

15. CREATION OF A MEMBER TASK AND FINISH GROUP FOR REVIEWING THE NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN AND CORPORATE STRATEGY (EF)

1. Purpose of the report

This report seeks approval to establish a Member Task and Finish Group for reviewing the National Park Management Plan and Corporate Strategy, agree the Group's Draft Terms of Reference and agree arrangements to appoint Members to the Group.

Key Issues

- Officers have identified the need for a Member Task and Finish Group for reviewing the National Park Management Plan and Corporate Strategy to be created.
- At the first meeting of the Task and Finish Group, a Chair will be appointed and the draft Terms of Reference (at Appendix 1) will be reviewed.

2. Recommendations(s)

- 1. To establish a Member Task and Finish Group until October 2022 for reviewing the National Park Management Plan and Corporate Strategy.**
- 2. To approve the Draft Terms of Reference for the Group (set out in Appendix 1).**
- 3. To implement the appointment arrangements as described in the report. This includes delegating authority to the Chief Executive to determine the membership of the Task Group, following consultation with the Chair of the Authority, should more than six Members of the Committee express an interest in joining the Task Group..**
- 4. To confirm that attendance at meetings of the Task and Finish Group is an approved duty for the purpose of claiming travel and subsistence allowances.**

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

- 3.1 Section 66 of 1995 Environment Act requires National Park Authorities to produce a National Park Management Plan (NPMP) which '*formulates policy for the management of the relevant Park and for the carrying out of its functions in relation to that Park*' and should reflect national park purposes. This should be updated at least every 5 years.
- 3.2 The UK Government vision and circular 2010 for the English National Parks and the Broad states that 'Park Management Plans are the over-arching strategic document for the Parks and set the vision and objectives which will guide the future of the Park over the next 10 to 20 years. The Park Management Plans are for the Parks and not just the Authorities. They should be supported by clear strategies with evidence of significant 'buy-in' from key partners and stakeholders, including communities, land owners and land managers. The Government expects public agencies and authorities active within or bordering a Park to cooperate in the development of the Park Management Plan and the achievement of the Management Plan objectives.'
- 3.3 The Corporate Strategy (CS) sets the high-level direction of the Authority and identifies the outcomes that we wish to achieve over the longer-term, plus our targets for this five-

year strategy. It sets out how the Authority will deliver its commitment to the National Park Management Plan and work to the purposes and duty of the National Park.

4. Background Information

4.1 Members will be aware that currently we have a NPMP that runs from 2018 to 2023, which is one of the Authority's statutory plans, and the partnership plan for the place. This is coordinated by the Authority and agreed and delivered with partners. Although the Authority coordinates development and performance management of the NPMP, it is a partnership plan that the NPMP Advisory Group have a role to play in both its development and implementation. The NPMP has a vision, things we want to achieve, called the areas of impact, and a set of actions in the delivery plan that assist in achieving the areas of impact. It also introduces the seven National Park special qualities.

4.2 We also have our own Corporate Strategy that runs from 2019 to 2024, for the Authority only, with a vision, mission, set of outcomes and set of actions, or strategic interventions, that assist in achieving the outcomes. It sets out how the Authority will deliver its commitment to the National Park Management Plan and work to the purposes and duty of the National Park. The Authority develops, approves and performance manages our Corporate Strategy.

4.3 The majority of other National Park Authorities fully align their NPMP and Corporate Strategy, and have one strategy for both the place and the Authority. Furthermore, the Landscapes Review recommends that National Park Authorities should give greater emphasis to their NPMPs. Therefore, to ensure we learn from this best practice, give weight to the Landscapes Review and are as efficient as possible, in the future, we propose to have one strategy for both the Corporate Strategy and NPMP. This will ensure that what the Authority seeks to achieve will be the same as what we are seeking to achieve with partners.

4.5 This is a significant change for the Authority. As such, in addition to the established ways of working with Members, as discussed at the April 2021 Members Forum, we would like to establish a Member Task and Finish Group for reviewing the National Park Management Plan and Corporate Strategy. The Task and Finish Group will work with officers over the strategy review period, which ends by October 2022. For clarification, it will not be involved with overseeing delivery of the NPMP, which will follow adoption of the plan.

5. Proposals

Member Task and Finish Group - Scope of activities

5.1 The Task and Finish Group has been created to provide a way for Members and officers to engage with each other on developing the Authority's approach to reviewing and aligning the NPMP and Corporate Strategy. It will focus on the following key areas:

Strategy

The Group will steer on the development of the aligned NPMP and CS. More specifically, development of the revised vision for the strategy, the strategy outcomes and the strategy text.

Performance monitoring

The Group will steer on performance management of the strategy. More specifically, development of key performance indicators, targets and reporting mechanisms to Members and partners.

Delivery plans

The Group will steer on the partnership and Authority delivery plans for the strategy. More specifically, development of both delivery plans and what type of actions fit in which delivery plan.

Partner engagement

The Group will steer on how Members of the Authority should secure ownership of the NPMP strategy and delivery plan actions with key partners, with emphasis on local authority partners.

Establishment of the Task Group

- 5.2 It is proposed that there will be a maximum of six Members on the Task Group.
- 5.3 Members of the Task Group will be selected via expressions of interest from all Members. There should be a mixture of Members appointed by the Secretary of State, local authority and parish councils.
- 5.4 Subject to this report being approved, Authority Members will be asked to submit an expression of interest to join the Task Group. Should more than six Members express an interest, it is proposed that the Chief Executive be delegated the authority to determine the membership of the Task Group, in consultation with the Chair of the Authority.

Member Engagement

- 5.5 Although the Task Group will take the lead on reviewing and aligning the NPMP and Corporate Strategy on behalf of the Authority, it is important to ensure all Members remain informed and engaged.
- 5.6 It is therefore proposed that notes from Task Group meetings will be shared with Members Forum so the full membership can see how the review is progressing. Furthermore, we will continue to engage with Members throughout the time of the review via informal discussions at the Members Forum or bespoke meetings / workshops, and at appropriate times, formally through Authority meetings.

Ways of working

- 5.7 The group will replicate as best practice how the Member climate change steering group meets and works. The climate change steering group's ways of working have been to meet regularly at Members' convenience (every four to six weeks, with a proposed break in summer), with meetings lasting 2-3 hours. At the moment, all meetings are held virtually. As the proposed Task and Finish Group is not a decision making body, it would be able to meet virtually if that is what the group wishes.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

6. **Financial:**
The financial implications of any future NPMP and CS work has not yet been evaluated,

but will be a core aspect of developing this combined strategy.

As attendance at meetings of the Task Group are an approved duty there will be additional costs relating to claims for travel and subsistence. As the Task Group has been established part way through the 2021/22 financial year, no provision has been made for this. Any additional costs can be minimised by holding meetings on the same day as other meetings or holding them virtually.

7. Risk Management:

There is a potential risk of Members, who are not on the Task Group, becoming disenfranchised. This will be mitigated by regular updates to Authority and Members Forum.

8. Sustainability:

Attempts will be made to reduce the environmental impact of convening meetings by minimising the volume of paperwork produced and, if face-to-face meetings are held on days when no other events are taking place, encouraging Members to car share or use public transport.

9. Equality:

In appointing Members to the Task Group consideration must be given to making sure the membership is diverse and representative. In developing proposals the Task Group will need to consider how they may impact on the 9 protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

10. Human Resources:

There are no significant Human Resources issues to highlight at this stage as the Task Group's initial activities can be supported by existing officers.

11. Climate Change

The National Park Management Plan sets the framework for climate change in the National Park. In the current NPMP climate change is an area of impact, 'preparing for a future climate'. This aims to coordinate the action of partners in a concerted effort to address this challenge. It is likely that this focus will be replicated and enhanced in the development of the next National Park Management Plan and Corporate Strategy.

12. Background papers (not previously published)

None

13. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Draft Terms of Reference for the National Park Management Plan and Corporate Strategy Review Member Task and Finish Group

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