



Lewes District Council

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MINUTE EXTRACT

Cabinet – 23 July 2007

38 Public Question Time

A question had been received from a member of the public on the following subject, a copy of which was circulated to all councillors at the meeting and made available to the public attending the meeting:

Questioner

John Foxley

Question Concerning

The importance of the land south of Chyngton Way, Seaford, and its re-instatement within the proposed South Downs National Park.

Following discussion of the above it was:

Resolved:

- 38.1** That the Director of Planning and Environmental Services be authorised to write to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to object to the deletion, from the proposed South Downs National Park, of the land south of Chyngton Way, Seaford, and to request its re-instatement within the boundary of the proposed Park.



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Cabinet – 23 July 2007

39 South Downs National Park (SDNP): To Consider the SDNP Inquiry Inspector's Report, and Related Material, Published for Consideration by DEFRA

The Cabinet considered Report No 136/07 relating to the South Downs National Park (SDNP) Inquiry Inspector's Report, and related material, which had been published, for consideration, by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The deadline for responses to be received by DEFRA was 13 August 2007. Appended to the Report was a schedule of recommended boundary changes and maps relating to the District.

The Countryside Agency had made a Designation Order for the Park in December 2002. Representations on the proposed Order had been the subject of a Public Inquiry, which had been presided over by a Government Inspector, between November 2003 and March 2005. The focus of discussion at the Inquiry had been:

- Did the South Downs warrant formal designation as a National Park, having regard to purpose of national parks set out in legislation?;
- If designated, what should the detailed boundaries of the National Park be?;
- Was it justified to revoke all the land in the East Hampshire and Sussex Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty?; and
- Was a National Park Authority appropriate to the South Downs and, if so, how might it best be established and operated?

The Designation process had been on-hold for a year, but had since been re-started. The Inspector's report had been published by DEFRA on 2 July 2007, together with several related documents, details of which were set out in paragraph 1.2 of the Report. Details relating to the Inspector's main conclusions/recommendations were set out in paragraph 1.4 of the

Report.

The key issues which needed to be considered related to:

- the Inspectors recommended deletions from the proposed SDNP;
- the Inspectors recommended additions to the proposed SDNP*;
- proposals for a major reduction in the proposed SDNP north of the Downs in Hampshire/West Sussex (Petersfield to Pulborough)*;
- The Meyrick case*, which challenged the designation principles of the National Park; and
- revised legislation relating to National parks in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006*,

further details of which were set out in Appendix A to the Report.

(*However, DEFRA was only inviting objections and representations on the matters which were marked above with an asterisk).

The areas which were recommended for deletion by the Inspector were for information only as they fell within the Designation Order boundary that was the subject of the Public Inquiry.

Following receipt of the very bulky set of documents from DEFRA, the officers had only a few days to prepare the Report and, therefore, it had not been possible for them to produce a detailed set of recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet. Instead, the Appendix identified the deletions/additions that had been recommended by the Inspector and invited the Cabinet to provide any comments it might have thereon, and to authorise the Director of Planning & Environmental Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Planning, to prepare a detailed response relating to the latest stage of the SDNP Designation process.

Resolved:

- 39.1** That the proposed deletions from, and additions to, the proposed South Downs National Park, as recommended by the Inspector following the Public Inquiry held between November 2003 and March 2005 and as detailed in Report No 136/07, be received and noted; and
- 39.2** That the Director of Planning & Environmental Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Planning, be authorised to prepare a detailed response to the recommendations on behalf of the Council by the deadline date of 13 August 2007, such response to also take account of the decision, in Minute No 38.1 above (Public Question Time), that the Council objects to the deletion, from the proposed South Downs National Park, of the land south of Chyngton

Way, Seaford, and requests its re-instatement within the boundary of the proposed Park. .

Reasons for the Decisions:

To ensure that the Council's views continue to influence the South Downs National Park Designation process and that such views are submitted to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs by the required deadline.