

**9. AGREEING THE METHODOLOGY FOR REVIEWING THE NATIONAL PARK LOCAL PLAN (BJT)**

**1. Purpose of the report**

To agree the broad timescale and principles for programme management for the full review of the Local Plan for the National Park

**Key Issues**

- To consider matters of programme management
- To understand the regulatory framework for producing a sound plan
- To ensure that National Park purposes are pursued through the Local Plan
- That full regard is had to the social and economic wellbeing of National Park communities in pursuing National Park purposes

**2. Recommendations(s)**

1. To agree the broad timeframe for reviewing the Local Plan set out in paragraphs 17-29);
2. To delegate responsibility for the management of the project programme to the Director of Conservation and Planning in consultation with the Member Plan Review Steering Group;
3. To establish a Member Plan Review Steering Group for this purpose and approve the draft terms of reference and scope as set out in Appendix 1.
4. To confirm that the detailed programme and scoping of the review project will be delegated to the Project Team in consultation with the Member Plan Review Steering Group as set out in paragraphs 32 to 37 and may amend the terms of reference and scope to reflect discussion.
5. To confirm that the Member Plan Review Steering Group may also offer a critical friend role in the production of Supplementary Planning Documents.
6. To confirm that attendance at meetings of the Steering Group is an approved duty.

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

3. The production of a Local Plan for the National Park is a statutory requirement and forms the starting point for all planning decisions.

4. The review offers the opportunity to pursue key areas of impact in the National Park Management Plan and recently approved Corporate Strategy for 2019-2024. Indeed the Local Plan provides the spatial strategy for all 6 “Areas of Impact” described in the Management Plan.

**5. Areas of Impact:**

- 1: Preparing for a future climate
- 2: Ensuring a future for farming and land management
- 3: Managing landscape conservation on a big scale
- 4: A National Park for everyone
- 5: Encouraging enjoyment with understanding
- 6: Supporting thriving and sustainable communities and economy

6. **Corporate Strategy outcomes:**

A sustainable landscape that is conserved and enhanced;

A National Park loved and supported by diverse audiences; and

Thriving and sustainable communities that are part of this special place

7. Moreover, the Local Plan is also a means of achieving the strategic objectives of the adopted Landscape Strategy for the National Park, setting out the distinctive aims of each landscape character type.

**Background Information**

8. The current Local Plan for the National Park comprises 2 development plan documents:
- The Core Strategy (adopted October 2011)
  - Development Management Policies (aiming for adoption May 2019)
9. Government guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should review their Local Plan's every 5 years.
10. Overall, the Local Plan for the National Park has remained consistent with National Policy and the adoption of the Development Management Policies DPD further helps strengthen this relationship. Since the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2011 a number of challenges have arisen which the plan should strive to address. Some examples include:
- The overall health of the climate and the natural environment
  - The need for greater sustainability in design and resilience to climate change and energy costs
  - The on-going backlog of affordable housing need;
  - The overall change to the structure of the population with ageing trends and out migration of young adult population;
  - The need to support the health of the nation;
  - The increasing demands for active recreation;
  - Strategic demands for cross park transport infrastructure (road and rail) and the competition for space with recreational users
  - The need to support a range of sustainable land management industries (in particular the future of traditional farming)
  - The need to find opportunities for a sustainable local economy
  - The need to find a sustainable level of output for our traditional minerals industry
  - The need to invest in heritage to conserve the valued heritage of the area
11. In this context, it is clear that the pressures on the National Park are unrelenting and the need for a sustainable plan which continues to be driven by National Park purposes is a

complex and challenging undertaking.

12. Recent experience of producing the Development Management Policies DPD allowed a Member Steering Group to work with officers to debate and steer key areas of policy. However, the group did not play a major role in programme management.
13. During the production of the Core Strategy a Plans Review Task Team was established to oversee programme management but conversely played only a minor role in policy development. This was left to more comprehensive member and stakeholder workshops.
14. Officers consider that a role that takes the best aspects of both these models could bring real benefits in terms of officer, member relationships, programme delivery and ultimately an improved understanding and ownership of policies by the members.
15. The previous Member Steering Group brought together a mix of members:
  - Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee
  - Chair of Authority
  - Member representatives for:
    - Cultural Heritage
    - People and Communities
    - Biodiversity
    - Economy
16. At the July 2018 Authority meeting Cllr M Chaplain was also added to the group but without a recorded Member representative role.

## **Proposals**

17. **Timeframe**
18. A full review of the Local Plan is a significant project undertaking. It is proposed to use the timeframe of the newly adopted Corporate Strategy to aim for adoption by 2024. In broad terms the production period is anticipated as follows:
19. **2019/20 – Year 1 scoping and evidence collection**
20. During this period the project team will:
  - Develop the engagement plan;
  - Undertake early engagement with all Parishes through our Parish Statements
  - Draft a State of Communities Report
  - Generate other strategic evidence reports
  - Commence Statement of Common Ground with constituent and adjoining planning authorities

**21. 2020/21 – Year 2 Generate issues and options**

22. During this period the project team will:

- Complete evidence collection; and
- Begin to compile Issues and options
- Commence early debates on broad issues (using digital media and workshop style events)

**23. 2021/22 – Year 3 Consult widely on focussed issues and options**

24. During this period the project team will:

- Undertake a formal consultation phase on focussed issues and options for the Local Plan; and
- Collate responses
- Feedback to member group and the Authority and seek steer

**25. 2022/23 – Year 4 Draw up preferred options or draft plan**

26. During this period the project team will:

- Draw up the first draft plan either in final plan form or as preferred options depending on outcome of the previous stage;
- Consult on draft plan/preferred options
- Collate responses
- Feedback to member group and the Authority and seek steer

**27. 2023/24 – Year 5 Submission and Examination of Publication version**

28. During this period the project team will:

- Finalise the plan
- Consult on Publication version
- Consider early preparation of modifications and scope for additional consultation
- Collate the plan, modifications (if needed), representations and supporting documents for submission to the Secretary of State (PINS);
- Recruit Programme Officer
- Prepare for and administrate independent examination
- Respond to any requests for further modifications

**29. 2024 – Adoption**

**30. Programme Management**

31. The day-to-day management of tasks will be led by the Policy and Communities Service, which will form the main project team, managed by the Head of Service. However, in order to provide an Authority level steer at key stages, it is proposed to reconstitute the Member Steering Group, which has worked effectively with officers on the Development Management Policies DPD. The group provides space and flexibility for deeper debate and technical inputs as guided by the project team and on request by the member group.

**32. Member Steering Group**

33. It is proposed that the basic structure and composition of the group remains the same, but with a view to drawing in some of the newer member representative roles in order to address the broader scope of the spatial strategy, namely:

- Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee
- Chair of Authority
- Member Representatives for:

Communities

Food and Farming

Health and Wellbeing

Landscape and Heritage

Tourism and Participation

Rural Economy

Thriving Natural Environments

34. A draft terms of reference and scope for the Steering Group is set out in Appendix 1 however it is proposed that at the initial meeting of the group these are considered and amended to reflect discussions.

35. Authority members as a whole are encouraged to utilise the group participants or contact the Head of Policy and Communities in order to input their own views as part of the process. There will be opportunities for the Member Steering Group to consider what other opportunities there should be for wider member input, e.g. workshop days, presentations to Members' Forum, debates etc in addition to full Authority meetings.

**36. Wider work of the Steering Group**

37. In addition to the production of a new Local Plan the Authority also has a commitment to delivering a series of Supplementary Planning Documents. As such a further useful role of the steering group will be to offer a critical friend style role on related areas of policy guidance, prior to these being brought to full Committee for approval in draft or final form.

**38. Resources**

39. The whole of Policy and Communities Service will be available to assist in undertaking the review. In addition specialist officers e.g. built and natural conservation specialists as well as Development Management staff, Minerals, Legal and Enforcement officers

who may also be drawn in as and when. The core project team includes:

Head of Policy and Communities;

Policy Planners;

Community and sustainability specialists;

Transport Policy officers; and

Technical (mapping) and research skills

40. In addition to staffing the Service has an annual budget for **plan making** and the scoping phase will be used to consider the adequacy of the budget for this purpose and how best to utilise these funds on the production of evidence and supporting appraisals (sustainability, habitats regulations, equalities, health etc). The scope and potential for evidence reports will be shared and discussed with the member steering group.

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

**Financial:**

41. The cost of reviewing the Local Plan (including production of the evidence base and wider resources) is taken into consideration in the main report and will be discussed further with the Member Steering Group.

**Risk Management:**

42. The adoption of the Development Management Policies provides the Authority with greater consistency with national policy. Therefore the Local Plan as a whole has undertaken a partial review and is will be more up to date as a result.
43. Only a very small number of challenges have been made to the Core Strategy since its adoption in 2011 as evidenced through appeal decisions. Policy CC2 (renewable energy) was formally considered by the Authority and resulted in the production of a Supplementary Planning Document. Other challenges related to aspects of housing policy, however it was decided to complete the DM Policies work and return to strategic matters as part of the full review.
44. National guidance for plan making indicates that reviews should take place every 5 years. Hence it is proposed to kick-start the review immediately from adoption of the Development Management Policies and seek to bring forward a comprehensive plan review within the following 5 year period.
45. Regulations are clear and provide clarity on the route to be taken to achieve a sound plan. The key aspects of soundness relate to:
- the justification for the plan;
- The effectiveness of the plan; and
- consistency with national policy
46. In order to reduce risks going forward the project team will need to ensure the plan is produced in accordance with both soundness and regulations in mind.

**Sustainability:**

47. Sustainability will be a central aim of the Local Plan and will be achieved through rigorous application of the sustainability appraisal, thorough examination of the evidence base and ultimately through the production and delivery of its policies.

**Equality:**

48. Equality matters will be considered through a specific Equalities Impact Assessment on the plan and will ensure that the needs and issues of people within all the protected groups are given due consideration.

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

None

**50. Appendices**

1. Draft Terms of Reference and Scope of the Member Local Plan Review Steering Group

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

Brian Taylor, Head of Policy and Communities, 7 March 2019  
[Brian.taylor@peakdistrict.gov.uk](mailto:Brian.taylor@peakdistrict.gov.uk)