

3. **ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITIES CONFERENCE, BUXTON, 19-21 SEPTEMBER 2007 (A11911/JBD)**

Proposal

- 1 To report back on the ANPA conference

RECOMMENDATION:

That

1. **the evaluation report and final budget are noted**
2. **thanks are expressed formally to the members of the task team; to all staff, volunteers and members who helped; to partners who helped on tours; to the speakers, chairs and other contributors; the staff of The Conference People, The Palace Hotel and the University of Derby; and to the sponsors who generously supported the event**

Key Issues

- 2 The Authority agreed to establish a task team to make arrangements for the ANPA Conference at its meeting 27 May 2005 (minute reference 43/05). This report summarises the conference evaluation and reports on the final budget.
- 3 The conference was held successfully at the Palace Hotel Buxton 19-21 September 2007. 188 delegates attended in total with 112 full packages with the remainder part attendance, concessionary or allocated to speakers, sponsors and organisers. All 14 UK NPAs were represented. A full evaluation report was prepared and is available from the Chief Executive. The following is a summary of that report.
- 4 The conference was an extremely well run event which left delegates enthused and informed about National Parks. Overall, 79% of respondents thought it was a good or excellent event, with only 9% believing it poor or fair. There was a good buzz and highlights such as tours, dinners, speakers, workshops and entertainment were well executed and thought through. Tours were a highlight for many and were well organised and exhibited the best of our high quality work in the Peak District. The 6 speakers from NPAs were of a uniformly high quality and the other speakers were of a very high level and calibre, although not consistently focused on the conference theme. Timekeeping worked extremely well with all speakers and chairing sessions sticking to time and with a core script ensuring key announcements, thanks to sponsors etc. Conference Audio Visual and presentation were of a high quality, allowing speakers and the *Spirit of the Peak* DVD to be shown at their best, although there were difficulties with sound for the DVD *Tomorrow's People*. Conference information was a good standard and used a consistent brand.
- 5 Whilst the conference was well attended by NPA members from all UK National Parks - so it felt like a very successful member event - attendance by others from outside NPAs was disappointing, probably because of high delegate fee rates. It is questionable whether such a large event can continue into the future at such a cost, despite securing 40% of the costs through sponsorship. The conference achieved diversity and sustainability goals well.
- 6 We successfully used a mixed model of using professional conference organisers to do specialist and back-office functions with NPA staff (62 volunteers - 30 rangers/part time rangers, and 32 who volunteered from across the Authority) and members (9 volunteers) focusing on content of tours, workshops, front-of house and helping delegates. Good

project management ensured effective budgetary control and attention to detail, so leading to overall a high quality event. The venue overall was well located, up to the task and generally good value for money, but as we were essentially purchasing a 'value' package some elements of service were not absolutely up to the mark and a higher cost contract, eg with exclusive hotel use, may have resolved those.

APPENDIX

BACKGROUND

Resources

- 7 At Services Committee 9 June 2006 a gross budget of £115 000 was approved with all costs to be covered by sponsorship and income (minute reference 26/06). A full budget has been reviewed by the task team. This shows overall that the final costs of the event was £98 749.52 (inc VAT) of which £41 000 was achieved through sponsorship and the remaining £61 571.90 through delegate income. Overall, the budget shows a small surplus of about £3834.00, although a small amount of work to disseminate the results is still to be accounted for but this will be less than £800, therefore leaving an overall surplus of £3000.

Risk Management

- 8 Full risk management was used throughout the conference planning so as to ensure a successful event.

Human Rights, Equalities, Health & Safety

- 9 The conference achieved diversity and sustainability outcomes reasonably well.

Consultees

- 10 None

Enclosures

- 11 None

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

- 12 None

Report Author

- 13 Jim Dixon

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- 14 29 November 2007