

# Broads Authority

## Minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2021

### Contents

	Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014	3
1.	Appointment of Chair	3
2.	Appointment of Vice-Chair	3
3.	Chair's announcements	4
	Peter Cannell – volunteer	4
4.	Apologies	5
5.	Introduction of members and declarations of interest	5
6.	Items of urgent business	5
7.	Public question time	6
8.	Minutes of last meeting	6
9.	Summary of actions and outstanding issues	6
10.	Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)	6
11.	Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 and Code of Corporate Governance 2021	8
12.	Draft Statement of Accounts 2020/21	8
13.	Strategic direction update	9
14.	Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report – endorsing technical consultation	10
15.	Residential Moorings Guide for adoption	10
16.	Marketing and Viability Guide – approval of draft for consultation	11
17.	Code of Conduct and declaration of interests	11
18.	Appointment of members to committees and other bodies	12
19.	Broads Local Access Forum Annual Report	14
20.	Items of business raised by the Designated Person in respect of the Port Marine Safety Code 14	
21.	Minutes to be received	14
22.	Other items of business	14
	Nature for Climate Peatlands Discovery Grant	14

23. Formal questions	15
24. Date of next meeting	15
25. Exclusion of the public	15
Summary of Exempt Minutes	16
26. Exempt minutes of the Navigation Committee meeting on 16 January 2020	16
Appendix 1 – Declaration of interests: Broads Authority, 23 July 2021	16

## Present

Harry Blathwayt, Stephen Bolt, Matthew Bradbury, Nigel Brennan, Bill Dickson, Andrée Gee, Gail Harris, Paul Hayden, Tim Jickells, James Knight, Greg Munford, Michael Scott, Matthew Shardlow, Nicky Talbot, Vic Thomson, Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro and Fran Whymark

## In attendance

John Packman – Chief Executive, Christopher Bing – Monitoring Officer, Maria Conti – Head of Governance, Emma Krelle – Chief Financial Officer, Rob Rogers – Director of Operations, Natalie Beal – Planning Policy Officer, Andrea Kelly – Environment Policy Officer and Sara Utting - Governance Officer

## Members of the public

Peter Cannell – Volunteer (item 3)

## Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

The Chief Executive explained that the meeting was being audio-recorded. All recordings remained the copyright of the Broads Authority and anyone wishing to receive a copy of the recording should contact the Governance Team. The minutes remained the record of the meeting.

## 1. Appointment of Chair

Bill Dickson had been proposed by Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro and seconded by Nicky Talbot.

### **Bill Dickson was appointed Chair.**

Before handing over to the Chair, the Chief Executive asked if he could say a few words. He referred to the previous 18 months, which had been a very difficult time for the Authority, potentially facing a financial crisis, with the collapse of hire boat income. Officers had worked closely with the hire boat companies who had also faced major problems. Staff welfare had also been a high priority, and steps had been taken quickly to enable the majority of office-based staff to work from home. The difficulties had been exacerbated by the problems of Defra colleagues in getting clarity on the implications for use of the Broads waterways of the latest Government advice. He commended the staff for their hard work and adaptability. He also thanked the Chair for the huge amount of time he had devoted to the Authority, a fact that was not always apparent to other members. The Chair's advice and support to officers was greatly valued and it was important that this was recognised. The Chief Executive added that the Broads Authority was very fortunate with its membership and its Chair, in having a gifted set of members who made good decisions following thoughtful debates, and he thanked the members for giving up their time to the Authority, which was greatly appreciated.

Bill Dickson took the Chair.

## 2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

Matthew Bradbury had been proposed by Nicky Talbot and seconded by Bill Dickson.

**Matthew Bradbury was appointed Vice-Chair.**

### **3. Chair's announcements**

The Chair thanked his proposer and seconder, stating that he would do his utmost to fulfil the confidence which had been shown in him. He welcomed the three new members to the Authority (Nigel Brennan, Paul Hayden and Michael Scott) and also welcomed Stephen Bolt and Matthew Shardlow to their first "in person" meeting, having joined the Authority last year. The Chair referred to the recent site visit to Carlton Marshes and, in doing so, thanked Essie Guds for organising a very successful day. The visit had been a terrific opportunity for members and officers to talk to each other face to face after so much time of isolation. The project was a fantastic example of an integrated approach to management of the Broads and a perfect example of the Authority's three statutory purposes in action.

The Chair referred to the meeting agenda, which demonstrated how busy the Authority was, with projects such as Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) and peatland restoration, and the very tight timescales within which officers had to operate to deliver ambitious outcomes. This was all against a background of a flat cash settlement of National Park Grant. This all meant that the Authority needed to be even more agile and adaptable in the future. Two flagship projects were Water, Mills and Marshes and CANAPE – both wide ranging and complex programmes involving many partners. There were also a number of major issues facing the Authority, such as the development of the brownfield sites in east Norwich and the challenge of providing access by water to the centre of Norwich, safety on the water and the funds used to appoint additional Rangers and the video campaign, and finally the Landscapes Review. A consultation on the Government's proposals on this review was expected in August and would impact the future of all the National Parks and AONBs. All of these issues illustrated how the strategic steer of the organisation was all the more important.

Turning to the year ahead, the Chair referred to the unprecedented challenges and the importance of members' role in providing the strategic direction, and while not to interfere in the operational role of staff but to support them in the enormous pressures they faced. Formal meetings of the Authority would focus on decision making, with informal sessions being used for discussion groups and briefings, such as the successful tolls briefing in 2020, which it was proposed to repeat this year.

Finally, the Chair referred to the impact of Covid and how this had made things even more difficult but many services had been successfully delivered remotely, which was a testament of the excellent IT staff and the adaptability of all staff in general.

#### **Peter Cannell – volunteer**

The Chair welcomed Peter Cannell to the meeting, advising that the Authority wished to celebrate Peter's huge input into volunteering for the Broads Authority. Peter recently completed over 5,000 hours of volunteering, an incredible achievement.

Peter first joined the Ops Techs team as a volunteer back in autumn 2013. His regular supervisor, Ady Stevens, was first introduced to Peter at How Hill where the task was clearing

vegetation by hand around the bird hide on Reedham Water. This involved wading in muddy water and cutting and pulling dirty and often smelly reed rhizomes, not the most glamorous activity. The frequency of emptying out waders and wringing water out of sodden socks was high! Peter must have had a good time because he came back the following week and had now been with the Authority for the past 8 years.

Peter was not just known to his team as a volunteer, but had also become a colleague and a friend, sharing his wisdom, friendship and skills. He was as committed to the Broads Authority as a member of staff and his willingness to volunteer two days a week, and sometimes even three just to see the project through, had been remarkable and a huge help to the Ops Techs team. Peter can put his hand to anything, from brush-cutting a fen in the middle of nowhere to helping out constructing bridges, boardwalks and quay heading. Peter has also become a role model for volunteering at the Broads Authority, helping guide new volunteers and offer them support in their work.

The Chair gave Peter a massive thank you on behalf of the Authority, Lottie and Fiona in the Volunteer Service, but particularly from Ady Stevens, Peter's supervisor, and the whole of the Ops Techs team.

The Chief Executive presented Peter with some gifts.

Peter responded by saying that he was very appreciative. The past seven years had flown by and he had met some really nice people, many of whom were now friends. He had been to many new places not visited before, seen some great wildlife and learnt new skills. He had been a metal worker for 51 years and so his construction skills helped Ady and, in turn, he had learnt about marshes from Ady.

## 4. Apologies

**Apologies** were received from Tristram Hilborn, Leslie Mogford, Simon Roberts and Simon Sparrow.

## 5. Introduction of members and declarations of interest

The three new members introduced themselves, providing a brief synopsis of their background. Chris Bing also introduced himself to members as the Authority's new Monitoring Officer, having been appointed as Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer at East Suffolk Council.

Members indicated they had no further declarations of interest other than those already registered, and as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

## 6. Items of urgent business

The Chair referred to an item of urgent business, which he had agreed be included for discussion at this meeting. This would be taken at item 22 below.

## 7. Public question time

No public questions had been received.

## 8. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2021 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman.

## 9. Summary of actions and outstanding issues

Members received the latest summary of actions and outstanding issues following decisions at previous meetings. In addition, the Chief Executive reported that whilst the consultation on the Secretary of State's view on taking forward the Landscapes Review was due in August, it was likely this would be delayed. Members would be invited to a briefing to review the response in detail, in advance of the full Authority meeting. A member welcomed the National Parks' statement in response to the Secretary of State's statement, which he considered to be a strong endorsement of the Landscapes Review.

In response to a question on the status of the collaboration work with Norfolk County Council and whether this could be marked as "completed", the Chief Executive advised that work was going remarkably well and there was lots of partnership working, such as with the Norfolk and Suffolk Nature Recovery Partnership. He would discuss with officers the status of the item on the Summary of Actions, taking into account the fact that the work was continually ongoing.

**The report was noted.**

## 10. Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)

The Chief Executive introduced the report, which provided an update on the new Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme and sought the necessary delegations to administer the funding. He drew particular attention to some key points: the relatively small amount of money involved, Defra had a very prescriptive scoring system for assessing the grant applications, and it involved a very short timescale. There were three distinct elements: firstly, the partnership delivery with the Norfolk Coast AONB was a very positive thing and provided the first opportunity to work together; secondly, unlike some National Parks, the Authority would be using its existing network of partners to deliver the advisory system for farmers; and thirdly, the Test and Trials work on the Environment Land Management (ELM) scheme provided an excellent head start, enabling use of existing arrangements with farmers and other partners for the assessment panel, referred to locally as the Land Management Board (LMB).

A member referred to the amount of funding available and the fact that this could easily be taken up by a small number of applications for large amounts, meaning that the fund would soon be taken up. He suggested that the Board be advised to keep aside a sum of money for a period, such as up to Christmas, to enable farmers of small enterprises to make applications and benefit from the scheme. The Chief Executive concurred, stating that the maximum grant

level set by Defra was £250,000 and this could result in all of the fund potentially being used up on a single grant. For that reason, the maximum grant level for the Authority had been set at £75,000, following consultation with the LMB. The Environment Policy Officer added that, along the Norfolk coast, there had been a lot of interest from the big estates but this was not the experience within the Authority's area. A total of 24 applicants had submitted an expression of interest for suitable projects, ranging from £5,000 up to big capital or infrastructure projects seeking funding for 40% of the total project cost. Small farmers were being encouraged to submit their applications quickly, including via groups such as the Norfolk Mink Management Initiative who work with farmers, landowners and gamekeepers. At this stage, it was looking likely that there would be less take-up in year one. More complicated projects, such as those in the wetlands or which required planning permission or a feasibility study first, could be considered for funding in years 2 and 3.

A member questioned why the three bodies had been chosen to be on the panel (Norfolk Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), RSPB and Norfolk Rivers Trust) and what the Authority's relationship with them was like, recognising that a procurement deadline had to be met. The Chief Executive responded that they were three bodies the Authority currently worked with and had a good relationship with. For example, the RSPB had been given a grant under the Water, Mills and Marshes scheme to provide agricultural advice. The decision had been made early on with the NFU to use existing resources rather than employ new staff to be additional people engaging with farmers. Between the three bodies they all provided different expertise and applicants would be directed to the most appropriate body.

In response to a question on Defra's intention for the decision-making process, the Chief Executive advised that any grants over £5,000 required a 'local assessment panel' to make the decision. He added that a minor adjustment had been made to the process as the Board sought an assurance so that the Authority would be implementing its decisions. This was considered to be advantageous as the Authority was the Accountable Body and it would not want to put any individuals at risk, through any decisions made via the assessment Board. The Authority would implement decisions made by the LMB. The constituent members of the Board were prescribed by Defra and had to include farming representatives, etc some of whom were not familiar with governance arrangements. It was highly unlikely that the Board would make a decision on a grant that the Authority would not implement. Due to the short timescales, it had been necessary to draw up the governance arrangements very quickly and these would be reviewed based on experience in the first year. The Environment Policy Officer added that Defra had good supporting mechanisms in place and once the LMB had gone through the process a number of times, they would gain confidence.

A member commended officers on a pragmatic and rapid response to the programme. He queried if there would be the possibility of leverage going forward, to be used on match funding for bigger projects or married with other funds/grants from government which the Authority could lobby for. The Environment Policy Officer responded that expressions of interest had been received to form two formal collaborative working groups of farmers across a much larger area, not just within the Broads area, which extended to the Norfolk Coast AONB and Suffolk Coast AONB.

In response to a question on the size of the fund and the costs of administering it, and the potential for these costs to become disproportionate, the Chief Executive referred to paragraph 3.1 of the report, which detailed the figures for how much of the grant could be used on administration (circa 10%). The ambition was not to spend as much as that, with the potential for one staff member also providing the administrative service for the Norfolk Coast ANOB so those costs would be shared, which would result in less admin costs and more available grant, through having one assessment Board for the two areas.

Tim Jickells proposed, seconded by Stephen Bolt, and

**It was resolved unanimously to**

- (i) note the progress in the delivery of the FiPL programme, and in particular the agreement to work in collaboration with the Norfolk Coast AONB;**
- (ii) approve the delegations to officers and establishment of a Local Assessment Panel; namely that the Chief Executive will be responsible for making decisions on grant applications below £5,000 and the Local Assessment Panel will make recommendations on grant applications above £5,000 for implementation by the Authority and**
- (iii) approve the appointment of Norfolk FWAG, the RSPB and Norfolk Rivers Trust as deliverers of advice on FiPL to farmers and land managers.**

## **11. Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 and Code of Corporate Governance 2021**

Members received the report of the Head of Governance on the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21 and the Code of Corporate Government for 2021 which demonstrated how the Authority was complying with the principles of good governance, including internal control systems and risk management. It was noted that, at its meeting on 20 July 2021, the Audit and Risk Committee had recommended these documents for approval by the Authority.

Andrée Gee proposed, seconded by Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro, and

**It was resolved unanimously to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 and to note, subject to the implementation of improvements identified in the action plan, that the Authority's systems of governance and internal control were considered to be adequate and effective.**

## **12. Draft Statement of Accounts 2020/21**

The Authority received the report of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), which provided an update on the Broad's Authority Statement of Accounts and its audit for the year ended 31 March 2021. These had also been presented to the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting on 20 July 2021. The CFO advised that the audit had now commenced and was due to be completed in two weeks. The audit on the Pension Fund was almost complete and the

figures were likely to be amended, potentially resulting in a reduced liability for the Authority. This meant that the Statement of Accounts would change by the time it was presented to the Authority in September, once confirmation had been received.

A member referred to the discussion at the Audit and Risk Committee on the huge increase in costs to the Authority for the auditor's fees (£67,000 in total for 2019/20 and 2020/21) and asked the Authority to note this and the potential liability. The CFO responded that this increase in fees affected not just the Broads Authority but all local authorities. However, Ernst & Young, who were the auditors for the Authority and other National Parks, were making the largest increase. She had contacted the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) to dispute the fees, as had the other National Parks, and a decision was awaited. This year saw a similar increase in fees as 2019/20 and Defra had been in contact with the PSAA and the Authority was on the list of bodies awaiting reconsideration. In response to a question on whether the Broads Authority could find an alternative auditor, the CFO advised that unfortunately, the Authority had opted into a national scheme along with 98% of English local authorities, as they had been told there would be economies of scale by bidding altogether. A report would be presented to the Authority later this year as a decision was required on opting back into the scheme.

**The report was noted.**

### 13. Strategic direction update

The Chief Executive (CE) presented the report on the latest progress in implementing the Authority's annual strategic priorities and starting the process for considering next year's priorities, as well as presenting a draft timetable for the Broads Plan review. He emphasised that it was important for members to look at new strategic priorities early on so they could be taken into account as part of the budget setting process. Members' views were invited on how they wished to participate in this process.

In response to a member request, the CE provided an update on safety issues, stating that he was pleased that members had taken the decision early on to fund the additional Rangers and safety videos, both of which had proven to be essential. He referred to the national campaign, "Respect the Water" and also the significant concerns in terms of visitors to the coast and inland rivers and lakes.

Members agreed that the best format for discussing the strategic objectives would be for a specific workshop session, to enable a full and in-depth discussion on the future priorities.

In response to a question on progress with the traffic light system for hire boat operators, the Director of Operations (DoO) advised that work had commenced, but this had been delayed due to a new draft Code which was impacting on a lot of the licensing work. Also, careful consideration needed to be given to the criteria to be applied to the system. In addition, Covid issues were still taking up a lot of the Head of Safety Management's time but it was hoped to present a report on progress, together with the review of the licensing system as a whole, at a future meeting of the Authority.

Regarding the safety videos, the DoO advised that these had been well received and officers were very proud that they were successful. In response to an update on the survey results of hirers, the DoO commented that Rangers were asking people to complete the questionnaires on the boat handover arrangements, etc and the results so far were favourable, with some positive responses and people saying they felt confident. Once sufficient data had been received, this would be shared with members.

**The report was noted.**

## **14. Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report – endorsing technical consultation**

Members received the report of the Planning Policy Officer, on the preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report, which was one of the first tasks in producing the Local Plan for the Broads. It set out the framework for assessing policy approaches as the Local Plan progressed and also the framework for assessing strategic objectives in the Broads Plan, which was under review in 2021/22. It was noted that the Planning Committee had made some observations on the SA Scoping Report, at its meeting on 18 June 2021, and these had been addressed by officers as detailed in the report.

A member referred to the potential risks for sustainability which could arise through lack of knowledge, such as the frequency of Natural England monitoring protected sites would impact the available data. He felt that the document should include the risks and the need for regular and adequate data to be available in order to make judgements on the condition of habitats and species. The Environment Policy Officer concurred that accurate data was essential but acknowledged that it would be difficult to keep within the Authority's boundary. It was accepted that more regular reviews needed to be carried out, recognising gaps in knowledge and working well with partners. The last biodiversity audit had taken place in 2013 and this needed to be reviewed more regularly. There were 66 species critical to the Broads, mainly invertebrates, often with no common name and very little known about them.

Nicky Talbot proposed, seconded by Harry Blathwayt and

**It was resolved unanimously to approve the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for technical consultation.**

## **15. Residential Moorings Guide for adoption**

Members received the report of the Planning Policy Officer, which proposed the adoption of the Residential Moorings Guide, to help implement the policies of the adopted Local Plan for the Broads relating to residential moorings and make schemes as successful as possible. The Guide had been the subject of two rounds of public consultation in 2020 and it was noted that, at its meeting on 21 May 2021, the Planning Committee had recommended the Authority adopt the Guide.

Gail Harris proposed, seconded by Stephen Bolt, and

**It was resolved unanimously to adopt the amended Residential Moorings Guide.**

## **16. Marketing and Viability Guide – approval of draft for consultation**

Members received the report of the Planning Policy Officer, on a draft version of the Marketing and Viability Guide for consultation purposes. The Guide had been the subject of two rounds of public consultation in 2019 and 2020, but the Covid restrictions had limited movement and public access to venues, and a further consultation period was proposed. It was noted that, at its meeting on 21 May 2021, the Planning Committee had recommended the Guide be approved by the Authority for consultation purposes,.

Tim Jickells proposed, seconded by Andree Gée and

**It was resolved unanimously to endorse the draft Marketing and Viability Guide for final consultation.**

## **17. Code of Conduct and declaration of interests**

The Monitoring Officer (MO) presented his report which provided members with the external legal advice on Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) in relation to the setting of navigation charges (as requested at the meeting on 20 November 2020). The report also introduced a draft revised Member Code of Conduct, based on the Local Government Association's new Model Code of Councillor Conduct, together with a revised Register of Interests form. It was noted that the Audit and Risk Committee, at its meeting on 20 July 2021, had recommended that the Authority adopt the revised Code and form.

It was noted that the external advice concurred with the then MO's view as to the existence of DPIs in the setting of navigation charges for the three members who were directors / operators of private hire and leisure boat companies and that they should not participate in that item. Furthermore, a dispensation would not be "otherwise appropriate" under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.

The existing Code had last been revised in 2018 and a number of deficiencies had been highlighted, such as inclusion on the use of social media. In terms of the revised Code, this was very similar in principle to the existing Code but the terminology had been updated to better reflect the Localism Act, particularly in terms of the categories of interest (Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, other registerable interest and non-registerable interest). It was suggested in the report that the new Code include the existing provision regarding the setting of tolls by boat owners (paragraph 3.10 in the current Code), which enabled a member owning a boat and paying a toll (outside of a business) to attend and vote on matters concerning the setting of tolls, as well as the existing provisions to allow members to debate members' allowances, payment of indemnities and matters relating to schools.

A member referred to the appointment of members as Trustees to other organisations and in particular, how their first responsibility was as a Trustee and not as a Broads Authority

member. The MO referred to table A (table 1) in the model Code relating to pecuniary interests and table B (table 2) relating to other registerable interests; the Authority's Register of Interest form had been amended accordingly, and members would be required to register such appointments under the latter category, which would assist with openness and transparency.

A member thanked both the current and former MOs for clarifying the particular issue of members having a DPI, and for making it understandable so members were totally clear on when they should or should not be participating at relevant meetings.

A member commented that a primary function of the Authority was to set tolls and the Authority was made up of members with different interests, knowledge, skills and experience. Furthermore, there was a range of tolls, not just those for hire boat operators. Whilst he could not disagree with the advice, in that it was clear hire boat operators had a DPI, he considered that private boat owners must also have a DPI and that they must feel even more passionately about the tolls and other fees etc than a hire boat operator would. It would be appropriate for all members to be allowed to debate the issue of the setting of tolls and that members should be trusted to act in the interests of the Broads and not just for themselves. The Chief Executive responded that the legal advice was very clear. He had subsequently discussed with the MO the importance of having access to the views of both private boat owners and hire boat operators, and it had been determined there were two opportunities for members to get involved. Firstly, the tolls briefing session to which all members would be invited and secondly, the Navigation Committee. As the latter was a non-decision-making body, the members of that committee who were hire boat operators, and who still would have a DPI, could be granted a dispensation by the MO. However, this would not be appropriate at the full Authority meeting when the decision on the tolls would be taken, as the DPI would clearly be applicable.

Nicky Talbot proposed, seconded by Matthew Bradbury, and

**It was resolved by 16 members for and one abstention, to**

- (i) note the external legal advice provided by Mr Jonathan Goolden on Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in relating to the setting of navigation charges and that his advice will be followed in future years;**
- (ii) adopt the Member Code of Conduct for Authority members, based on the LGA's new Model Code of Councillor Conduct (as amended to retain paragraph 3.10 of the existing Code) (Appendix 1 of the report) and**
- (iii) adopt the Register of Interests' form for members (Appendix 3 of the report).**

## **18. Appointment of members to committees and other bodies**

Members received the report of the Head of Governance on the proposals for member appointments to committees and other bodies for the year 2021/22, following expressions of interest by members and a review by the Chairs' Group. The Group had taken into

consideration the need for an appropriate balance of local authority and Secretary of State appointees, together with a sufficient number of members, on each committee and outside body and to minimise potential conflicts of interest.

It was noted that the Planning Committee currently appointed the Heritage Asset Review Group (HARG) from its own membership but it had been proposed by the Chairs' Group that these sessions were extended to all members to enable the whole Authority to be informed and engaged in cultural heritage matters.

In terms of the consultation process for the setting of tolls, members acknowledged that, in the past, a Tolls Reference Group had been appointed specifically for this purpose. However, in light of the impact of Covid-19 on toll income and the local tourism industry in 2020/21, and to provide context for setting the following year's charges, all members (including co-opted members) had been invited to a briefing session in October 2020. This had proved to be successful as it gave all members an opportunity to offer views and guidance to officers for the reports to both the Navigation Committee and full Authority. Therefore, the Chairs' Group was proposing this approach be replicated in the future, replacing the need to appoint a Tolls Reference Group. A member disagreed with this approach, commenting that he felt it to be a retrograde step not to have a Tolls Reference Group, preferring to see a group of six people representing private boat owners and hire boat operators, and that all members did not need to get involved in that level of decision making. The Chair responded that it was more democratic to open up the discussion to a wider group of members and that the group had originally been set up to deal with the very complex issue of the restructure of the tolls. The Chair of the Navigation Committee endorsed these comments, adding that she considered it to be a step forward by having all members involved, rather than limited to a small, specific group with particular interests.

In response to a question on the status of the appointment of members to the Whitlingham Charitable Trust, the Chief Executive confirmed that the Authority was still a member of the Trust and he represented the Authority at the AGM with the Colman family. The Authority had the ability to appoint three members as Trustees and it was proposed that a conversation should be had with the Colman family to clarify the terms of engagement, the benefits of the partnership and members being Trustees, following which the Authority would be asked to appoint three Trustees. It was important to remember that once appointed as a Trustee, a member had to act in the best interests of the charity and not as a Broads Authority representative.

Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro proposed, seconded by Nicky Talbot, and

**It was resolved unanimously to confirm the Broads Authority member appointments for the year 2021/22 (until the Annual Meeting on 15 July 2022) as set out in Appendix 2 to these Minutes to:**

- (i) the Audit and Risk Committee; Navigation Committee, Planning Committee, Broads Local Access Forum and Hearings Committee (table 1); and**
- (ii) outside bodies (table 2).**

## 19. Broads Local Access Forum Annual Report

Members received the report of the Waterways and Recreation Officer on the Broads Local Access Forum Annual Report for 2020/21.

**The report was noted.**

## 20. 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.

## 21. Minutes to be received

Members received the minutes of the following meetings:

Navigation Committee – 14 January 2021

Broads Local Access Forum – 10 March 2021

Navigation Committee – 15 April 2021

Planning Committee – 23 April 2021

Planning Committee – 21 May 2021

## 22. Other items of business

In accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair approved that the following item be considered as a matter of urgent business on the grounds that a member decision was required before the next scheduled meeting of the Authority and it involved the potential for significant grant-funding.

### **Nature for Climate Peatlands Discovery Grant**

The Chief Executive presented the report on the Government's Nature for Climate Peatlands Discovery Grant Scheme, the aim of which was to support the development of peatland restoration partnerships and projects. The scheme had only been published on 7 July with a closing date for applications of 1 September 2021. He thanked the Environment Policy Officer and Director of Strategic Services for producing the report within a very limited timescale, thereby enabling members to decide on whether the Authority should participate in the scheme.

It was noted that scheme was an opportunity to contribute to multiple Broads Plan objectives and would enable the Authority to further the outcomes from the CANAPE project to deliver additional peatland restorations. Some projects would be delivered by partners and the Broads Authority would deliver peatland restoration at Buttle Marsh and How Hill. Applicants could apply for up to 100% of funds for a Discovery Grant project and the indicative amount for the total value of the partnership's activities was estimated to be between £250,000 and £400,000, with the Broads Authority's part estimated at £150,000. To enhance the value for money assessment of the bid, it was proposed to include a match funding cash contribution of £10,000 from the Broads Authority.

In response to a question on whether there was sufficient land available to do this, the Environment Policy Officer advised that landowners were interested in carbon, looking at private finance but recognised that it needed to have investment. The Authority was working with Palladium to develop a first-time model for lowland peatland investment, working with a big Investment Readiness Fund (IRF) with Aberdeen University. It was important for farmers to interact with the private finance market, which could be very confusing. If the bid was successful, it would provide access to public funding for climate mitigation through land management. One million tonnes of carbon were being released from the marshes in the Broads over the last 40 years and that had not changed but there was huge potential to lock and to build carbon in the soils. It took a thousand years to deliver one metre of peat in the uplands but only 370 years in lowlands such as the Broads. This was new evidence from the work pre-CANAPE with PhD students working in the Broads, and this needed to be used in the decision making frameworks and investment models to ensure IUCN who developed the Peatland Code get it right for the lowlands, where it was costly to make changes to water, infrastructure and existing farm business. Farmers need to be incentivised. This could only be done by blending with private finance. There were seven partners and NGOs, BA and Natural England all co-financing the bid for development; and four private landowners, some of whom were large and influential. It was all about demonstrating success, taking ourselves a step further forward with an entrepreneurial approach to demonstrate feasibility to capturing carbon in lowland landscapes. However, there was no commitment from the landowners to commit to restoration and do the changes as a result of having this first stage recovery but it would put them in a good place, should they want to. Water Resources East and the Broadland Futures Initiative would be linked into this bid.

A member expressed his support for the application but acknowledged the capacity issues referred to earlier. The Authority had to get used to these short-term opportunities as they arose and decide which ones were relevant to the Authority's plans.

Matthew Bradbury proposed, seconded by Stephen Bolt, and

**It was resolved unanimously to submit a partnership application by 1 September 2021 to the Nature for Climate Discovery Grant, with the Broads Authority as the lead partner.**

## 23. Formal questions

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

## 24. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Friday 24 September 2021 at 10.00am.

## 25. Exclusion of the public

Melanie Vigo di Gallodoro proposed, seconded by Harry Blathwayt, and

**It was resolved by 10 votes for, 3 against and 4 abstentions**

to exclude the public from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for the consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, as amended by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public benefit in disclosing the information.

There were no members of the public present and the recording was suspended.

## Summary of Exempt Minutes

### 26. Exempt minutes of the Navigation Committee meeting on 16 January 2020

Members received the exempt minutes of the Navigation Committee meeting held on 16 January 2020.

The meeting ended at 12:40pm

Signed by

Chairman

### Appendix 1 – Declaration of interests: Broads Authority, 23 July 2021

Member	Agenda/minute	Nature of interest
James Knight	17	One of the three members referred to in the report with a DPI relating to the setting of navigation charges

## Appendix 2 – Appointments to committees and other bodies

**Table 1**

Member appointments to committees

Committee	Members
<p><b>Audit and Risk Committee</b> At least 6 BA members, to include Chairs of BA and Navigation Committee</p>	<p>Chair of Broads Authority (Bill Dickson) Chair of Navigation Committee (Nicky Talbot) Matthew Bradbury Gail Harris Paul Hayden Tristram Hilborn Greg Munford Simon Roberts Michael Scott Matthew Shardlow Fran Whymark</p>
<p><b>Navigation Committee</b> 5 BA members and 8 co-opted members</p>	<p><b>BA members</b> Harry Blathwayt Stephen Bolt Matthew Bradbury Leslie Mogford Greg Munford</p> <p><b>Co-opted members</b> John Ash Linda Aspland Mike Barnes Andy Hamilton Simon Sparrow Nicky Talbot Paul Thomas Alan Thomson</p>
<p><b>Planning Committee</b> At least 11 BA members</p>	<p>Harry Blathwayt Stephen Bolt Nigel Brennan Bill Dickson Andrée Gee Gail Harris Paul Hayden Tim Jickells James Knight Leslie Mogford</p>

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Members</b>
	Michael Scott Vic Thomson Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro Fran Whymark
<b>Broads Local Access Forum</b> 2 BA members	Harry Blathwayt Michael Scott
<b>Hearings Committee</b> (Chair of Audit and Risk Committee plus pool of 6 BA members)	Chair of Audit & Risk Committee Bill Dickson Gail Harris Greg Munford Simon Roberts Nicky Talbot Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro

**Table 2**

Member appointments to outside bodies

<b>Outside body</b>	<b>Recommended appointments</b>
BFI Elected Members Forum	Matthew Bradbury Matthew Shardlow (reserve)
How Hill Trust	Tim Jickells
Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Charitable Trust	Paul Hayden Simon Roberts
Whitlingham Charitable Trust	In abeyance
Broads Tourism	Paul Hayden
Upper Thurne Working Group	Harry Blathwayt