

**7. CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S REPORT (SLF)**

**1. Purpose of the report**

To up-date members of key items since the previous Authority meeting

**2. Recommendations(s)**

**1. For members to note the report**

**3. Key Items**

**Long service awards:** since the February Authority meeting I have presented long service awards to four staff with 10 to 20 years’ service to the Authority.

**National Park Grant settlement 2020/21:** I have received confirmation of the funding allocated to us from Government, in the form of our National Park Grant from the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, for 2020/21. Our settlement is £6,698,847, which is the same level of funding received in 2019/20 and so does not take into account inflationary pressures on our budget. This is not what we had hoped for, however we have prepared for it. We will now draw on £152k of baseline budget reductions from the list of proposed savings presented to members at the February 2020 Authority to achieve a balanced budget for 2020/21. The Chairs of the English National Park Authorities have written to the Secretary of State to highlight the exciting opportunity they have to invest in a new deal for National Parks for the benefit of the whole nation. The current settlement only allows us to make a start on this important task, we are highlighting the opportunity for the government to act now and support enhanced delivery with sustained additional financial resource.

**Working nationally:**

- **Defra visit** - on 4<sup>th</sup> March we hosted a visit by the Defra Future Landscapes Team on our work to be a national park for everyone. We shared our audience insight data and our engagement plans to be a national park loved and supported by diverse audiences. The Defra team had the opportunity to meet the Fit for Work team and Peak District Mosaic, and the Peak District Educators Group to learn how we work with others to achieve this outcome.
- **South Pennines Regional Park:** The Chairman and I met with Pennine Prospects to learn about their work to develop a South Pennines Park. We offered our support for the concept and are already working well with the South Pennines through the Moors for the Future Partnership. We will look for opportunities to continue to connect our work across the northern protected landscapes.
- **Great North Bog:** we’re having early and fruitful discussions nationally and locally on this proposal covering 92% of all upland peat in England. It is an ambitious, grand-scale peatland restoration initiative developed by the North Pennines AONB Partnership, the Yorkshire Peat Partnership and the Moors for the Future Partnership. It is a landscape approach to restoration across nearly 7000 square kilometres of upland peat in the protected landscapes of northern England, which currently store 400 million tonnes of carbon. Damaged peat in the Great North Bog releases 3.7 million tonnes of carbon annually. The programme aims to develop a partnership to deliver a 20-year funding, restoration and conservation plan to make a significant contribution to the UK’s climate and carbon sequestration targets.

### National Park Management Plan delivery:

- **#PeakDistrictProud:** is launched in March to re-engage visitors to the Peak District National Park with the Countryside Code; promoting a sense of responsibility and ownership in order to make positive behavioural change. We have worked with partners to create a unique, engaging identity to present this information. It is deliberate that neither an existing logo has been used, nor a new logo developed; the focus will be on a set of values and messages. Respect, protect, enjoy. We have broken down the messages of the original code to three areas of focus: **Respect your environment, Enjoy your access, Protect the invisible.** This makes the code easy to understand and use, and retains positivity in each message. **#PeakDistrictProud** is to be used by official stakeholders when pushing the refreshed code and will be digital first campaign to target people who will visit the park when and before they arrive, this will encourage behavioural change.
- **Thriving and sustainable communities:** The Peak Park Parishes Forum have shared a statement with us on what a “thriving and sustainable” community means. This alongside our work with Parishes on individual parish statements will aid the development of a collective understanding of thriving and sustainable communities with the drafting of our first State of Communities Report. We will continue to involve the parishes and Peak Park Parishes Forum in this unfolding piece of work.
- **Delivery of affordable local needs housing:** In December 2019 officers brought an Annual Monitoring Report to members of the Planning Committee. This showed 40 new homes completed during 2018/19 and a further 213 in the pipeline. This includes 50 affordable homes in delivery addressing local needs across Derbyshire Dales (main sites in Bakewell, Bradwell, Taddington, and Winster), with a further 163 homes comprising open market and ancillary units on brownfield and enhancement sites and other justified by agricultural need.

**Peak District Birds of Prey Initiative:** The Peak District Bird of Prey Initiative 2019 report has been published. It brings together data on key birds of prey or ‘raptors’ nesting within the Dark Peak. Results from the 2019 season include the fledging of goshawks from all eight nests monitored within the study area, along with the return of hen harriers once again to a nest in the Peak District. This news was tempered by the death of one of the two young hen harriers a few days after fledging, from what are thought to be natural causes. The second youngster and both adults were also not seen again from about the same time. Of particular note was that two of the eight successful goshawk nests monitored saw the first confirmed fledging following around two decades of failed attempts in the same locations, with co-operation on the ground between raptor groups and gamekeepers supporting the successful results. For the 2020 season, the Initiative focus will include measures to deter peregrine egg and young theft alongside the police, encouraging earlier sightings and reporting and increasing joint site visits between gamekeepers and raptor monitoring workers.

**Our values** – thank you to members, staff and volunteers for feedback on our draft values. We have collated the results and, working with the Investors in People Delivery Group, have identified our three values: Care, Enjoy, Pioneer. These and supporting statements will be rolled out across staff, volunteers and members from April.

#### 4. Appendices

None

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

Sarah Fowler, Chief Executive, 05 March 2020