

# Broads Authority

23 September 2022

Agenda item number 15

## Appointment of Trustees to Whitlingham Charitable Trust

Report by Chief Executive

---

### Purpose

To receive an update following the meeting with the new Chairman of the Whitlingham Charitable Trust on the proposed process for the Authority appointing four trustees to the Whitlingham Charitable Trust.

### Recommended Decision

In collaboration with the new Chairman of the Whitlingham Charitable Trust, use an open and transparent process, similar to that used for the Navigation Committee and Broads Local Access Forum, to appoint four trustees with the skills and experience to deliver the Trust's Strategic Plan.

## 1. Background

- 1.1. The Whitlingham Charitable Trust was established in 1988 to establish and manage the newly formed Whitlingham Country Park, on the south-eastern fringes of Norwich. The Broads Authority and the Colman family are the Members of the Trust. The Broads Authority has played an important role in the development of this initiative and appoints up to four Trustees. The other Trustees (of whom there can be up to five) are appointed by the Colman family.
- 1.2. At the last meeting of the Authority it was agreed that a report would be presented at a future meeting on the proposed arrangements for appointing Trustees to the Whitlingham Charitable Trust (WCT).
- 1.3. The Vice-Chair advised at the meeting that the Charity Commission dictated that a trustee of WCT, or of any other charity, must act in the best interests of that charity and that they were not allowed to represent the views of another organisation. He had also indicated that, with the Chief Executive, he would be meeting with the new Chair of WCT, Mr. Nigel Savory, the following week and agreed that it would be useful to have that conversation before taking a decision on the process for the appointment of Trustees.

## 2. Update

- 2.1. The meeting with Mr. Savory was held on 1 August. Two issues, pertinent to the matters discussed at the Board meeting, were raised: the process for the Authority appointing four trustees, and the importance of the relationship between the Trust and the three relevant local authorities: Norfolk County Council, South Norfolk Council and Norwich City Council.
- 2.2. Mr Savory expressed the wish to build a good working relationship with the Broads Authority and outlined his plans for a new Strategic Plan for the Trust, a draft of which would be considered by the Trustees at their September meeting. He supported the suggestion of identifying and appointing trustees with the skills and experience to help in the delivery of the strategic plan and requested that he be involved in the process. He also readily recognised the importance of links with the three respective local authorities and undertook to contact the relevant officers.
- 2.3. For the benefit of members, the process for the appointment of trustees, which was outlined in the last report, is repeated below with minor amendments.
- 2.4. Once the content of the Strategic Plan is endorsed, we will understand the skills and experience needed by the Trust. Accordingly, the Authority would then advertise the opportunity through the Press and relevant organisations and shortlist and interview candidates before appointing them as trustees to the Board. It is not envisaged that there would be any financial implications for the Broads Authority from the proposed arrangements.
- 2.5. It is proposed that the arrangements will be as follows:
  - Broads Authority CEO, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority, will agree with the Chairman of the WCT a Trustee role description to include the skills and experience required by WCT to ensure good governance and create a well-rounded Board.
  - Broads Authority secretariat will advertise; and arrange for the short-listing and interviewing of candidates, and their appointment is recommended to the Authority's Board for approval.
  - Interview panel – comprising the Chair &/or Vice-Chair of the Authority, one of the two members appointed to the Broads Local Access Forum and the Chairman of the Whitlingham Charitable Trust.
- 2.6. The appointments to the Trust will be made on the following basis:
  - Trustees shall be appointed by the Authority for not less than one and not more than three years.
  - A Trustee appointed by the Authority may resign by giving notice in writing.
  - The Authority shall terminate the appointment of a Trustee in the following circumstances: fails to act in the best interest of the Whitlingham Charitable Trust, fails to attend any meeting in one year; fails to declare an interest in any matter brought up at a meeting.

- Trustees appointed by the Authority will report significant issues if and when they arise to the Authority.
- 2.7. The Broads Authority's Chief Executive will continue to represent the Authority at the WCT AGM in the Authority's capacity as a Member of the Trust, and report back on progress to Members. The Members of the Charity receive the WCT annual report at its annual meeting.

Author: John Packman

Date of report: 06 September 2022