

**AGENDA ITEM No. 8**

**PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

**NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MEETING**

**22 MAY 2009**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**PART A**

**1. NATIONAL PARK SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT ACTION PLAN (A85631/ TN)**

**Purpose of the report**

1. This report seeks Member approval for the National Park Revised Draft Sustainable Transport Action Plan. This Action Plan will provide a focus for the delivery of sustainable transport within the National Park by stakeholders and the Authority. This report seeks delegated authority from the Authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Member Representative for Traffic, Travel and Accessibility for approving the Final Action Plan.

**Recommendations**

2.
  1. **The Authority approves the Revised Draft National Park Sustainable Transport Action Plan (Appendix 1).**
  2. **The Authority agrees that further comments from stakeholders on the Revised Draft Action Plan be addressed in a final version with delegated authority to the Chief Executive to make such changes in consultation with the Member representative for National Park Management Plan Outcome 6 – Traffic, Travel and Accessibility.**
  3. **The Authority note the process for monitoring the Action Plan will be through the National Park Management Plan Annual Monitoring Reporting to Audit and Performance.**

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

3. The adoption of the National Park Sustainable Transport Action Plan will fulfil Action 5 of Outcome 6 – Traffic, Travel and Accessibility within the National Park Management Plan. This action is to “Adopt a National Park Sustainable Transport Strategy which includes an integrated approach to parking, public transport, walking and cycling within the National Park. Implementation of the Action Plan will contribute to the whole of Outcome 6, which states the following.  
“By 2011 highways, transport infrastructure and services have been improved because they:
  - meet the needs of residents, visitors and surrounding areas
  - increase the proportion of visitors using methods of travel other than private cars
  - reduce the adverse environmental impacts of travel on the special qualities of the National Park
  - enable more sustainable travel patterns that lead to a reduction in the levels of carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere, especially by supporting public transport.”

4. The adoption and implementation of the Action Plan will also contribute to further implementing corporate outcome C: adverse environmental impact of traffic on the special qualities of the National Park are minimised.

### **Background**

5. The production of a Sustainable Transport Action Plan for the Peak District National Park was originally recommended within the mini Best Value Review of the National Park Authority's Transport Policy Team in 2005 (Minute Reference 13/05). Subsequently, the Traffic, Travel and Accessibility outcome for the National Park Management Plan 2006-11 contained the following action: -

- "5. Adopt a National Park Sustainable Transport Strategy which includes an integrated approach to parking, public transport, walking and cycling within the National Park".

A decision was taken in 2008 to engage Consultants to undertake the production of the Action Plan. This decision was taken on the basis that an independently produced Plan would carry greater weight with stakeholders, and ultimately gain greater buy-in from them.

6. Integrated Transport Planning (ITP) were recruited through a formal tender process in August 2008, to produce the Action Plan. The preparation of a Draft Plan required careful consideration of relevant existing information and policy with regard to transport in the National Park. The initial preparation also included a first round of verbal consultation with key stakeholders. The resultant Draft Plan contained objectives and actions formulated by ITP in response to their desk study and preliminary consultation.
7. The National Park Authority undertook a stakeholder workshop on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2009, whereby statutory and non-statutory invitees were given the opportunity to influence the objectives and actions of the Plan. A similar event was held for Authority Members on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2009. All comments arising from the workshops were recorded and used to produce revised objectives and actions. Following the workshops, the revised objectives and actions of the Plan were taken to meetings of the Strategic Management Team on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2009, and the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2009. Prior to the Meeting of SAG, all Members received copies of the main text of the Plan for information and comment. Feedback from SAG and Members has informed the Revised Draft Plan appended to this report.
8. ITP are currently undertaking a second round of stakeholder consultation, that will be concluded on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2009. It is anticipated that any resultant changes to the revised draft objectives and actions will be minor. Therefore Officers feel that it would be appropriate that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Lead Member for Traffic, Travel and Accessibility be delegated authority to sign-off the final Action Plan, in order that the implementation of the Plan can commence from July 2009 onwards.
9. Members should be aware that the Revised draft Action Plan does not contain any indicators yet, as these will be developed over the coming months (the same as other Action Plans and Strategies), so they are integrated with National Park Management Plan, corporate and other existing indicators that the Authority already monitors.
10. Members will be aware that following the Authority's decision to withdraw from the South Pennines Integrated Transport Strategy (SPITS) Partnership (Minute Reference 6/09), that £5400 allocated for the SPITS contribution for the 2009/10 financial year has been re-allocated to the implementation of the Sustainable Transport Action Plan.

Any slippage in the timescales for implementation of the Plan could impact upon the ability to effectively utilise this funding within the current financial year. Similarly, following the National Park Authority's withdrawal from the SPITS Partnership, it is important that the adoption and implementation of the Sustainable Transport Action Plan is undertaken in a timely manner, in order to retain the interest of stakeholders.

### Proposals

11. This report has three recommendations, relating to the approval of the Action Plan by the Authority, delegating approval of the Final Action Plan to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Lead Member for Traffic, Travel and Accessibility, and that monitoring of the Action Plan will be done through the National Park Management Plan monitoring. The close relationship of the recommendations limits the number of available options as follows: -
  - 1) Option 1 – Approval of all recommendations; this would consist of the approval of the Action Plan before Members, with a subsequent sign-off of the Final Action Plan by the Chief Executive. It would also consist of the Action Plan being monitored through the National Park Management Plan monitoring process. This option would enable the Action Plan to meet Project Plan deadlines, and ultimately enable implementation of the Plan to commence from July 2009 onwards. It also coordinates the monitoring of the Action Plan with the National Park Management Plan. This is the preferred option.
  - 2) Option 2 – Approval of recommendation 1 only; this would consist of the approval of the Revised Draft Action Plan, but would necessitate that the Final Action Plan be brought before Authority for approval. This would add some considerable delay to the completion of the Action Plan, and ultimately delay implementation, with a potential loss of buy-in from stakeholders.
  - 3) Option 3 – Approval of recommendations 1 and 2 only; this would consist of the approval of the Action Plan before Members, with a subsequent sign-off of the Final Action Plan by the Chief Executive. This option would lead to another monitoring system for the Action Plan needing to be found, which will not lead to a coordinated reporting mechanism for the National Park Management Plan and Action Plan.
  - 4) Option 4 – Approval of none of the recommendations; this option should only be considered if Members consider the Plan before them to be flawed. This option would lead to considerable delay and expense in the adoption of a National Park Sustainable Transport Action Plan.

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

12. **Financial:** The Transport Policy Team has allocated £5,000 towards the completion of the Plan by ITP, and a further £5400 for its implementation. Both these costs will be met from the Transport Policy Team budget. Any delay to the adoption of the Plan may result in cost/resource implications for the Team.
13. **Risk Management:** The greatest risk to the adoption and implementation of the Action Plan is the Transport Policy's Team anticipated workload resulting from the Local Development Framework development process. Should there be any delays in the adoption of the Action Plan, it is unlikely that there will be sufficient officer resources to finalise the Action Plan within the current timescales. In addition, this could impact on implementation of the Action Plan.

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

None

**Appendices**

National Park Revised Draft Sustainable Transport Action Plan 2009-15

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

Tim Nicholson, Acting Transport Policy Manager, 14 May 2009