

9. PROPOSAL TO MAKE A BID TO THE EU HORIZON 2020 FUND

1. Purpose of the report

To seek approval for PDNPA to prepare and submit a European Funding bid (**Horizon 2020 EU funding programme for research and innovation**) with Sheffield University and selected National Park partners in UK and Europe to support PDNPA ambitions and work on sustainable transport to deliver NPMP and corporate strategy outcomes.

Key Issues

- **PDNPA staff capacity**
- **Confirmation of partners (x2 European National Parks)**

2. Recommendations(s)

- 1. OPTION 1 - Delegate approval to the Director of Planning and Conservation in consultation with Head of Finance to develop and submit a funding bid by 10 September 2020**

How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

- 3.** There are no legal obligations to develop and submit the bid. Should the bid be successful PDNPA are not legally responsible until the funding agreement has been signed which would be in consultation with the Head of Law.

This bid provides the potential opportunity to provide funding over 3 years to develop and pilot our sustainable transport policies. The bid is 100% revenue funded and would provide additional funding to compliment a shrinking government grant.

Strategic fit:

Enable delivery of corporate strategy outcomes.

A sustainable landscape that is conserved and enhanced (KPI 2 natural beauty conserved and enhanced, KPI 3 increase the amount of carbon captured)

A National Park loved and supported by diverse audiences (KPI 11 proportion of underrepresented groups increased)

Thriving and sustainable communities that are part of this special place (KPI 18 generating interventions that support sustainable community development).

Enable delivery of NPMP objectives, including the within the following areas of impact:

1: Preparing for a future climate

4: A National Park for everyone

5: Encouraging enjoyment with understanding

6: Supporting thriving and sustainable communities and Economy

The bid would also support and align with existing programmes of work such as:

- Recreation Hubs and Visitor Management
- Audience Reach
- Low Carbon sustainable Transport
- Thriving and Sustainable Communities
- Local Plan review

Background Information

4. High-profile government initiatives for locking-in walking and cycling involve the fast-tracking of traffic regulation orders coupled with a (re-focussed) commitment of £2bn for active travel. However, this means little to national parks for three reasons. Firstly, transport authority (as delivery body) officer capacity is already strained. Secondly, the priorities of transport authorities are primarily to their residents (the majority of which live outside national parks) whereas access and transport in national parks is often significantly influenced (and often dominated) by demand from visitors. Thirdly, government priorities are mainly aimed at utility (rather than leisure) and implicitly to higher density areas.
5. The National Park Authority aims to be ambitious. We want to deliver high profile sustainable travel of a sufficient quality that it may deliver a true alternative to car use. The popularity of the Peak District National Park (PDNP) as a breathing space for millions has never been greater; most travel to the PDNP from the surrounding cities and towns by car as day visitors. However we're seeing evidence of all of this car travel into the PDNP becoming a growing affliction, in particular issues of car parking and road capacity overloads, with localised air quality issues. A saturation of car borne visitors can negatively impact upon the quality of life for local communities. This trend of car traffic is unsustainable. The conversion to Electric Vehicles will help the air quality and low carbon agenda, but not the other issues around the sheer volume of cars. Therefore a solution that beckons is to propagate the growth of mass travel and active travel products, with advanced integration of travel modes wherever possible, to engage and inspire (with a balanced carrot and stick approach) the millions of NP visitors, the local communities and businesses to embrace sustainable travel like never before.
6. The Authority's ambition is for the Peak District to be a pioneer of sustainable transport solutions to underpin a sustainable tourism and visitor offer for a modern Britain. The Landscape review (September 2019) highlighted the strategic importance of new transport solutions, in particular with to the potential for pilot areas under recommendation 19. The Authority has already developed close working dialogue with local transport authorities (e.g. Derbyshire and Staffordshire County Councils) and other motivated National Park Authorities (Lake District and Dartmoor) in pursuit of this aim.
7. Sheffield University have world class expertise in climate change adaptation in a number of fields including transportation. At a practical level they have recently assisted The Authority providing the modelling and analysis to build the business case and invest in EV charging infrastructure at Aldern house, Parsley Hay, Ashford depot and Longdendale which is being implemented.

8. **The benefits to the Authority as the lead partner for this bid include:**

- Provision of additional expertise and funding over 3 years to support key strategic policy and decision making
- Opportunity to test policy options more thoroughly with national park management plan partners and local communities
- Model what a sustainable transport solution offer looks like for a selection of case study areas based on recreation hub/gateway or visitor management area (e.g. Upper Derwent, Hope Valley, Langsett/Upper Don)
- Building collaborative partnerships with Lake District, Dartmoor and two European National Parks actively demonstrating a positive response to Landscape review challenges.

9. **Technical Outcomes:**

Deliver a generic National Parks transport model that, fed with geographic data on the National Park's road and public transport networks and a set of standardised park user survey responses, can be used to simulate shared transport route options and EV charging hubs. The model should be able to simulate various options and compare benefits based on emissions reductions, costs and other park user metrics to be defined.

Key outputs would include:

- EV hub locations and infrastructure requirements
- Public transport routes, identifying interconnections including with existing services
- Outline timetables
- Vehicle utilisation rates for various park usage conditions (such as winter weekday, summer bank holiday)
- Emissions of CO₂, particulates, NO_x
- Passenger-km transferred between modes
- Additional Park visits generated by target social group
- Outline financial evaluation
- Development and testing of Policy decision making tools including community and stakeholder consultations.

10.

Horizon 2020 - Specific Challenge:

The delivery of the Energy Union targets requires the full engagement of the public sector at all governance levels.

Local and regional public authorities have a crucial role in setting ambitious energy efficiency strategies, for instance in the framework of the Covenant of Mayors (*Bollington and Kirklees are signatories*) for Climate & Energy and Smart Cities & Communities or the Clean Energy for EU islands initiative. The political commitment at local level should be enhanced and the focus should turn to implementation and effective monitoring of concrete energy efficiency solutions and actions, which can contribute to modernise and decarbonise the European economy. Synergies should be sought, whenever possible, with local and regional air quality plans^[1] and air pollution control programmes^[2] to reduce costs since these plans rely to a large extent on similar measures and actions^[3].

Support should continue and be reinforced in building capacity of public authorities and empowering them to take up their role of energy transition leaders at regional and local level, by permanently improving their skills as public entrepreneurs and supporters of market transformation towards more efficient energy systems.

At national level, the Energy Efficiency Directive^[4] has triggered numerous positive developments in the Member States by setting targets to incentivise and enable investment in energy efficiency programmes across all sectors. However, Member States have yet to fully implement the Directive and additional support in building capacity and know-how is needed.

Scope:

a) Support to local and regional public authorities

The Commission considers it to be equally relevant to address one or more of the following bullet points, as appropriate:

- Enhance decision-making processes of regional and local authorities, to deliver a higher quality, coherence and consistency of energy efficiency measures - and accelerate reaching targets. Actions should foster horizontal and vertical integration of different governance levels, joint application of the energy efficiency measures across local and regional authorities, improved monitoring and verification schemes, and more efficient use of public spending. Proposals should demonstrate political commitment and lead to subsequent institutionalisation of the improved processes in support of the Energy Union Governance Regulation.
- Support public authorities in the development of policy scenarios and transition roadmaps that clearly outline the path to the European long-term 2050 targets and inform the ongoing implementation of SEAPs/SECAPs or similar plans and the development of future plans/targets for 2030 and beyond. Actions should link closely to the Covenant of Mayors initiative and the Energy Union Governance Regulation, where relevant.
- Innovative ways to enable public engagement in the energy transition, developing interface capacities within public authorities to engage with civil society.
- Deliver innovative capacity-building programmes for cities and/or regions to step up their capacity to drive the sustainable energy transition in their respective territories. Proposals should foster a sustained increase in the skill base of public authorities, adapted to their needs and challenges, and support the diffusion of the learning within participating organisations and beyond. The proposed actions should include a strategy to replicate results across Europe and a solid impact monitoring.

Proposals should build on existing initiatives such as the Covenant of Mayors^[5], ManagEnergy^[6] or any other relevant initiative as appropriate.

b) Supporting the delivery of the Energy Efficiency Directive

Proposers should focus their proposed action on:

Actions assisting Member States to fulfil their obligations under the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) and – where relevant to the implementation of the EED – under the Energy Union Governance Regulation. Proposals should support efficient implementation by taking into account existing effective practices and experiences from across Europe. Proposals may address, for example, the harmonisation of energy savings calculations under Article 3, the effective implementation of Article 7 including consistent monitoring and verification systems, higher efficiency of the generation under Article 14 and of transmission or distribution systems under Article 15 or an efficient development and continuous reporting of Integrated National Energy and Climate

Plans.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of between EUR 1 and 1.5 million would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected Impact:

Proposals are expected to demonstrate, depending on the scope addressed, the impacts listed below, using quantified indicators and targets wherever possible:

- Primary energy savings, renewable energy production and investments in sustainable energy triggered in the territory of participating parties by the project (respectively in GWh/year and in million Euro);
- Number of institutionalised collaborations on the energy transition between public authorities;
- Numbers of stakeholders active in delivering the energy transition;
- Number of public authorities and public officers with improved capacity/skills in delivering the energy transition;
- Number of policies influenced through the action;
- Number of Member States with improved implementation of the EED and linked Energy Union Governance Regulation, clearly attributable to project activities.

Proposals

11. A series of options were considered by the Resources Management Meeting on the 7th July. These are set out below. RMM endorsed the progression of a bid with the caveat that any risks and issues were clearly laid out to this committee:
12. **OPTION 1** – PDNPA lead (Head of Policy and Communities) the development and submission of a bid (expectation of between 1 to 1.5 million Euros) with support from Sheffield University (submission date 10 September).

Strengths

- The bid aligns very closely with work the team is already doing
- The bid once written can be used to promote to other funders e.g. DfT
- Cross national park working (England and x2 national parks in Europe)

Weaknesses

- 10-15 days preparation time.
- Dependency to secure x2 European national parks

13. **OPTION 2** – Encourage another UK national park to lead with PDNPA as a partner

Strengths

- Bid process management led by someone else, reducing PDNPA time and commitment

Weaknesses

- PDNPA lose control and influence on the shape of the bid
- If successful, PDNPA would receive less grant income
- Loss of leadership role for any implementation. Increases risk of mis-alignment with

our corporate outcomes.

14. **OPTION 3 – Do nothing.**

Strengths

- Some time-saving (but doing a lot of the thinking and work anyway)

Weaknesses

- Harder to realise our strategic ambition and demonstrate pioneering spirit
- Closes down a potential alternative source of revenue for 3 years
- Misses opportunity to work with a partner (Sheffield University) who would bring valuable analytic, modelling and sustainable transport skills into PDNPA policy development

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

Financial:

15. 10-15 days staff time to prepare and submit the bid. Support will be available from our partners at Sheffield University and Derbyshire County Council to help advise on the best approach and to support any submission as a key partner. No financial obligation or liability at this stage of the process. The proposed bid would be for 100% revenue support and therefore no expectation of match funding. However, the Authority must remain aware of exchange rate fluctuations in respect of the Euro and whether this may necessitate any contingency funds being made available.

Risk Management:

16. Assessment using the corporate risk framework is LOW. Preparing this bid will help clarify the Policy and Communities team thinking and process. The critical dependency is securing two European partners without which no bid can be submitted. This will be addressed through approaching Europarcs; advertising on the European funding website and personal contacts. Moreover, close existing partnership with Derbyshire County Council should strengthen the bidding prospects. There is also great interest from the Authority's own Climate Change member steering group and there would be potential to report back to that group with updates and requests for steer as the bid moves forward.

Sustainability:

17. A successful bid would greatly assist the Authority in moving towards its ambitions in the National Park Management Plan and the outcomes of the 5 year Corporate Plan.

Equality:

18. None

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

None

20. **Appendices**

None

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Brian Taylor; Head of Policy and Communities; 9 July 2020