

7. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S REPORT (SLF)**

1. **Purpose of the report**

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

2. **Recommendation**

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

3. **Key Items**

COVID-19 – On 23rd March 2020 the Prime Minister made it clear we are facing a national emergency as we tackle the coronavirus outbreak. He clearly and starkly spelled out what all of us need to do; stay at home, protect the NHS, and save lives. We have responded and, while most of our services remain in operation, we have shifted the whole organisation’s way of operating to remote working. This means that our National Park Authority offices are closed and we have closed our visitor facilities, including visitor centres, cycle hire centres and car parks. Our staff are working at home, unless undertaking essential safety tasks, which they are doing in line with strict government guidance. During this time meetings of the Authority and the Programmes and Resources Committees will take place through video conferencing. These meetings will be broadcast live on YouTube and can be viewed using the following link: [View live meetings on YouTube](#). Meetings of the Planning Committee have been suspended so the Chief Executive is using her Emergency Delegation to make planning decisions that cannot wait until Committee meetings resume. Details of any decisions that will be made under this delegation will be published 5 working days before the decision is to be made to allow you to make representations. We also took the unprecedented move to ask those who do not live in, or work on essential services in, the Peak District to stay away. This is because it was absolutely critical for our Peak District communities, businesses, farmers and key workers within the National Park that we all take these measures extremely seriously; ensuring that we do not put undue and unnecessary pressure on often limited local services and emergency personnel.

On 10th May 2020 the Prime Minister set out the governments to steps to ease these restrictions, including allowing unlimited outdoor exercise and driving to do this. We continue to ask the majority of staff to work from home. We are currently reviewing what this means for staff who are unable to work from and how we can offer a COVID-19 safe office environment to work in and what this means for our outdoor related work. It is no surprise that as the nation takes the first steps in easing the 'lockdown' many will turn to our national parks as a place of sanctuary. Whilst we may need our national parks at this time, we remain precariously balanced with the current risks to everyone from Covid-19. This is why we have taken steps to appeal to anyone seeking to travel to the Peak District National Park that before their journey they carefully consider their own wellbeing and that of the Peak District’s many small communities - and be aware that the vast majority of facilities including hospitality businesses will not be open for a little while yet. Continuing to use local parks and outdoor areas close to home can continue to provide the crucial breathing space for them and for us, to ensure the Peak District can be a safe and welcoming place to visit in the weeks to come. In this way we can ensure we don’t place undue pressure on public highways, emergency access or key workers and that we limit the impacts on our residential towns and villages wherever possible.

As well as taking action ourselves, we are working closely with our partners. We are connected into Derbyshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and with our fellow National Parks and with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

We have weathered many challenges in our almost 70 year history and, when the time is right, we will once again welcome everyone to this place which so many millions of us love and hold dear.

You can keep up to date with our response to the changing situation via our website: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Update: Peak District National Park](#)

Long service awards – I have had the opportunity to give four long service awards since the Authority meeting in February 2020.

Working nationally – the 10 English National Park Authorities continue to work collectively on delivery plans for the four key areas of: Being National Parks for everyone; Being leaders in nature recovery; Shaping the future of farming; Leading in tackling the climate emergency. Defra remains keen to ensure the recommendations of the Landscapes Review are assessed and the agenda moved along and have invited me to join them as an expert adviser to support this work. This is a unique opportunity to help shape the way forwards for our national landscapes.

Working with partners locally - #PeakDistrictProud - a range of partners across the National Park have come together to launch and collectively promote the Countryside Code for the Peak District National Park with refreshed images and clear messages on *Protect the invisible, Respect the environment and Enjoy your access.*

Investors in People action plan - An important area of work we had in train was developing our organisational values - the core ethics, behaviours or principles we will abide by no matter what. Those values that set us apart and distinguish what it means to us to work here. We were ready to launch our new values just before the coronavirus pandemic struck. They had been developed from the hard work of our Investors in People Delivery Group, which includes a representative from every service, using feedback from consultation exercises with staff, volunteers and our Members. I am pleased to share with you these values:

- **Care** : *We care for the Peak District National Park, the people we work with and all those we serve. It's at the heart of everything we do.*
- **Enjoy** : *We take pride in what we do and feel good about our contribution.*
- **Pioneer** : *We were born of pioneers. We will continue to explore opportunities to inspire future generations.*

These values, supported by this set of simple and clear behaviours, will become embedded in everything we do. We hope they will serve us well.

4. **Appendices**

None

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Sarah Fowler, Chief Executive, 13 May 2020