

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Peak District National Park Authority Future Size and Shape of the Authority**

Following discussion at the Authority on 10 September, the following rationale for setting priorities and plan for achieving change has been agreed. This forms the basis on which future detailed changes to budgets, staffing structures, ways of working and relationships with partners will be based.

The paper is in 2 parts:

- The rationale for the overall approach to selecting priorities for funding
- Key principles for changing the Authority over the period to 2015

#### **1. Rationale for the overall approach to selecting priorities for funding**

This paper sets out the overall approach we propose to take for the future and sets out specific ways in which the reduction in budget could be managed, taking into account the Authority's Agreed Priorities and the Principles agreed by the Authority for guiding change over the budget planning process (Minute references 82/09 and 84/09). All that we do must be driven by our statutory purposes. National Parks are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949, and have two statutory purposes:

1. *To conserve and enhance their natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage.*
2. *To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of these special qualities.*

Policies and decisions that could have an impact upon National Parks have to take these two purposes into consideration. National Park Authorities also have a duty to foster the economic and social wellbeing of communities in pursuit of these purposes

We have also taken account of the priorities set out recently Defra in its Structural Reform Plan which are:

- *to support and develop British farming and encourage sustainable food production;*
- *help to enhance the environment and biodiversity to improve quality of life;*
- *and support a strong and sustainable green economy, which is resilient to climate change*

Other Government Department's priorities include local accountability, working with the voluntary sector, supporting tourism and heritage protection.

We have also considered the tests for all public spending set out by the Chancellor for the Spending Review which are:

*To ensure that resources are prioritised within tighter budgets, departments will be asked to prioritise their main programmes against a tough set of criteria to ensure value for money in public spending. The criteria are:*

- *Is the activity essential to meet Government priorities?*
- *Does the Government need to fund this activity?*
- *Does the activity provide substantial economic value?*

- *Can the activity be targeted to those most in need?*
- *How can the activity be provided at lower cost?*
- *How can the activity be provided more effectively?*
- *Can the activity be provided by a non-state provider or by citizens, wholly, or in partnership?*
- *Can non-state providers be paid to carry out the activity according to the results they achieve?*
- *Can local bodies, as opposed to central Government, provide the activity?*

This is summarised in the Prime Minister's statement on 8 August : *If we do all this - if we cut the obvious waste, attack the ingrained waste, stop doing things that don't add value, if we're realistic about the things that we can no longer afford and creative about raising income – we'll be able to prioritise the things we really care about.*

## **2. Key principles for changing the Authority over the period to 2015**

We will work with others to set a strategic direction for the communities and landscape over a long and medium-term period, through the National Park Management Plan. Over the next 4 years we will work towards the following. The precise percentage changes will be dependent on the actual grant settlement from Defra, but the figures below give a clear indication of our proposals.

1. protect most of our biodiversity, land management, cultural heritage and landscape work, but secure extra voluntary sector resources where possible, retain and develop our partnerships and achieve efficiencies in this work such that the budgets will be expected to be reduced by 10-20% over a 4 year period. Overall service levels will be expected to be retained or improved by more efficient working practices and contributions by partners.
2. protect our frontline planning work including planning enforcement, but seek efficiencies in forward planning by working with other councils and increase fees for some services such that the budgets will be expected to be reduced by 5-10% over a 4 year period. Overall service levels are expected to be retained or improved by more efficient working practices.
3. improve the quality of customer care in all of our planning functions including planning enforcement; cover more costs in some areas of the service through charges; ensure a higher level of local accountability for decisions; achieve more sustainability outcomes for communities, the economy and the environment through planning; and embrace creatively the opportunities to share certain services and functions with partners.
4. over time, combine all the regulatory functions - planning, enforcement, historic assets, transport - to provide a wholly integrated service to communities, land managers and property owners on statutory matters within a coherent policy framework
5. expect to reduce our transport work between 15-30%, focusing more on the reactive casework. Overall service levels in these areas will be expected to be reduced and re-focused.

6. retain capacity in our communication team, but do so in a way that reduces the overall costs of the design team recognising that more work may need to be procured externally. Services will need to budget more carefully for this work.
7. Reduce substantially the net cost of providing Environmental Learning and outreach work currently provided by Losehill Hall and look to ways of reducing the net costs of Losehill Hall to nil including through partnerships and/or disposal with full details to be discussed at the Authority meeting on 24 September 2010.
8. ensure that all direct leisure, information and recreation services should either be cost-neutral, income-generating or provided for by other organizations, including by market-testing many of our current services. We will look at further commercial opportunities for revenue generation
9. accelerate our asset management plan so that our main properties are cost-neutral or run by other agencies so that our property costs for non-operational properties are expected to be reduced by 60-80%. We will review our HQ office with a view to sharing some space with others or reducing costs in other ways.
10. retain the capacity of rangers to work with parish councils and local schools but expect to reduce lower priority community work; focus the ranger service on priority work areas.
11. rationalise the way that all of our volunteers are compensated and make further reductions in payments to part-time volunteer rangers
12. co-ordinate all grant schemes and sharply focus them on supporting voluntary, community and land management sectors to maximize their contributions to the National Park
13. widen the opportunities for volunteers to contribute to our work and at the same time providing what volunteers want, developing their role from existing areas (eg rangers) to encompass more roles in conservation, planning and education and interpretation
14. reduce our middle and senior management costs and corporate support costs by an estimated 18% proportionate to the reduction in scale and complexity of the organisation, but retaining the capacity to manage projects such as *Moors for the Future*. We will reduce the costs of supporting members whilst enhancing their effectiveness
15. reduce the number of people working for the Authority by between 30 and 45 FTE posts by reducing working hours, more flexible working and redundancies, seeking voluntary mechanisms wherever possible. We will support people today and developing skills and capacity to work flexibly and efficiently in the future. Our current budget is approximately 57% direct staff costs and the budget reductions in this plan will broadly reflect this proportion.

**Peak District National Park Authority**

**September 2010**