

Broads Authority

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2025

Contents

1.	Welcome and apologies	3
	Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014	3
	Apologies	3
2.	Appointment of Chair	3
3.	Appointment of Vice-Chair to the Broads Authority	3
4.	Chairman's announcements	3
5.	Introduction of members and declarations of interest	4
6.	Items of urgent business	4
7.	Public question time	4
8.	Minutes of last meeting	4
9.	Summary of actions and outstanding issues	5
10.	Strategic priorities – update	5
11.	Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 and Code of Corporate Governance 2025	6
12.	Draft Statement of Accounts 2024/25	6
13.	Endorsing the Local Plan for Consultation	8
14.	Adopting/making the Carlton Colville Neighbourhood Plan	9
15.	Adopting/making the Postwick with Witton Neighbourhood Plan	9
16.	Endorsing the updated Norfolk Strategy Planning Framework	10
17.	Risk Management Policy	10
18.	Update on the progress of the response to the grant settlement	11
19.	National Park Capital Programme 2025/26	12
20.	Appointment of Chief Executive	13
21.	Appointment of a Monitoring Officer	14
22.	Committee membership and member appointments 2025/26	15

23. Items of business raised by the Designated Person in respect of the Port Marine Safety Code 16	
24. Broads Local Access Forum Annual Report 2024/25	16
25. Report on outside bodies – Whitlingham Charitable Trust 2024/25	17
26. Minutes to be received	17
27. Other items of business	17
28. Formal questions	18
29. Date of next meeting	18
30. Exclusion of the public	18
31. Exempt minutes of last meeting	18
32. Purchase of land - update	18

Present

Harry Blathwayt – in the Chair, Peter Dixon, Andrée Gee, Alan Goodchild, Tony Grayling, James Harvey, Martyn Hooton, Tim Jickells, Siân Limpenny, Gurpreet Padda, Matthew Shardlow, Vic Thomson, Fran Whymark.

In attendance

John Packman – Chief Executive, Natalie Beal – Planning Policy Officer (items 13 – 16), Emma Krelle – Director of Finance, Rob Rogers – Director of Operations, Lorraine Taylor – Governance Officer, and Marie-Pierre Tighe – Director of Strategic Services.

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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 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 Stephen Bolt and Tristram Hilborn

2. Appointment of Chair

Harry Blathwayt was proposed by Siân Limpenny and seconded by Tim Jickells.

There being no other nominations Harry Blathwayt was appointed Chair of the Authority for the forthcoming year 2025/26.

Harry Blathwayt took the Chair.

The Chair thanked the Members.

3. Appointment of Vice-Chair to the Broads Authority

Tristram Hilborn was proposed by Siân Limpenny, seconded by Tony Grayling.

There being no other nominations Tristram Hilborn was appointed Vice-Chair of the Authority for the forthcoming year 2025/26.

4. Chairman's announcements

Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro

The Chair said that he had hoped that Melanie would be at the meeting, but sadly she was unable to attend. Everything that Melanie had done for the Broads Authority, and it had been

a lot, had been done with love. Her kindness had shone through in everything she did. The Chair said that he was very lucky to have followed her as Chair of HARG and he learned then that he was not close to being as effective or efficient. He then followed her as the Chair of the Planning Committee and again he learned what a great job Melanie had done. The Chair said that he would miss Melanie terribly and he thanked Suffolk County Council for having Melanie as their representative on the Broads Authority.

James Reeder

The Chair welcomed James Reeder to the Broads Authority as the Suffolk County Council appointee.

James said that Melanie, as everyone knew, had a tremendous passion for the Broads Authority and was delighted to be a member. Today, he should be at a Suffolk County Council meeting, but the Broads Authority would always take precedence for Melanie and would for himself where possible. He thanked the Chair for his words for Melanie and he would pass them back.

Marie-Pierre Tighe

The Chair said that the Authority was saying 'Au revoir' to Marie-Pierre who was sadly leaving the Authority after eight years for pastures new. The Chair presented Marie-Pierre with some flowers with thanks and said that he would miss her greatly. Marie-Pierre had led the work on the Broads Future Initiative which was probably the most important item of business in Broadland and without Marie-Pierre it would not have progressed in these very thick, muddy waters as it had, with her clarity of thought which had been exemplary and for that, the Chair would miss her terribly.

A Member said that he was on the interview panel when Marie-Pierre was appointed. The panel knew then that she would be a wonderful member of the team and she had been and added that it had been an absolute pleasure to work with her. The Member said that she had done a great job for the Authority and thanked her.

5. Introduction of members and declarations of interest

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

6. Items of urgent business

There were no items of urgent business.

7. Public question time

No public questions had been received.

8. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 09 May 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

9. Summary of actions and outstanding issues

Members received the latest summary of actions and outstanding issues following decisions at previous meetings.

The report was noted.

10. Strategic priorities – update

Members received the report of the Head of Governance. The Chief Executive (CE) said that all priorities were on track.

A Member said that previously they had talked about access for disadvantaged groups which was always an issue for National Parks and asked whether there were any plans for reaching out to such groups. The CE said that at Hoveton Riverside Park the electric boat, the Ra, was able to take wheelchairs and the Authority had been updating the boardwalks which was an important part of providing access.

The Director of Operations (DO) said that the Authority had got some money from Defra for Access for All and the improvements to Hoveton Riverside Park was completed in the first tranche and was now looking at what work could be done within the second tranche.

A Member said that he thought of access for all not just in terms of physical disability, but for the socio-economic disadvantaged as well and thought the Authority should think about those issues alongside the good work that had already been carried out on physical access. The CE said that the Authority's Education Officer had done some good work with more deprived schools in Norfolk and Suffolk and it was something that the Authority was very conscious of and was trying to achieve within the resources available.

The Member said that from Norfolk County Council's point of view there was a lot going on with access for all including the Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy as well as the footpath trails. The Chair said that the Norfolk Coast National Landscape, with assistance from Norfolk County Council, had done a lot of good work on that and suggested that the Authority liaised with them to see if there was a way they could work together.

A Member said that there had been money available from the National Parks Foundation for access issues across all National Parks and asked if the Authority had been successful in getting any of this money, and if not the Authority should try again as there was still some funding left. The CE noted that.

A Member asked whether Members would be invited to attend the partnership workshops as detailed in strategic priority 4, 'Bring significant external funding to deliver Broads Plan objectives'. The CE said that it had not got to the planning stage of this yet, however, members would be very welcome.

The report was noted.

11. Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 and Code of Corporate Governance 2025

Members received the report of the Head of Governance. The Director of Finance (DF) said that the report was the annual review of the governance arrangements of the Authority and was a key document which was linked to the Draft Statement of Accounts and was reviewed by external auditors. If Members approved the Annual Governance Statement, the link in the Draft Statement of Accounts would be updated.

The Head of Internal Audit's Annual Opinion formed part of the review which was set out on page 44 of the papers. The opinion was 'reasonable' which was good. Appendix 1(a) of the report sets out the improvements for 2025/26 and Appendix 1(b) provided an update against targets for 2024/25.

The Risk, Audit and Governance Committee reviewed the Annual Governance Statement at its meeting on 23 July and had no further amendments to recommend to the Board.

Tony Grayling proposed, seconded by Andrée Gee.

It was resolved unanimously to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 and note that the Authority's systems of governance and internal control were considered to be adequate and effective.

12. Draft Statement of Accounts 2024/25

Members received the report of the Director of Finance (DF). The DF said that report provided an update on the Draft Statement of Accounts and audit. The most significant change to the Statement of Accounts from last year was IFRS16, an International Financial Reporting Standard related to leases. This was a significant change compared to the 2023/24 accounts as it was now a requirement to recognise on the balance sheet the Authority's right to use an asset, but also the liability associated with lease payments for future years. In addition, peppercorn leases that had not previously been recognised on the balance sheet were now included. Members would see that within the comprehensive income and expenditure statement, in order to get them on the balance sheet, they were treated as a donated asset.

Since the last report to Members in May, the surplus had increased due to the accounting treatment of the Yare House rent. Under the old lease the Authority received a rent-free period which was accounted for over the lifetime of the lease and this ended in 2024. This released some money back into the income and expenditure statement as set out in paragraph 1.1 of the report.

Table 1 of the report showed the final outturn of £585,000 surplus across the Directorates at summary level. Table 2 provided the year-end adjustments and table 3 detailed what areas those adjustments fell in. The second column of table 3 there was an adjustment of £341,000 which was made up of pension adjustments that was carried out as a result of receiving the report of -£38,000 and £379,000 capital depreciation and revaluations. Members were referred to column 3 and the adjustments of £3,476,000 which moved interest and the grant

income out of cost of services line to the taxation and financing lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. £517,000 was the transfer of capital items to the balance sheet including debt repayment.

The external auditors, EY, attended the Risk, Audit and Governance (RAG) Committee on 23 July and the audit had started. If there were no problems, EY hoped to sign off the Statement of Accounts at the November RAG meeting. Also discussed at the RAG meeting was the possibility of moving from a disclaimed opinion to a modified opinion if they were able to rebuild some of the opening balances that they did not have an assurance about because there was no audit for 2022/23. The audit results, which would go to RAG in November would highlight any findings and what steps had been taken to help rebuild their assurances on balances that they had not been able to audit in the past.

The DF said that the Draft Statement of Accounts might change when the final version was produced and probably the biggest figure that might change would be pension figures as the pension fund was also being audited at the same time. When the Authority's figures were included in the accounts draft assumptions were made around the March contributions, however, by time they issued the final report, they would have these confirmed.

A Member said that the Authority should hold EY to account in terms of getting sign-off in November and push hard to get the situation on the disclaimed opinion rectified. The DF said that the backstop legislation included a deadline for getting 2024/25 Statement of Accounts signed off by 27 February 2026, so the fact that they were working towards November was positive. The DF said that there was one caveat in that this would be the first time IFRS16/IFRS16 had been adopted in the accounts so no doubt EY would want to do some really detailed work about how that had been interpreted.

The Chief Executive (CE) said that at the RAG meeting, EY made the point that the Broads Authority was in a much better position than many local authorities and this was one of the reasons why they were able to push ahead and why they thought they would be able to get the Authority out of a disclaimed opinion to a modified opinion.

A Member commented that the change in the pension valuation was enormous and asked why it had changed so much since the last time. The DF said that the figures in the accounts was the assessment at a point in time. A lot depended on what was going on in the world along with other factors and historically it had gone from liability to asset every other year. This did not change the Authority's contributions. However, as part of EY's audit, this figure might change which was why the DF highlighted that there was a risk that the draft figures would change. The DF said that the pension fund was valued every three years and it had just had its valuation and they were now in the process of finalising the results, but it did look positive. Assets had performed better over the last three years which hopefully meant that a lot of local authorities would see their contribution rates drop from the three years from 2026/27.

Report was noted.

13. Endorsing the Local Plan for Consultation

Members received the report of the Planning Policy Officer (PPO). The PPO provided an overview of the report and said that this was the third and final stage of consultation before the Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspector for examination. The Local Plan was meant to come to Broads Authority in November 2024, but the Government released a new NPPF. Since that time, updates had been made to reflect, for example, the Environment Agency's update to flood risk data and air quality information from Defra.

Included within the paper was the Habitat Regulations Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal which was reflected in the Local Plan.

The aim was to run the consultation for nine weeks rather than the six-week minimum to reflect that it would run over the school holidays and would hold three drop-in sessions during September.

The Chair of the Planning Committee said that this was a big and important document and would decide how planning applications were handled over the next five years. It had been produced in a time of flux for central government and added that time was key as the Authority was trying to submit the Local Plan within the deadline under previous rules and if this was not achieved, the Local Plan would need to be rewritten to meet new requirements – it would not change the content, but would mean a change to the layout and how it is produced. He added that he hoped that Members would be able to approve the document for consultation as well as the fallback position of delegating authority as detailed in the recommendation. For those not on the Planning Committee he could assure Members that this document had been looked at with some skill and in depth over the last two years. He thanked the PPO for her hard work on the document and how she had brought to the Planning Committee in bite-sized pieces which enabled debate in considerable detail.

A Member said that when any new Mayor was appointed, they would have strategic authority over planning. A Member replied that although this was true, the Authority's Local Plan would exist and any Mayor would have to work with it.

The Chair thanked the PPO and the Planning Team for all the work that had gone into producing the Local Plan. The Chair also thanked every Member of the Planning Committee who worked on this with commendable concentration, the meetings were not short and added that he was in awe of everybody's contributions.

Tim Jickells proposed, seconded by Alan Goodchild.

It was resolved unanimously to endorse:

- a) The Local Plan, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment for public consultation;**
- b) The proposed approach to consultation;**
- c) Any minor changes or amendments be delegated to the Head of Planning and Director of Delivery; and**

- d) **The fallback position, if required, of delegating authority for submitting the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of Broads Authority and Chair of Planning Committee.**

14. Adopting/making the Carlton Colville Neighbourhood Plan

Members received the report of the Planning Policy Officer (PPO). The PPO said that this had been through its various stages, however, this was slightly different from other Neighbourhood Plans as the Neighbourhood Planning Group, East Suffolk Council and the Broads Authority were not entirely happy with the Examiner's proposed changes and there was due process if that happened. It was therefore consulted again within the confines of the regulations and the relevant parties were now happy. The PPO said that the Planning Committee endorsed the Plan at its meeting in May.

Andrée Gee proposed, seconded by James Reeder.

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

15. Adopting/making the Postwick with Witton Neighbourhood Plan

Members received the report of the Planning Policy Officer (PPO). The PPO said that the Plan had not been to referendum at the time of the Broads Authority meeting. This was because the Neighbourhood Planning Group would like the Plan to be adopted as soon as possible so that they could benefit from the uplift in the Community Infrastructure Levy because there was a large development planned for the Parish. The referendum was to be held later August 2025. The PPO had worked with the Head of Governance to bring a recommendation to the Members that they adopt/make the Plan subject to the Plan passing a referendum. A report was considered by the Planning Committee on 18 July and it recommended that the Broads Authority make/adopt the Plan. Members from Broadland Council added that the evening before this Broads Authority meeting, the Council had made/adopted the Plan also subject to the referendum result.

Fran Whymark proposed, seconded by James Harvey.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- **Adopt/make the Postwick with Witton Neighbourhood Plan.**
- **Note that the adopting/making of the plan was subject to the Parish Council Referendum and Broadland and South Norfolk Councils adopting/making the Plan.**
- **Delegate any final changes to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee prior to publishing.**

16. Endorsing the updated Norfolk Strategy Planning Framework

Members received the report of the Planning Policy Officer (PPO). The PPO said that this was version four of the Norfolk Strategy Planning Framework and added that this was an important document for the Broads Authority and across the whole of Norfolk as it sets out how local planning authorities in Norfolk co-operate on strategy, cross-boundary issues.

The PPO referred Members to Summary of Formal Agreements within the Statement of Common Ground and particularly Agreements 10 and 11. Despite three calls for sites the Authority had not allocated any new dwellings in the Local Plan and so those agreements are particularly important. The PPO said that the Planning Committee endorsed the document for adoption by the Broads Authority at its meeting on 18 July.

The Chair of the Planning Committee said that this was an important document for the Broads Authority and provided a broad overview of strategy. Noting what a Member said earlier, this arrangement might change after the local government reorganisation.

Tim Jickells proposed, seconded by Gurpreet Padda.

It was resolved unanimously to endorse the updated Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework.

17. Risk Management Policy

Members received the report of the Head of Governance. The Director of Finance (DF) that the Risk Management Policy was considered at the Risk Audit and Governance (RAG) Committee meeting on Wednesday 23 July. There had been a few changes to the policy following the internal audit in February 2025 and the revised version in front of Members incorporated the recommendations from that audit which were presented in tracked changes. For the first time, the policy now included a Risk Appetite Statement as set out in appendix 2. As this was the first time the Authority had had a risk appetite, Members would see that the appetite was 'minimal', but the Head of Internal Audit who was in attendance at the RAG meeting on Wednesday explained that this would mature and would be part of the risk management audit in later in 2025/26. During the discussion at the RAG meeting, Members were keen that this be used to drive opportunity.

A Member commented that he was concerned that the risk appetite in relation to technology was adverse given that the Authority needed to innovate and find new, more customer friendly and efficient ways of doing things. The CE said that there had been a good discussion at the RAG Committee meeting and in terms of the question, particularly following the Marks & Spencer IT issue, when the Authority's IT staff were asked about their risk appetite they did not want any risk at all to the Authority's systems because of the potential implications. That was a different question from how the Authority might make the most of new technology to drive improvements and efficiencies. The CE said that this was a really good piece of work by the Head of Governance, however, the risk appetite statement needed further refinement so that it was not just a simple statement.

A Member said that the first stage was to assess what the risk appetite was and the second stage to use it to drive opportunities. The Member commended the report and commented that it was an excellent piece of work which would drive everyone to think hard about where there were opportunities and where there was a need to be more risk adverse. The Member recognised the position that the IT team wanted to be in to protect the Authority from cyber security risk with the opportunity to innovate in that space.

Siân Limpenny proposed, seconded by Tony Grayling.

It was resolved unanimously to adopt the revised Risk Management Policy and Risk Appetite Statement.

18. Update on the progress of the response to the grant settlement

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (CE). The CE said that following the Members adoption of a series of recommendations following the cut in the National Park Grant, the paper in front of Members provided an update on the progress made.

The CE said that the Authority had made good progress. There had been a slight tweak to the revised structure following consultation with staff: the External Funding team would move under the Director of Resources and the Partnerships & Funding Manager's title would change to Head of External Funding. The Director of Finance (DF) had calculated that of the target of £300,000, there had already been £176,000 of savings made on the National Park side, and were looking at making further savings and added that, as Members would understand, it was not an easy process.

A Member said that he commended the Management Team and staff for the way that they were managing the difficult issue of a reduction in staffing and asked if some of these savings would also deliver savings to the Navigation budget. The DF said that as a result of all the savings identified so far this would save £99,000 on the Navigation budget.

The CE provided an update on the current Navigation budget. He said that this year income was about £107,000 behind the budget due to a reduction in the number of boats of all sizes and types. The Broads was not in a unique position, as this was a pattern that other waterways, and the marine industry as a whole. The CE thought that this had been driven by a cost of living crisis as well as a wider demographic change.

The CE planned to provide Members with a briefing note and distribute it in September prior to the in-person tolls briefing meeting in October and he hoped to have further evidence as to what was driving the reduction in boat numbers.

A Member asked whether the Authority was able to survey ex-toll payers. The CE said that was the intention. The Tolls Team was still incredibly busy chasing people who had not paid. It appeared that more people were hanging on until the last minute to pay their tolls and therefore needed chasing. There were approximately 300 people that had not yet paid and they had been issued notices of contravention. In August, it was hoped that the Tolls Team

would be able to carry out a telephone survey on a random sample of previous boat owners which would help provide evidence for the briefing paper.

A Member asked whether there would be an advantage to levy a fine on late payments. The CE said that for the first time this year, the Authority had levied a £25 administrative charge to those that did not respond to the first letter chasing for payment. Although this seemed to have a positive effect, this did create more work for the Tolls team. The CE added that the Tolls team did a brilliant job and although most of the 9,000 toll payers were very pleasant to deal with, there were a very small number of people who were abusive, but the team handle that with a degree of aplomb and curtesy.

A Member asked of the 300 people that were being chased for non-payment of tolls whether there was a cost to that. The CE confirmed there was. The Member said that looking at the budgets going forward, these costs needed to be factored in. The CE said that he would have a better idea in the Autumn as to how effective the £25 charge had been and how much of the costs had been recovered through the charge.

A Member said it was not a short-term decline and was a long-term spiral and therefore, the tolls might have to go up which was a vicious cycle, and suggested that the Authority should have a dedicated PR campaign which highlighted the brilliant work that Broads Authority did, and the benefit of the work it carried out. The Member added that it was distressing reading the negative comments that were published about the Authority and recently about mooring fees. The CE said that in relation to Reedham Quay, the Authority had worked closely with Broadland District Council and interestingly it was following the exact same pattern as was found at Ranworth. The introduction of a relatively modest charge to moor at Reedham Quay had delivered benefits to the local businesses in Reedham. There was a greater turnover of craft and therefore more money was spent in the local pub and the café.

The CE said that one of the things that the DF and he were doing, along with all the National Parks, was working with a firm of accountants who were doing some pro bono work around the potential for private sector funding. The CE said that he did not know what the outcome would be, however, the Authority did need to look at other ways which supported the National Park side of the Authority's work as well as the Navigation.

A Member asked, in relation to tolls, whether it would be possible to put in place a charge whereby any non-payment went past a certain date, the fee went up automatically. The CE said that this was something that had been considered and might be something that Members would like to discuss at the meeting in October.

The progress made in responding to the reduction in National Park Grant was noted.

19. National Park Capital Programme 2025/26

The CE said that the report in front of Members was to provide an update on the capital programme which Members approved at the meeting on 9 May. The CE reported that, for the first time, he had managed to convince Defra that the Authority could spend National Park capital money on functions and benefits that were largely Navigation, such as improvements

to moorings and the purchase of pontoons. The CE had argued that this was part of the Authority's second purpose, promoting the enjoyment and understanding of the Broads. The way in which many people enjoyed the Broads was through boating and therefore access was as much from a National Park point of view as it was Navigation.

Progress on the delivery of this year's National Park Capital Programme and the flexibility provided in the Change Control Notice was noted.

20. Appointment of Chief Executive

Members received the report of the Chair of the Authority. Following the announcement of the Chief Executive's (CE) intended retirement, there was a process that the Authority would have to go through for recruitment of a new CE. At the CE's last annual review, he agreed to put in a place a succession plan that would allow the Authority to be prepared for this eventuality. The Chair said that the Broads Authority was not the only National Park that was going through this process at the moment so would need to be nimble on its feet to attract the right candidates.

The Chair said that he had received a lot of correspondence on this subject, none of which had replied to as that would have shown pre-determination, however, he felt that the correspondence raised a good point that nobody from the Navigation Committee was on the final interview panel. Therefore, in addition to the proposals set out in the paper, the Chair proposed that Alan Goodchild be added to the appointment panel.

Harry Blathwayt proposed, seconded by Peter Dixon.

It was resolved unanimously to appoint Alan Goodchild to the panel for the appointment of a new Chief Executive.

A Member commented that it was an interesting time at the moment, and asked whether this appointment was pre-emptive as it was not known what would happen with the appointment of a mayor and devolution in terms of their strategic responsibilities, planning etc., and said that there were some really good officers at the Authority who could take over in the interim. A Member said that there was so much going on in the political space and agreed with the Members comments about holding off on recruitment and suggested that it would be more prudent for the Authority appoint an interim CE until it was known what the new political landscape would look like.

A Member commented that he disagreed quite strongly with appointing an interim CE and said that the Broads Authority was set up by an Act of Parliament and had not seen any suggestion that the Act would be directly affected by local government reorganisation. The Authority would have to work with whatever the local government structure was going to be and whoever the new mayor would be. The Authority would still have a very clear role with a lot of important functions. The Member said that the Authority should have somebody in place to provide good, strong leadership and to appoint an interim CE together with the revised management structure to deal with everything that would be coming the Authority's

way in the next two years would be inconsistent with the Authority's approach to risk management.

The Director of Finance (DF) said that at the Risk, Audit and Governance Committee meeting on 23 July, both the external and internal auditors recognised the importance of not employing multiple interim's as this would disrupt the staff and the uncertainty that brought.

There was a debate over the validities of both arguments, and there was agreement that the Authority was entering into an uncertain time. Members recognised that the mayor would welcome an organisation that was well run and well-resourced to work with, and the Authority would still be required to carry out its duties especially in relation to being the Harbour Authority.

A Member commented that in terms of the appointment of a recruitment company, it was important to have a company who had EDI, justice and access embedded into their recruitment policies and asked to see any recruitment data on GatenbySanderson in respect of EDI. A Member agreed and said that the Authority should look at the widest talent pool available and that the Members of the Authority should also look to their own networks so that only a top-class candidate was recruited. A Member said that any recruitment carried out, the Authority should make sure that EDI was presented as high value.

A Member commented that GatenbySanderson had been employed to find his successor in another role, however, he had no direct interest in that but believed this should be placed on record. The Chair duly noted that.

The Chair said that this was a terrible time to lose a CE, however, there was no time since he had been associated with the Broads Authority when it was not be a terrible time.

Peter Dixon proposed, seconded by James Harvey.

It was resolved by 11 votes in favour and 2 against to:

- **Approve the arrangements set out in this report for the recruitment and appointment of a new Chief Executive.**
- **Appoint GatenbySanderson to carry out the executive search and support the Member Group and Panel throughout the process.**

21. Appointment of a Monitoring Officer

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (CE). The CE said that when the Authority had difficulties concerning a previous Member, Wilkin Chapman were employed to provide advice and they then took on the role of Monitoring Officer (MO). This had worked well and got the Authority through that difficulty. However, it was an expensive way of providing a MO. The Authority was required to appoint a MO and the role would normally be carried out by a senior officer of the Authority. The CE said that the Authority had been really fortunate to recruit Rob Thomas as the new Head of Governance with the experience that he brought to the Authority, and he was in the process of taking the MO training.

The CE said that he would like to thank Jonathan Goolden and Estelle Culligan for their work and confirmed that they would be available to Rob Thomas if anything arose that he needed guidance on.

A Member commented that things often come to a MO suddenly and asked what would happen if the MO was on holiday and asked whether the Authority would need a Deputy Monitoring Officer (DMO). The CE said that the legislation gave the responsibility to the MO to appoint the DMO, therefore, in due course Rob would do that.

A Member commented that with the recommendation, it appeared that the Authority would be tying its hands no matter what happened and suggested that the appointment be subject to completion of the course. If, for whatever reason, the course did not get completed, the position could not just be handed over on 12 November. The Director of Finance said that the course was modular and much of the course had already been completed.

Tim Jickells proposed, seconded by Martyn Hooton.

It was resolved unanimously to agree to transfer the position of Monitoring Officer from Jonathan Goolden at Wilkins Chapman to Robert Thomas, Head of Governance as from 12 November 2025.

22. Committee membership and member appointments 2025/26

Members received the report of the Governance Officer. The Chief Executive (CE) said that Members had already been canvassed as to which committees they would like to be on and everyone had been accommodated. The Authority was due to have four new Secretary of State Members appointees and the suggestion was that once these were known, rather than waiting until the next meeting, that after consulting the new Members and the Chair the CE be given delegated authority to appoint them to the committees.

A Member asked whether the two vacancies on the Standards Committee would be filled as currently the membership stood at five members and the quorum was four. The Governance Officer confirmed that it would be expected that two of those Secretary of State appointees would fill those two positions.

Matthew Shardlow proposed, seconded by Alan Goodchild.

It was resolved unanimously:

- **That appointments to the Navigation Committee; Planning Committee, Risk, Audit & Governance Committee; Standards Committee and the Broads Local Access Forum be made in accordance with Table 1 and to outside bodies as set out in Table 2.**
- **That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Authority, be delegated to appoint the new Secretary of State Members to the committees after discussion with the new Members.**

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

The Director of Operations (DO) said that at the Oulton Broad Powerboat racing event the previous evening, there was an accident which unfortunately resulted in a fatality. This was an ongoing situation and the first fatality through a powerboat racing event.

The Rangers were on station during the race to ensure the navigating public were kept separate to the race. The Maritime Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB), together with the Police and Rangers were attending the scene at the current time.

Condolences had been sent to the family. The Rangers were being supported as they attended the scene and helped get the emergency team over to the location.

The Broads Authority were now working with the MAIB. As the Authority licence the event, the Port Marine Safety Code, Safety Management System, and risk assessment for the event would need to be thoroughly reviewed and any findings would go to the Boat Safety Management Group, the Navigation Committee, and then the Board.

24. Broads Local Access Forum Annual Report 2024/25

Members received the report of the Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology (HCME). The HCME said that the report in front of Members was the annual opportunity to feedback on the Broads Local Access Forum's (BLAF) activities and advice during the last year.

The HCME said that in the last year, BLAF members had raised with both the Broads Authority and Norfolk County Council the issue around monitoring for hazards to human health in water, particularly around swimming and paddle sports, and how that issue was managed. There was also a big push on the loss of public rights of way to high water levels and erosion.

The priorities for BLAF in 2025/26 were tracking the implementation of the Broads Authority's Integrated Access Strategy, the Access for All grant from Defra of £135,000 to be spent by 31 March 2026, and working with Norfolk County Council on the public rights of way and trails issues.

The HCME thanked the Chair, Vice-Chair and members of BLAF for their work over the last year.

A Member noted that one of the meetings of BLAF was not quorate and asked whether there were any implications of it not being quorate. The HCME said that the one meeting where it was not quorate was when a paper was taken to reduce the number of meetings from four to three. At the next meeting, which was quorate, it was agreed that the meetings would reduce from four to two per year which was still in line with guidance from Natural England. The aim was to make the meetings as efficient and effective as possible, whilst also saving the Authority officer time and money on discharging the functions of the committee. The Member asked whether it was not dependent on the committee to make statutory decisions. The HCME said that there was only one area which was a statutory requirement of BLAF and

that was around consultations on open access land in the Broads, however, the Broads Authority's executive area did not include much open access land and was therefore low risk.

A Member commented that it looked as if BLAF was getting the join up with Norfolk County Council on access and asked if there was anything further that the two Members from Norfolk County Council could do. The HCME said that if there were specific topics, the BLAF meetings were open for members of the public to attend and there was also the opportunity to raise questions in advance of meetings.

A Member commented that previously it had been discussed about the valuable resource of mobile phone data to determine what parts of the Broads were being used and how it was being used and asked whether this was any further forward. Was this fed into BLAF and did it help with developing access strategies? The HCME said the data had been collated, but there was a vacancy in the key post of Waterways and Recreations Officer. The WRO would have the objectives to use that technology within the Integrated Access Strategy workplan. Until that officer was in post, it was on hold. A Member commented that he had reservations on how accurate some of the mobile data was.

The report was noted.

25. Report on outside bodies – Whitlingham Charitable Trust 2024/25

Members received the report of Matthew Bradbury, Trustee of the Whitlingham Charitable Trust. The Chief Executive (CE) said that each year the Trustees appointed by the Broads Authority were asked to produce a yearly report. The CE said that Whitlingham Charitable Trust and the park was doing really well and the Authority should be proud of the involvement it had in establishing it with the Colman family.

A Member commented that there was a lot of good work being done at the park.

The report was noted.

26. Minutes to be received

Members received the minutes of the following meetings:

Broads Local Access Forum - 5 March 2025

Risk, Audit and Governance Committee - 11 February 2025

Navigation Committee - 3 April 2025

Planning Committee - 2 May 2025

Planning Committee - 30 May 2025

27. Other items of business

There were no other items of business.

28. Formal questions

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

29. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Friday 19 September 2025 at 10.00am at the King's Centre, 63-75 King Street, Norwich, NR1 1PH..

30. Exclusion of the public

Fran Whymark proposed, and Tim Jickells seconded.

The Authority resolved to exclude the public from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for the consideration of the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Paragraph 1, 3 and 4 of Part1 of Schedule 12A to the Act as amended, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public benefit in disclosing the information.

The public left the meeting and the recording was suspended.

31. Exempt minutes of last meeting

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2025 were confirmed and would be signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting.

32. Purchase of land - update

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (CE). The CE confirmed that agreement had been reached with the landowner who was anxious to complete the sale by the end of August. The CE said that he was trying to encourage the Minister to visit the Broads Authority and he had suggested that they might co-ordinate the visit to celebrate the purchase.

The CE said that it was an important piece of land and the aim was to put it back to proper management, but also it would generate an income for the Authority against the capital funding and he hoped in due course, Members would be able to visit.

The Chair asked about the security of funding that the Authority would receive for managing this piece of land. The CE said that the Authority could only work on the basis of what was currently known, but was reasonably confident that the £28,000 per year was reasonably secure.

The Director of Operations (DO) said that it did tick a lot of other boxes for the Authority. The Authority owned the two parcels of land either side and therefore it joined up a large piece of managed fen and provided access to that land. It also helped with the 30 by 30 initiative. The DO said that when the Ecology Team carried out the initial survey they found two Bittern nests and other species were identified, such as the Swallowtail butterfly.

The progress made in the purchase of land was noted.

The meeting ended at 11:59am

Signed by

Chairman