

MEETING OF
THE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE SUB-COMMITTEE
OF THE COTSWOLDS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE BOARD

HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM MEETINGS

MONDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2022

Members

Ed Macalister-Smith (EMS) - Chair
Brendan McCarthy (BM)

Independent Member

David Powell (DP)

Officers

Andy Parsons (AP) - Chief Executive
Diane Bassett (DB) - Head of Finance (Maternity Cover)

1. INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

- Apologies – apologies were received from Paul Crossley.
- Introductions and announcements – the Chair welcomed David Powell, the group's new independent member.
- Declarations of interest – no interests were declared.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING – 15 NOVEMBER 2021

- Decision – Minutes approved as a correct record. The actions arising had either been dealt with previously or were discussed at the meeting, including AP giving an overview of the progress made with regard to increasing the transparency of the Voluntary Warden bank accounts. The exception being the revised terms of reference for the Board and Executive Committee, which will be presented at the AGM in June.
- Actions Arising – none.

3. Q3 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

- Comments – DB introduced the accounts, indicating that some of the differences were down to timing that will be rectified by Y/E. DP commented that it is a complex funding environment and it would be helpful to understand where the key risks lie. DB and AP felt that the two main risks were (1) restricted funds not being spent by Y/E and (2) impacts of a pay increase on employee costs. BM reiterated the need to ensure we keep a close eye on project contributions to our central costs. Members thanks DB for the clarity of her reporting.
- Decision – resolved that the Q3 accounts be noted and that the Board paper should highlight the risks, e.g. levels of confidence in ensuring that the current underspend position is overcome by Y/E and the potential impact of the pay increase. The Board report should also include reference to the new income streams that are supporting central costs .
- Actions Arising – *DB and AP will keep the Sub-Committee regularly informed of grant spend v. reforecast between now and the end of the FY.*

4. 2022/23 BUDGET

- Comments – DB introduced the draft budget which has been built with a level of caution, e.g. flat line Defra core grant and not including potential grant funded projects, e.g. A417 designated funds. Due to additional costs, for property and voluntary wardens in

particular, the General Fund (in this scenario), will be need to be utilised to deliver a balanced budget. There was a good discussion around level of detail that will be presented to the Board and there was agreement that there should be a summary budget and explanatory notes, supplemented by more detailed appendices.

- Decision – resolved that the draft budget be noted, acknowledging that there is currently some significant ‘unknowns’ that will mean further draft/s will be required.
- Actions Arising – *DB and DP to discuss budget presentation for the Board meeting on 22 February.*

5. PROPERTY MATTERS

- Comments – AP and BM introduced the item, informing Members of their recent meetings with the landlord and recent advice from Tanners solicitors. Kirkham Pryer Surveyors have completed a detailed Schedule of Works report and this will now be shared with the landlord.
- Decision – the Committee noted the report and agreed that AP and BM should continue their positive discussions with the landlord. Also agreed to keep the Board informed through periodic reporting.
- Actions Arising – *AP to email the Schedule of Works report to the landlord and to then arrange a meeting with them to discuss it, and the next steps.*

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- Comments – AP has undertaken a recent review and redrafting of the Risk Management Framework and the Key Risk Register. Members were in agreement of the revisions and suggested minor additions – (1) include ‘reputational management’, (2) make the reference to ‘fraud’ clearer under ‘theft’ and (3) include reference to ‘cyber security’ under IT.
- Decision – the Committee noted the revised approach to risk management.
- Actions Arising – *include the recommendations in the version that is presented to the Board in February.*

7. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE LANDSCAPES REVIEW

- Comments – EMS suggested that it was a good time for the Sub-Committee to review the consultation questions, ahead of the Board submitting their final response at the end of March. AP gave a summary of the Board’s approach to writing the response, which was supported by everyone.
- Decision – the Committee noted the approach.
- Actions Arising – none.

8. AGREE NEXT STEPS

- EMS confirmed that AP will circulate any actions arising along with the draft minutes of the meeting.

9. FORWARD PLAN

- AP informed Members of his recent work to produce a standard reporting timetable for Finance & Governance, Executive and Board. This will be circulated with the Minutes.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- None.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Monday 23 May 2022, 10:00am via Zoom meetings

Ed Macalister-Smith, Chair