Broads Authority

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2026

Contents

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Present
Harry Blathwayt – in the Chair, Peter Dixon, Alan Goodchild, Tony Grayling, Gail Harris, James Harvey, Tristram Hilborn, Heather Hilburn, Martyn Hooton, Tim Jickells, Curig Johnston, Leslie Mogford, Tim Munday, Matthew Shardlow.

In attendance
John Packman – Chief Executive, Matt Dane – Head of Safety Management (item 12), Kate Knights – Heritage and Design Manager (item 13), Emma Krelle – Director of Resources, Rob Leigh – Head of Communications (item 27), Rob Rogers – Director of Delivery, Joseph Balaam – Governance Officer, Lorraine Taylor – Head of Governance.

1. Welcome and apologies
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014
The Chair explained that the meeting was being audio-recorded. All recordings remained the copyright of the Broads Authority and anyone wishing to receive a copy should contact the Governance Team. The minutes remained the record of the meeting. He added that the law permitted any person to film, record, photograph or use social media in order to report on the proceedings of public meetings of the Authority. This did not extend to live verbal commentary. The Chair needed to be informed if anyone intended to photograph, record or film so that any person under the age of 18 or members of the public not wishing to be filmed or photographed could be accommodated.

Apologies were received from Stephen Bolt, Siân Limpenny and Andrée Gee

2. Chairman’s announcements
The Chair requested that item 27 of the agenda, National Park funding, be moved to be considered after item 4.

Tim Jickells proposed, seconded by Tristram Hilborn

It was resolved unanimously to move item 27 of the agenda, to be considered after item 4.

3. Appointment of two co-opted members to the Broads Authority
The Members received the report of the Head of Governance (HoG). The HoG said there was a slight change to the report following the rescheduling of the May 2027 Broads Authority meeting. Due to this, the appointment of the two co-opted members to the Authority would be until 21 May 2027. At its meeting on 16 April 2026, the Navigation Committee appointed Alan Goodchild as Chair and Peter Dixon as Vice-Chair and had recommended that both be appointed as the two co-opted members to the Broads Authority for one year.

Tony Grayling proposed, seconded by Gail Harris

It was resolved unanimously to appoint Alan Goodchild and Peter Dixon to the Broads Authority for one year, until 21 May 2027.

4. Introduction of members and declarations of interest

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

26. Exclusion of the public

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 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.

27. National Park funding

Members received the report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Resources/S.17 Officer. A summary of the discussion was contained in the exempt minutes.

5. Items of urgent business

There were no items of urgent business.

6. Public question time

No public questions had been received.

7. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

8. Summary of actions and outstanding issues

Members received the latest summary of actions and outstanding issues following decisions at previous meetings. There were no further updates to the report.

A Member commented that they were pleased the works on Buttle Marsh had been completed and asked what the ongoing legacy of the project would be. The Chief Executive (CE) said the project had been a learning experience for the Authority and highlighted the complexities of the Environment Agency's permitting systems, and issues around eels as key experiences. The CE advised no further work had been scheduled at the site. The Director of Delivery said that the Authority required a pump at the site, however, there was presently no model that could deal with eels, and technology would need to improve to match the Authority's ambitions.

The report was noted.

9. Strategic priorities – update

The Members received the report of the Head of Governance. The Chief Executive (CE) said the report outlined some of the aims of the Authority over the next year.

The report was noted.

10. Financial performance and direction

The Members received the report of the Director of Resources (DoR). The DoR said the first part of the report provided an update at the end of the financial year 2025/26 and was subject to change if any additional accruals were discovered, at present only £1,000 had been found.

The DoR said the Authority's audit plan would be presented at the next meeting of the Risk, Audit and Governance Committee and highlighted the carry forward in section 9 of the report and advised the requests were due to constraints outside the budget holders control. The DoR added clarification regarding the £25 charge for the notice of contravention letters was needed. The DoR said after the notice of contravention had been issued by the Ranger, and payment had not been made, the tolls team would issue a first letter. At the first letter, a charge of £25 would be applied. If payment was still not forthcoming a second letter would be sent with an additional £25 charge.

The DoR highlighted changes to the revised budget, adjustments were displayed in table 8 of the report. The replacement to the Spirit of Breydon engine and Digital Planning Improvements were funded from the earmarked reserves and had no impact on revenue as a result.

Peter Dixon proposed, seconded by Alan Goodchild.

It was resolved unanimously to:

i. **Note the draft income and expenditure figures, prudential indicators in section 6.**

ii. **Approve the recommended carry forward request in 9.2 and add it to the 2026/27 budget as additional expenditure.**

iii. **Clarify the £25 charge for the notice of contravention letters, in section 10.2.**

iv. **Adopt the revised 2026/27 budget, earmarked reserves and the transfer of unspent DEFRA additional funding at the end of 2026/27 to the Medium-Term Planning reserve.**

A Member praised the work of the Director of Resources and the finance team for their continued performance in delivering reports despite the small size of the team. The Members agreed with this sentiment.

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11. Draft Annual Business Plan 2026/27

The Members received the report of the Head of Governance (HoG). The HoG said the report provided an overview of work priorities for the upcoming financial year. The report linked with the Broads Plan, Five-year Plan, the Strategic Partnership Plan and Directorate Work Plans.

A Member said the Authority had made a number of cuts over the past financial year and believed this to be noteworthy. The Member suggested it be noted that the overall capacity of the Authority had been reduced as a result. The Chief Executive (CE) said the overall picture was complex, and the report was representative of the current state of the Authority due to changes in financial outlook. The Director of Delivery acknowledged that significant staffing cuts had been made, and the Authority were reprioritising as a result. The CE praised the HoG and thanked them for producing the Draft Annual Business Plan.

A Member enquired to the expected impact the Land Use Strategy may have on the Authority. The CE said executives of National Parks were not clear on where they would fit within the strategy, but praised DEFRA for recognising the important role National Parks would play. The CE said National Parks had been attempting to agree a shared set of KPIs for an extended period of time, however, progress had been limited to abandoning current KPIs. The CE said the development of shared KPIs would be challenging given the broad range of Authority activities and the difference in landscapes.

A Member asked if changing water levels due to drought and increased water extraction had been considered as a risk. The HoG said this would be considered in the Corporate Risk Register. The CE added climate change had been considered as a big issue in the previous Broads Plan and expected it to remain a big issue in the new Five-year Plan, which was currently underway.

Martyn Hooton proposed, seconded by Tim Munday

It was resolved unanimously to adopt the Annual Business Plan 2026/27.

12. 2025/26 Health and Safety Review and internal audit recommendations

The Members received the report of the Head of Safety Management (HSM). The HSM said the purpose of the report was to present the annual review of marine incidents in 2025/26 and the recommended audit programme for 2026/27.

The HSM said accidents remained relatively rare, with there being one fatality and seven individuals requiring hospitalisation, in connection with boating activities. The HSM remarked this was the lowest number in two decades. Incidence of vessel fires and explosion also remained minimal.

The HSM added there were seven fatalities not connected to boating activity. These figures included incidents where individuals entered the water either accidentally or intentionally, with some of these related to swimming. The Authority continued to monitor reports of slips, trips and falls as these were regularly featured on incident reports. Fortunately, in the incidents of accidental entry into the water, life jackets were in use which allowed those involved to exit the water and make a full recovery. The HSM concluded that the Broads waterways continue to provide a safe environment for families and visitors.

The report was noted.

13. Broads Authority Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document

The Members received the report of the Heritage and Design Manager (HDM). The HDM said the document had been endorsed by the Planning Committee at their meeting on 8 May 2026. The document provided a baseline of information that would be commonly used in planning, to inform development proposals and ensure mitigation of landscape impact. The original document was completed in 2006 and had been updated since. The most significant of these updates came in 2016 and included information on the history and development of the Broads.

The proposed updates to the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) included content and accessibility, with a cleaner and simplified layout. The HDM said the document was still appropriate and acknowledged changes to the planning system in which SPDs would be phased out in future. The SPD received further amendment following two rounds of public consultation, with responses summarised in appendix 3. The HDM concluded the proposed SPD would help inform development proposals and ensure the special landscape qualities within the Broads remain protected.

A Member commented that the document was fabulous and updates had made it much more user friendly. The Member said it was the best historical summary of the Broads known to them. The Member added that the Authority should find a way to make the document prominent on the website, for educational purposes, especially as SPDs were being phased out.

A Member congratulated the HDM on completing the document prior to the SPD deadline and asked the HDM if they believed the policy was robust despite the mapping alignment issue highlighted in section 2.5. The HDM said they were confident the policy was still valid and said that any changes were small and would not impact the overall assessment. The re-assessment of the mapping would be a large ongoing project but should be completed by the time of the next LCA review.

A Member congratulated the HDM and hoped the document would be used for educational purposes in addition to planning. The HDM said the Authority was looking at ways to make the document more accessible on the Authority's website.

Tim Jickells proposed, seconded by Tony Grayling.

It was resolved unanimously to approve the Broads Landscape Character Assessment SPD.

14. Annual Summary of formal complaints 2025/26

The Members received the report of the Head of Governance (HoG). The HoG said section 5.1 showed the number of complaints over the last seven years. The HoG advised Members the six complaints received in the last year were summarised in appendix 1.

A Member asked if more detail could be provided in relation to the complaints. The HoG said this would not be possible due to the General Data Protection Regulation law.

The report was noted.

15. Standing Orders Relating to Contracts – review and annual report on requests to waive standing orders in 2025/26

Members received the report of the Director of Resources (DoR). The DoR said there were 25 waivers of standing orders in the last financial year, of which 23 were approved by the Chief Executive and two by the Board. A summary of these waivers was set out in table 1 of the report. The DoR said 11 of these waivers were due to time pressure in which additional grant funds needed to be spent before the end of the financial year. The DoR added that all waivers were considered justified expenses and value for money. This was achieved by obtaining quotes in instances where it was not possible to adhere to the full tendering process.

The report was noted.

16. Annual Report of the Standards Committee

Members received the report of the Head of Governance (HoG). The HoG said the report was a summary of discussion from the Standards Committee meeting held on 19 March 2026. The HoG added that the agenda for this meeting contained three reports which had previously gone before the Standards Committee at the March meeting.

The Chair of the Standards Committee commented they were happy to see the Standards Committee only needed to meet once over the past year and no disciplinary intervention was required.

The report was noted.

17. Appointment of Monitoring Officer – May 2026

The Members received the report of the Chief Executive (CE). The CE was delighted to bring this report to the committee and said Lorraine Taylor had completed her Monitoring Officer training and could now be formally appointed to the role. The CE acknowledged that once approved, all four statutory appointments by the Authority, being the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer, S17 Officer and Navigation Officer, would be held by women.

Alan Goodchild proposed, seconded by Martyn Hooton.

It was resolved unanimously to transfer the position of Monitoring Officer from Jonathan Goolden at Wilkins Chapman to Lorraine Taylor, Head of Governance as from 18 May 2026.

18. Creating a framework for Member engagement with operational staff

The Members received the report of the Head of Governance (HoG). The HoG said the report recognised the value the Authority placed on Members observing the duties of operational staff as a learning experience, in addition to enabling practical work through volunteering activities. The HoG added the report clarified the distinction between Members and volunteer staff and had received approval from the Standards Committee.

A Member welcomed the report but suggested the report may not address circumstances in which staff may approach Members to request them to voluntarily provide their expertise. The HoG said this would come under the role of a Member rather than a volunteer.

A Member commented that the report neatly balanced the feelings of both staff and Members and provided clear guidelines for Members who wished to volunteer.

A Member strongly encouraged volunteering and remarked that the document was excellent.

Tim Jickells proposed, seconded by Peter Dixon.

It was resolved unanimously to approve the updating of the Volunteer Strategy to provide guidance on Member volunteering and engagement as proposed in the report.

19. Proposed amendment to Member Code of Conduct – interest of Navigation Committee members

The Members received the report of the Monitoring Officer and the Head of Governance (HoG). The HoG said the proposed amendment would only apply to Navigation Committee Members at meetings of the Navigation Committee and as such would not apply to co-opted Members at Broads Authority meetings. The purpose of the amendment was to allow Navigation Committee Members to share their expertise and experiences without the need to seek dispensation on navigation matters. The HoG said a Member had previously asked for clarification on the definition of "financial interest and wellbeing", which the report also addressed.

Alan Goodchild proposed, seconded by Tim Munday.

It was resolved unanimously to approve:

i. **That the Member Code of Conduct be amended by the addition of the words "For members of the Navigation Committee only, consultation on navigation matters other than the level of navigation tolls, irrespective of the nature and extent of the interest" to paragraph 9 of Appendix B of the Code.**

ii. **The addition of an explanatory note in Appendix B to provide clarity to the wording "financial interest and wellbeing".**

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20. Member training

The Members received the report of the Head of Governance (HoG). The HoG said the report had been produced after discussion of an exempt item at the Standards Committee meeting on 19 March 2026. The report distinguished difference between mandatory and desirable training in order to combat low training attendance. The HoG said the Authority sought to make as much training as possible online so that Members could complete modules at their leisure. For training requiring in person attendance, the Authority would seek to make this hybrid, via teams, where possible.

A Member asked if training from other authorities or roles could be used to demonstrate training completion to the Broads Authority. The HoG sympathised with the potential for training repetition but emphasised that the Authority was statutorily required to provide some specific training modules. The HoG advised the online modules were short and could be completed online at the Members leisure.

A Member asked why the length of training recertification varied amongst modules. The Director of Delivery said this was due to the nature of the topics and legislation rather than importance.

A Member commented that making mandatory training available online was a tremendous step forward and necessary to demonstrate good governance. The Member welcomed the convenience of this approach.

A Member asked for clarification on the proposal to publish training records and was not aware of any comparable body publishing records. The HoG said local authorities published members attendance at training and advised the publishing of training records was suggested by the Standards Committee to improve Members attendance. The Member said most Secretary of State appointees had demanding day jobs and the publishing of records was disproportionate to the harm of missing training and could consequently lead to significant reputational damage. The Member also asked for clarification on whether training on the Port Marine Facilities Safety Code (PMFSC) should be mandatory for all Members, including those who were not involved in the Navigation Committee. The Chief Executive (CE) said all members were collectively responsible for safety on the Broads under the PMFSC and the report attempted to find a balance between the Members busy lives and completion of mandatory training so that the Authority meets its legal obligation.

A Member recognised the importance of training and advised that failure to complete training or prepare for meetings could have consequences.

A Member welcomed clarification of mandatory training and asked for clarification on what would be considered extenuating circumstances and how figures would be reported. The HoG said table 1 of the report reflected how attendance figures may be reported. The Member supported this and asked if an update to the Member Code of Conduct would be needed if the recommended actions were approved. The HoG said references to training in the Code of Conduct were ambiguous and additions would be needed to clarify mandatory training.

A Member suggested attendance statistics may be more appropriate in the annual review process and during reappointment.

A Member asked if equivalent training may be used to satisfy the Authority's training requirements. The HoG said this would only apply to Code of Conduct training for Local Authority Members as the same model code applied to the Member in both roles. The HoG emphasised this did not exclude them from Code of Conduct training at the Broads Authority, but instead meant they were able to watch a recording of the training session. The Director of Resources (DoR) said equivalent training could not permit Members to circumvent training with the Authority as the Members Broads Authority training record would be needed in the event of complaint. The DoR added the Authority could not rely on the training of outside bodies to satisfy the requirements of the Authority as the contents of this training had not been internally assessed. A Member said this was consistent with other training they had undertaken in the past.

A Member asked if they would be able to attend Planning Committee training despite not being a Member of the Planning Committee. The HoG offered to invite the Member to a future training session.

Leslie Mogford proposed, seconded by Alan Goodchild.

It was resolved unanimously:

i. **To approve the designated mandatory training as set out in 4.2 of the report;**

ii. **That attendance of mandatory training becomes a code of conduct requirement; and**

iii. **That Member training attendance records are published annually as summary statistics.**

21. 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.

22. Minutes to be received

Members received the minutes of the following meetings:

Standards Committee – 20 February 2025
Risk, Audit and Governance Committee – 25 November 2025
Navigation Committee – 22 January 2026
Planning Committee – 13 February 2026
Planning Committee – 10 April 2026

23. Other items of business

There were no other items of business.

24. Formal questions

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

25. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Friday 24 July 2026 at 10.00am at the King's Centre, 63-75 King Street, Norwich, NR1 1PH.

Departing Members

The Chair said that due to the recent local elections, the Authority had lost four valuable Members. The Chair wished to thank the departing Members and addressed each of their great contributions to the Authority.

Vic Thompson

The Chair said Vic had provided almost twelve years of service to the Board and Planning Committee. The Chair praised the work, and friendship Vic had provided over his time with the Authority.

James Reeder

The Chair remarked that James faced a difficult task of filling in for his predecessor but did so splendidly. The Chair greatly admired the conduct and discipline James showed at meetings and expressed thanks for his service.

Gurpreet Padda

The Chair said Gurpreet showed exemplarily attendance at meetings despite holding a full-time job. The Chair was in awe of the ability Gurpreet had shown to balance her employment with her service on multiple committees of the Authority, amongst other commitments. The Chair remarked Gurpreet had been a champion of inclusion within the Authority and would be missed.

Fran Whymark

The Chair praised the performance of Fran and his ability to balance the complex role he held with Norfolk County Council and his commitments to the Authority. The Chair said Fran was a leading Member of the Planning Committee and would be missed.

The Members shared a moment of applause for Vic Thompson, James Reeder, Gurpreet Padda and Fran Whymark.

Retirement of the Chief Executive

The Chair acknowledged that today was the last day of the Chief Executive and as such wished to share a few words with the Members. The Chair remarked they remembered fondly the quiet conversations they would have on train journeys and recalled the story of when John Packman informed the Chair of his intention to retire. The Chair praised the pragmatism that the Chief Executive used to guide the Authority during his long tenure. The Chair thanked John and wished him joy, happiness and contentment in his retirement. These sentiments were echoed by the applause of the Members and staff.

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The meeting ended at 12:18pm

Signed by

Chairman

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Appendix 1 – Declaration of interests: Broads Authority, 15 May 2026

Member	Agenda/minute	Nature of interest
Peter Dixon	8	Trustee and Chair of the Museum of the Broads. Partner in bid to National Lottery Heritage Landscape Connection Scheme.