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11. **NATIONAL PARKS ENGLAND WORKING GROUP ON THE FUTURE OF FARMING (SF)**

1. **Purpose of the report**

National Parks England (NPE) established a Member-led task and finish group to provide advice to the NPE Board on the strategic priorities in relation to farming post Brexit to ensure environmentally sustainable farming in national parks and the pursuit of National Park purposes.

This report shares with members the emerging thinking from the group and is presented to the Authority to offer an opportunity for members to comment on this emerging thinking and before it is finalised in April 2017.

**Key Issues**

- National Parks England (NPE) established a Member-led task and finish group to provide advice to the NPE Board on the strategic priorities in relation to farming post Brexit to ensure environmentally sustainable farming in national parks and the pursuit of National Park purposes.
- The group has set out its outline thinking and an emerging vision and is now seeking views from the 10 English National Park Authorities on their draft ideas before their next meeting and before a discussion at the next NPE Board meeting.
- The purpose of the paper is inform NPE discussions with Defra on the future of farming in England post Brexit and especially how it might relate to National Parks.
- Members are asked to comment on the working draft attached at Appendix 1 to enable comments to be fed into the working group, via the Chair of the Peak District National Park Authority, at the next NPE Board meeting on 7 April 2017.

2. **Recommendation(s)**

1. **To note the working draft document from the NPE Future of Farming Group and offer comments for the Chair and CEO to use to inform the consideration of, and outputs from, this working group.**

3. **How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?**

Farming and land management has an important role in caring for the special qualities of the Peak District National Park. The emerging thinking from the future of farming in National Parks presents an opportunity to inform the national debate on the future of farming post Brexit to enable future schemes to recognise and value the role of farming in caring for our protected landscapes in the National Parks.

4. **Background**

National Parks England (NPE) established a Member-led task and finish group to provide advice to the NPE Board on the strategic priorities in relation to farming post Brexit to ensure environmentally sustainable farming in national parks and the pursuit of National Park purposes.

The Group has sought to paint a high level picture of how National Parks might be involved in the debate on the future of farming in a post Brexit world. It is intended to help inform discussions with Defra as they shape future policies and support for farming in England. The paper has been written in a moment in time, given what is currently known, and as thinking and the policy landscape evolves so will thinking in this paper.

The group is chaired by Jim Bailey (North York Moors National Park Authority) and its members are Sir Sebastian Anstruthers (South Downs National Park Authority), Neil Heseltine (Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority), Robin Milton (Exmoor National Park Authority), Adrian Shepherd (an officer at Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority) and Kevin Bishop (National Park Officer at Dartmoor National Park Authority).

The group has set out its outlining thinking and an emerging vision and is now seeking views from the 10 English National Park Authorities on their early draft ideas.

The Future of Farming Group are due to meet in mid-late March. The group will be seeking support for the draft vision and thinking from NPE Directors (Chairs of National Park Authorities) at the next NPE Board meeting on 5 April 2017. They are seeking comments from National Park Authorities before this meeting.

Members are asked to comment on the working draft from the working group (see appendix 1) to enable a collective member view to be fed into the working group. This will inform the Chair of the Peak District National Park Authority's response to the NPE Board meeting on 7 April 2017.

The Head of Landscape and Conservation, through the officer-led England Agriculture and Rural Development Group, has also been invited to comment on this paper.

The Campaign for National Parks (CNP) has a working group looking into the future of upland farming in National Parks. Robert Helliwell is a member of this group. Comments by members on the NPE working group will offer a useful opportunity for Robert to share members' views with the CNP working group.

## 5. **Proposals**

That the members be given an opportunity to comment on the emerging thinking and vision from the Future of Farming Working Group for the Chair and CEO to share to the group in advance of their next meeting and next meeting with NPE.

**Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?**

## 6. **Financial:**

There are no additional costs.

## 7. **Risk Management:**

There are no risks to highlight.

## 8. **Sustainability:**

There are no issues to highlight.

## 9. **Equality:**

There are no issues to highlight.

## 10. **Background papers (not previously published)**

None

## **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Working draft paper of the future of farming group

## **Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date**

Sarah Fowler, Chief Executive, 9 March 2017