

7. PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE - EARLY PUBLIC CONSULTATION (EF)

Purpose of the report

1. This report seeks Members approval to begin a public consultation on the big issues that we would like the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23 to focus on. We would like to consult on eight cross cutting areas of impact and eight special qualities of the Peak District National Park, using the public consultation document at Appendix 1.

Key issues

- Every National Park Authority must update their management plan every 5 years, and our current plan is due for updating this year.
- At the October 2016 Authority meeting (minute reference 39/16), Members agreed that the NPMP 2018-23 would use the existing vision framework and identify a small number of areas of focus.
- We propose to frame the next NPMP around eight areas of impact where we believe we can make the biggest difference to the Peak District National Park over the next five years.
- The areas of impact have been developed through a collaborative approach with partners and stakeholders and are summarised at paragraph 5.
- Currently the special qualities of the Peak District National Park are defined by 20 statements with no supporting text. In order to bring them to life and make them relevant we have developed eight statements that we believe better reflect and articulate what is special about the Peak District National Park.
- To fully meet this requirement the special qualities have been updated and are now clearly defined and have supporting text to aid understanding of them.
- We would like to undertake a public consultation on the areas of impact and special qualities, using the document in Appendix 1.
- Members are asked to note the next steps in the development of the NPMP as described at paragraph 8.

Recommendations:

2.
 1. **That Members approve undertaking a public consultation on the big issues that we would like the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23 to focus on using the consultation document provided at Appendix 1.**
 2. **That any changes needed in the consultation document as a result of the Authority meeting are delegated to the Chief Executive**
 3. **The Authority thanks partners for all their work and contributions to date on developing the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23.**

How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

3. The Authority has previously and will continue to develop, implement and review a Peak District National Park Management Plan (NPMP). The Authority is a place based organisation whose role is to protect and enhance the special qualities of the National Park and to promote public understanding and enjoyment of them. The 1995 Environment Act states that every National Park Authority must update their management plan every 5 years. The current management plan runs from 2012-2017 and so requires up-dating. Undertaking a public consultation on the proposed focus of the NPMP 2018-23 means we are adhering to our statutory responsibilities and will ensure the up-dated NPMP will be fit for purpose.

As Members will be aware, the NPMP is a plan for the place and as such is a partnership plan. The Authority's next Corporate Plan will detail how the Authority will contribute to the up-dated NPMP as part of a much wider collaborative effort.

Background

4. **The Peak District National Park Management Plan**
The Authority approved the full progress report of the NPMP 2012-17 at its meeting on 7 October 2016 (minute reference 39/16). It was also agreed that as we update the NPMP for the next 5 years, the current vision framework is still fit for purpose. The report concluded that the 2012-17 NPMP had been instrumental in bringing together many diverse partners and stakeholders to help tackle the many issues facing the Peak District National Park (PDNP). However, the report concluded that reporting and monitoring of the NPMP 2012-17 had been difficult and in many cases it was unclear what added value the plan had brought to the management of the Peak District National Park. Therefore, it was agreed that the NPMP 2018-23 would use the existing vision framework and identify a small, but strategic number of areas of focus, to deliver significant environmental, social and economic benefit to the Peak District National Park, its residents, businesses and visitors.

As agreed by Members previously, we started the process of updating the NPMP by working with a range of forums and working groups across the Peak District National Park to develop a series of topic based discussion papers. These were on cultural heritage, access and recreation, business and the rural economy, farming and land management, biodiversity and geodiversity, communities, sustainable transport, outreach, sustainable tourism, and climate change and natural resources. Together, these papers identified over 100 issues that were presented to Members and the NPMP Advisory Group in an Issues Report. In December 2016 Members and the NPMP Advisory Group met to identify areas where the next NPMP could have the greatest impact. This began the work of narrowing the focus of the NPMP 2018-23 down to a number of strategic areas of focus, as had been agreed previously.

During 2017 we have been working on the following areas that we wish to consult on in June 2017.

1. The eight areas of impact.
2. Refining the titles and developing supporting text for the special qualities of the Peak District National Park.

Proposals

5. **Areas of Impact**
Since the December workshops, the Project Board, a sub-committee of the NPMP Advisory Group, met to further examine the issues contained in the topic papers. They took the individual topic issues and assessed these across all the topics and through

Careful analysis developed eight cross-cutting areas of impact that we would like the next NPMP to focus on. The areas of impact integrate issues that were in individual topic papers and identifies those that can only be tackled at a strategic level across a range of partners. The areas of impact are as follows.

1. **A National Park for everyone:** This aims to widen participation by helping remove physical and mental barriers for all and promoting the health and wellbeing benefits that this can provide.
2. **Securing the most for the Peak District National Park:** This is about securing the political and financial support that is necessary to conserve and enhance the Peak District National Park's special qualities. By working collectively and pooling resources, we can be effective in influencing and responding to policy and funding decisions. This is especially important, following our exit from the European Union.
3. **Encouraging enjoyment with understanding:** This is a key purpose of the Peak District National Park. It is about making the most of opportunities for everyone to enjoy the special qualities by promoting a sense of harmony and responsibility.
4. **Preparing for a future climate:** This means that we will lead the way in helping our communities, businesses and visitors to reduce the impact of climate change on the environment, and in adapting to future conditions.
5. **Enhancing the benefits that the Peak District National Park provides:** This means increasing our knowledge and understanding of the benefits provided by the Peak District National Park. Then we can use this knowledge to inform our work, so the benefits remain for future generations.
6. **Ensuring a future for farming and land management:** This aims to support the sustainability of our farming community. It seeks to ensure that farmers and land managers conserve and enhance the special qualities of the Peak District National Park, and the benefits they provide.
7. **Managing landscape conservation on a big scale:** This is about a holistic approach to landscape conservation. This means working on a larger geographical scale and bringing all specialists together to get the biggest impact.
8. **Supporting sustainable communities:** This is about ensuring our communities are sustainable now and in the future. It is about balancing the needs of the community while conserving the Peak District National Park.

6. **Special Qualities**

One of the purposes of national parks is to:

Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public

Currently the special qualities of the PDNP are defined by 20 statements with no supporting text. In order to bring them to life and make them relevant we have developed eight statements which we believe better reflect and articulate what is special about the Peak District National Park. These statements, last presented to Members in early 2016 as part of a Strategic Advisory Group meeting, have been developed internally and with feedback from partners. They now read as follows:

1. Beautiful views created by contrasting landscapes and dramatic geology.
2. Internationally important and locally distinctive habitats and species.
3. Undeveloped places of tranquillity and dark night skies within reach of millions.
4. Characteristic settlements with strong communities and traditions.
5. Landscapes that tell a story of people and industry since prehistoric time.
6. An inspiring space for escape, adventure, exploring and quiet reflection.
7. Historic features offering visible and buried reminders of past lives.
8. Vital benefits for millions of people that flow far beyond the landscape boundary.

We have now developed supporting text to accompany these titles, which can be read within Appendix 1.

As previously agreed, these special qualities will be integrated into the updated NPMP so that they are an integral part of this partnership plan for the place. We wish to consult on these special qualities at the same time as the 8 areas of impact.

7. **Development of Public Consultation Document**

We have developed a public consultation document (see Appendix 1) which will help us to gain feedback from residents, visitors, businesses, partners and stakeholders on the areas of impact and the special qualities of the Peak District National Park. The consultation document highlights the areas where we believe we can make the biggest difference to the Peak District National Park over the next five years in collaboration with our partners and stakeholders, and seeks to gain comments on this proposed approach. The consultation document consciously does not set out how we plan to deliver any work to achieve the intentions in the areas of impact, as developing the delivery plan will be done during the next stage of the NPMP development process.

We have worked with the NPMP Advisory Group, National Park Authority officers and Members to produce the consultation document. The Strategic Advisory Group have provided comments on an earlier version of the consultation document which have been taken into account and incorporated in the version in appendix 1. Subject to Members approval, we will use this document to undertake a 6 week consultation period and use the results to inform the drafting of the NPMP, including continuing to refine the special qualities. Access to the consultation document will be via the Peak District National Park website with responses being made by means of an online survey, email or in writing.

8. **Next Steps**

Following the end of the consultation period we will assess the comments received and make the necessary changes to the eight areas of impact and special qualities. We will then begin to work with partners to develop actions that will help to achieve the areas of impact and to develop the final draft of the NPMP document. All of these steps will be undertaken with the NPMP Project Board, the NPMP Advisory Group, partners and stakeholders to ensure there is ownership of the final Plan and a willingness to deliver. The final draft NPMP will undergo a further round of public consultation to confirm that the actions within it are relevant and achievable.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

9. **Financial:**

There are no direct financial implications for the reports presented with this paper. In terms of the update of the NPMP, this has a budget associated with it.

10. **Risk Management:**

There is the potential that no one will comment on the consultation document. This risk has been minimised by involving partners throughout the development of the document. We will further minimise this risk by publishing the consultation document on the Authority's website and by directly informing partners and stakeholders that the consultation period is open. We will also promote the consultation via press releases, facebook and twitter.

11. **Sustainability:**

Implementing the NPMP directly contributes to the sustainability of the National Park.

12. **Background papers (not previously published)**

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Help Shape the Peak District National Park Management Plan Update

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date:

Emily Fox, Head of Strategy and Performance, 18 May 2017