

AGENDA ITEM No. 5

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

URGENT BUSINESS ITEMS SUB-COMMITTEE

23 AUGUST 2002

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT NATIONAL PARK OFFICER - HEAD OF CONSERVATION

PART A

1. ASSISTANT CONSERVATION ARCHAEOLOGIST: ADDITIONAL HOURS (A.54162/2/KRS)

Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek, for the first year, an addition of one day per week to the 2 days per week three-year fixed-term contract post of Assistant Conservation Archaeologist agreed by Resources Committee at its meeting on 10 May 2002 (minute 34/02 refers).

Legal/Policy Base and Background

- 1.2 This three-year post is supported by funds made available to the Authority as a result of the secondment of Ken Smith, the Archaeology Service Manager, to the Chair of the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO) for two days per week. The Assistant Conservation Archaeologist post was created to support the Authority's Conservation Archaeologist when she is fulfilling her part-time appointment as Archaeology Service Manager. The cost of this re-structuring within Archaeology Service is met by the funds from ALGAO.
- 1.3 This spring, the Authority was advised that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) was expecting a large number of applications for renewal of Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) agreements in the Peak District National Park. It is now apparent that over 300 ESA renewals have to be processed in the 12-month renewal period. The bulk of the work of processing and responding to these on behalf of the Authority falls on Farm & Countryside, Ecology and Archaeology Services. Arrangements have been put in place to cope with the extra workload in Farm & Countryside and Ecology Services.
- 1.4 The increasing number of applications for ESA renewals, together with an increase in work arising from DEFRA's Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS), is putting a severe strain on the Archaeology Service's ability to respond to such consultations. This report now proposes how this additional workload will be dealt with in Archaeology Service.

Proposal

- 1.5 It is considered that an additional day per week is required to manage the existing and expected applications for renewal of ESA and CSS agreements during the coming year. Funds have been identified within Archaeology Service sufficient to meet the costs of an additional day per week for the next 12 months. The estimated gross cost, including overheads, is £3,725.

- 1.6 It is proposed that an additional day per week be added to the contract of the current post-holder (who is agreeable to this change) for the first year. Any renewal thereafter would have to be linked to any further new workload generated by the DEFRA schemes, by the Archaeology Service's ability to cope with it, and - if additional help was needed - subject to the availability of funds.

Financial Consideration

- 1.7 Further consideration of the funding arrangements with ALGAO has identified income additional to that originally anticipated, sufficient to cover the £3,725 gross costs (including overheads) of this proposal.

Equal Opportunities/Health & Safety

- 1.8 There are no apparent issues arising from this proposal.

Consultation Responses

- 1.9 The Personnel and Financial Services Managers, Unison and Staff Committee have been consulted on this report.

1.10 RECOMMENDATION:

That the fixed-term post of Assistant Conservation Archaeologist be extended from 2 to 3 days per week for the first year, at an estimated cost of £3,725 to be met from income to Archaeology Service budgets.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil