

## **6. MOORS FOR THE FUTURE OPERATIONAL PLAN 2015 - 2016 (SLD/CD)**

### **1. Purpose of the report**

This report puts before committee the third Operational Plan from the Moors for the Future Partnership. This plan is for the commitments in the financial year 2015/2016, but includes a look back at achievements in the previous year and a look forward, both at commitments for the following year 2016/2017 and the expectations of business development during and beyond this time frame. The Operational Plan is an appendix to this report.

### **2. Key issues**

During the year of this 2015/16 Operational Plan the Moors for the Future Partnership has so far raised and committed funds of £1.83m. The value of projects in the pipeline (subject to approval) is an additional £2.6m. This is supported by £88k contribution from this Authority.

The Authority's Resource Management Team and this Committee regularly receive business cases for new projects from Moors for the Future.

The implementation of these business cases bring significant investment into the moorland landscape of the Peak District and all have then been successfully out-turned over the past 12 years. Over £20m has been secured and invested by the Partnership's team over this period.

There are regularly 20 to 30 live projects being out-turned at any time. The present combined value of directly delivered live projects is over £4m.

This plan sets out our programme delivery plan and helps the approvals process better understand how new projects fit into the bigger vision of delivering on both the National Park Management Plan and the requirements of the Moors for the Future Partners.

An integral part of the Programme Management approach is the production of this annual Operational Plan which adds to the transparency of the whole programme and allow the approvals process to scrutinise new proposals more effectively.

The projects within the Operational Plan are funded by, and involve, a number of important partners. This will give the Authority good engagement opportunities with major partners who have significant influence over the management of the moorland landscape.

The Partnership programme is at an interesting juncture. We are in a transition period with several projects due to be completed in March 2015. Currently work is being undertaken to determine whether, for example, final reports can be delivered in April or May and if so whether the necessary budget is in place to pay staff costs to do so. So it is likely that a few projects will be extended into 2015/16, together with four projects which are continuing into 2015/16 and beyond.

An application was made (in October) for a grant from the EU Life fund for a large project – MoorLIFE2020 – with funding from several partners. We understand that the outcome of this application will be known in Spring 2015; with a potential start mid July 2015 onwards.

While we await the outcome of this Life 2014 grant application we are considering a scenario where the grant is not forthcoming. We are in discussions with our funding

partners to continue a programme of capital works, with associated scientific monitoring and communications.

An Integrated Project application to the Life 2015 fund is likely to be submitted by Defra. We have been involved from an early stage with the planning of what will be a national peatland restoration project. If successful any works emanating from this project will commence in 2016.

If MoorLIFE2020 bidding is successful the intention is to use this as match funding potential for further bidding opportunities, for example to the Heritage lottery Fund.

### 3. Recommendation

1. **That the Audit Resources and Performance Committee supports this Operational Plan and recommends it to the Moors for the Future Partnership's Strategic Management Group.**

### 4. How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

The strategic fit of the Operational Plan is relevant to the Peak District National Park Management Plan strategic themes and covers many aspects which will support the delivery of the National Park Management Plan. More specifically:

#### A Diverse Working and Cherished Landscape

Action DL1.2 – Deliver conservation on a landscape scale through a diverse range of models, in keeping with Landscape Character Assessment and supporting adaptation to climate change

Action DL1.3 – Ensure that the conservation and enhancement of landscape character areas extends beyond the national park boundaries

Action DL3.1 - Conserve and enhance biodiversity by continued action for priority habitats, sites and species within the national park in line with the Biodiversity Action Plan

Action DL 3.4 - Focus on the natural environment, ecosystem services and the part we play in these systems, through integrated action and fostering greater understanding

Action DL 3.5 – Manage river water quality and supply within the national park

Action DL 4.2.1 - Protect and enhance the storage of carbon through blanket bog stabilisation and restoration

Action DL4.2.2 – Research and demonstrate the role of peat/soil in water storage and water flow risk management, and carbon storage and management within the national park

### 5. Background

A year ago this committee approved the Moors for the Future Business Plan, this Operational Plan is a practical manifestation of the current Business Plan. At the time that the previous Operational Plan (which is presently in delivery) was approved by this committee the team intended to complete the suite of revised management tools during 2014, with implementation of a new project toolkit, a new future strategy and a new annual reporting process to fully celebrate the magnificent work the Partnership is delivering. Due to the phenomenal amount of work required for the MoorLIFE 2020 bid the work to produce a new forward strategy and a new reporting process has not progressed.

The new project tool kit is in place and work has now started on the new future strategy.

The Resource Management Team meeting on 3 December 2014 fully endorsed this Operational Plan - with minor amendments – which have been made.

## 6. **Proposals**

The plan agreed at ARP in January 2013 is to have an on-going Moors for the Future Operational Plan which will be reviewed once a year, bringing the next financial year version to the respective January ARP committee. The annual reporting to committee will follow the programme below with some flexibility to fit around large projects in order for the reporting to encompass work in a meaningful way. Individual reports will continue to be brought to Committee as necessary to gain authority for new initiatives as required to meet Standing Orders.

The reporting structure is:

- **December RMT Meeting** The draft Operational Plan for the following year will be presented for comments.
- **Audit Performance and Resource Committee January**  
Final version of Operational Plan put to Committee for approval; committee then to recommend the final version (after changes required by Committee) to Moors for the Future Strategic Management Group.
- **Moors for the Future Partnership Strategic Management Group January**  
Accept the Operational Plan for the upcoming financial year.

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

The production and monitoring of the Operational Plan and annual reporting each year, in addition to the increasing work to ensure protocol and contract compliance, is increasing in both size and the need for technically skilled administration and financial management. This is becoming increasingly difficult to finance due to the reluctance of all parties to pay employment costs. The partnership manager will be paying close attention to partner advocacy during the 2015/16 delivery year in order to maximise any available resources

## 8. **Financial:**

The resources available to produce the Operational Plan each year are those of the existing staff team with welcome advice from senior officers. No additional resources are available.

**Background papers** - None

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - The Moors for the Future Operational Plan 2015/2016

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

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Moors for the Future Partnership, 15 January 2015