Chair could call an extraordinary meeting.

Alan Goodchild proposed, seconded by Andrée Gee.

It was resolved unanimously to approve the committee calendar for 2025/26.

18. Items of business raised by the Designated Person in respect of the Port Marine Safety Code

There were no matters to report under this item.

19. Whitlingham Charitable Trust – Annual Report

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (CE). The CE said that the Broads Authority was a member of the Whitlingham Charitable Trust and on the Members' behalf, he

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attended the AGM on 11 December 2024. The CE said that he thought Members would be interested in the Annual Report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, which showed how well the Trust was doing and the accounts showed that they were in a strong position financially.

The CE said that one of the four Trustees appointed by the Broads Authority to the Trust had stepped down, however, the Senior Governance Officer had proposed that the vacancy remained until the call for appointment of Trustees was made in 2026. The CE had consulted the Chair of the Trust on this matter and he supported that view.

20. Minutes to be received

Members received the minutes of the following meetings:

Navigation Committee – 7 November 2024

Planning Committee – 8 November 2024

Planning Committee – 6 December 2024

21. Other items of business

There were no other items of business.

22. Formal questions

There were no formal questions of which notice had been given.

23. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Friday 14 March 2025 at 10.00am at The King's Centre, 63-75 King Street, Norwich, NR1 1PH.

The meeting ended at 11:52am

Signed by

Chairman