

**AGENDA ITEM No. 10**

**PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

**NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MEETING**

**3 DECEMBER 2010**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**PART A**

**1. NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW – OUTLINE PROPOSAL (A6121/RG)**

**Purpose of the report**

1. To seek endorsement from Authority members on the approach being taken to review the current National Park Management Plan (NPMP) and specifically approval for the outline Proposal for the next plan.

**Recommendations**

2.
  1. **Endorse the approach being taken to review the National Park Management Plan, with a focus on seeking a high degree of engagement with stakeholders and delivery partners.**
  2. **Approve the overall architecture of the proposal (i.e. a short vision statement, four strategic themes, and a set of outcome statements) and the subject of the four strategic themes, as set out in Appendix 1, for further development into the draft Plan.**

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

3. The National Park Management Plan (NPMP) is the most important document for each National Park. It is the overarching strategic document and central to the future of the Park. It co-ordinates and integrates other plans, sets the vision and objectives that will guide development for the next 20-30 years, and indicates how the National Park purposes and duties will be delivered through sustainable development. In doing so it sets the overall framework for all policy and activity pursued by the National Park Authority. Guidance published in 2005 sets out a number of principles for reviewing NPMPs but the main responsibility is that plans have to be reviewed every 5 years, to ensure that they remain current and valid.

**Background**

4. On 26 March 2010 Authority agreed to establish a project to review the National Park Management Plan 2006-11. A small project team was formed which is working on reviewing the Plan, working to a Project Board, which reports regularly to Management Team and to the Chair and Deputy Chair on a bi-monthly basis. The Project Team works closely with the Strategy Lead Officers Group and with the Member Outcome Representatives.

5. An over-riding objective that Members and Management Team were keen to see run through the review was to get a good level on engagement with a wide range of stakeholders; in order to secure a higher level of ownership from partners in working towards achieving National Park Management Plan outcomes. This objective is shaping how we go about the review and the emphasis we are placing on working with external stakeholders. The outcome of the recent National Park Authority Performance Assessment has confirmed the importance of this approach.
6. In preparation for this item members were recently briefed on the progress of the project and given the opportunity to offer early observations and ask questions on the a review generally or the Proposal specifically.

### **Proposals**

7. Since the review started in April we have gathered evidence and analysed the current context for the National Park. The first Stakeholder event on 19<sup>th</sup> July at Losehill Hall was a key element of this stage. This event generated information from stakeholders about the context and drivers affecting the future of the National Park that would influence the Plan. We also tested with Stakeholders where they thought most had been achieved against the vision and outcomes in the current plan and where they felt the emphasis should lie in the next Plan. We asked Member Outcome Representatives and staff the same questions (through a survey), and received similar views.
8. Following the event we re-worked the current NPMP vision and outcomes based on the feedback we had from members, staff and external stakeholders. The Proposal incorporates the following key messages:
  - Clearer emphasis on economy and community in the National Park
  - Climate change responses and carbon management woven throughout
  - Focus on the important role of farming and land management
  - Maintaining emphasis on strong areas of biodiversity and cultural heritage
  - Greater integration, recognising interaction of people, landscape and economy
  - Simpler, integrated format, maintaining continuity but reflecting the new emphasis.
9. The Proposal provides an outline framework for the next Plan that is different from the current Plan in the following ways:
  - A shorter 'working' vision (i.e. we recognise that the words of the draft vision need further crafting over the next few months)
  - Four strategic themes (plus explanation based on current long vision)
  - Supported by 16 outcomes statements.
10. The four broad strategic themes in the Proposal flow from National Park purposes and duty but they describe the kind of outcomes we are seeking through four themes. The four proposed themes are:
  - A diverse and looked after landscape
  - A welcoming and inspiring place
  - Thriving and vibrant communities
  - An enterprising and sustainable economy.

The smaller number of themes also provide the potential to explore the relationships between these themes. For example, tourism is an important way of bringing people (especially more diverse audiences) to the National Park where they can be inspired by, enjoy and understand the National Park. If this experience is handled in the right kind of way their understanding can be increased and a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the Park can deepen, and help people to feel increasingly motivated to look after the Park through individual actions. Tourism is also an important economic force, supporting local businesses and providing employment. However, the Plan needs to direct tourism in a way that is sustainable, by seeking to balance between the impact on the protected landscape, the host community, the economic benefits and the quality of the experience.

11. The Proposal was presented to a second stakeholder event in October. The version that we presented is attached for your information at Appendix 1. The overall approach and architecture was strongly welcomed by stakeholders and delivery partners. The ambitions for the Proposal to be simpler, longer term focused, integrated and ensure continuity were substantially achieved. Stakeholders felt that the Proposal would be 'easier to communicate' and 'will sell wider benefits' of the National Park. Suggestions were made about the language in some places as well as specific issues, these are being considered as part of the development of a fleshed-out draft Plan for consultation from April 2011.
12. We are asking you to agree to the broad architecture and themes in the Proposal but also recognise that the detailed wording of this Proposal document is still developing. The preparation of a draft Plan will mean identifying the areas where the continuity of current programmes of work and commitments remains valid. In other areas (such as the challenge around farming, food, land management and conservation gain) it means working with specific partners to identify the new emphasis that we need to take together over the life of the next Plan. For example, the Land Managers Forum is focusing on helping us develop this element of the draft Plan. Other parallel approaches will be taken to help take forward the business, community and voluntary sector aspects. In other areas links will be made to review processes that are underway, such as the Biodiversity Action Plan review.
13. Since the Proposal received a high level of support from partners an important staging point in the review has been reached. Whilst we know there are refinements needed to the words in some areas, the energies of the project team now need to be directed towards working with others (lead members, officers and partners) to flesh-out the detailed issues and delivery elements of the draft Plan. During January we expect to work with Member Outcome Representatives to further develop and test the content of the draft Plan. If individual members wish to relay any issues to Member Outcome Representatives that would be very helpful.
14. We aim to bring a draft Plan to Authority in March before launching a consultation and a wider engagement process from April to June 2011. This process will aim to seek agreement to the draft Plan from delivery partners as well as getting comments on its content. There may also be some specific aspects of the draft Plan that we need to develop and test further during the consultation stage. Between June and August we expect to be refining and finalising the Plan and creating a web-based Plan which will be the way we want most people to be able to use the Plan (because it will have the benefits of being able to be up-dated regularly and connect to other important data, information etc). We expect that the final Plan will be available for adoption in autumn 2011, as previously agreed.

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

15. **Financial:**

The financial costs of the review will be met from within budgets.

16. **Risk Management:**

Any risks associated with the project are monitored by the Project Board. There are no risks that need to be brought to the attention of Authority.

17. **Sustainability:**

The NPMP plays a central role in indicating how achieving National Park purposes and duties will be delivered through sustainable development and in doing so provides an overarching framework for all National Park Authority policy.

18. **Background papers**

None

**Appendices**

Draft proposal for the National Park Management Plan

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

Rachel Gillis, Head of Policy, 25 November, 2010