

12. NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2020/21 (MM)

1. Purpose of the report

This report provides Members with monitoring information for the end of the third year of the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23. It also seeks Members approval to adopt the agreed definition of thriving and sustainable communities.

Key Issues

- Section 66 of 1995 Environment Act requires National Park Authorities to produce and update a National Park Management Plan every 5 years.
- At the end of our third year (2020/21) of the National Park Management Plan, an annual monitoring report has been produced, which forms appendix 1 to this report. This provides a more detailed update on all sections of the Management Plan referred to in this report.
- Progress has been made against most of the intentions identified in the National Park Management Plan, with 31 delivery actions being shown as ‘green’, which is on schedule, on the quarterly performance table. Three actions are shown as ‘red’, as the delivery actions have not been achieved and a further six actions rated amber due to risks arising which may delay their delivery. Further detail are provided at paragraphs 12-28.
- The definition of thriving and sustainable communities that was developed as an action in the Management Plan is included in this report for adoption by the Authority.

2. Recommendations(s)

- 1. That Members approve the National Park Management Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2020/21.**
- 2. That any necessary changes to the proposed wording of the Annual Monitoring Report and the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23 delivery plan be delegated to the Chief Executive.**
- 3. That Members approve and adopt the definition of the thriving and sustainable communities.**

How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

- 3. Requirement to produce and update the National Park Management Plan**
- 4. Section 66 of 1995 Environment Act requires National Park Authorities to produce a National Park Management Plan 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.**
- 5. The UK Government vision and circular 2010 for the English National Parks and the Broads 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.'

6. This means the National Park Management Plan is not a plan for the work of the National Park Authority, or of any one organisation, but about what can be achieved by everyone with an interest in the National Park and its future. The plan is therefore a partnership plan reflecting ambitions across the whole National Park and reflects the input of numerous organisations.
7. Through Our Corporate Strategy 2019-24, the National Park Authority delivers its contribution to the National Park Management Plan.

Background Information

8. The Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23 was adopted by the Authority at its meeting on the 25th May 2018 (minute reference 21/18). The Management Plan focuses on six 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

Proposals

9. Delivery Progress
10. Under each Area of Impact, there are a set of intentions that provide further detail on what we would like to achieve. In total there are fifteen Intentions. An Annual Monitoring Report is produced at the end of each year to outline the progress made in term of implementing actions in the delivery plan. The 2020/21 Annual Monitoring Report can be found at Appendix 1. Members are asked to approve this Annual Monitoring Report.
11. Further detail on delivery of specific actions in the National Park Management Plan delivery plan is outlined in appendix 2. Each action has been assigned a traffic light rating of red, amber or green (RAG) to give a clear indication of progress.

The RAG rating used to assess performance indicates the following.

Green – the delivery action is achieved or is on schedule to be achieved in the future.

Amber – the delivery action is at risk of not being achieved on schedule.

Red – the delivery action was not achieved

12. Progress has been made in most of the intentions identified in the National Park Management Plan, with 31 delivery actions being 'green' or on schedule. Three actions are shown as 'red', as the delivery actions have not been achieved and a further six actions are rated amber due to risks arising which may delay their delivery.
13. The two of the actions rated as red are under Intention 3.1: Establish monitoring at a landscape scale. We will have agreed and established a system of monitoring at a landscape scale encompassing landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage, with objectives set in 2018 and the methodology agreed in 2019. The outline programme of research necessary was identified in 2019/20. Since that time the proposals have been delayed by the impact of Covid19, which has restricted partner availability and prevented access to land and facilities. However, specific elements have progressed including work with Cranfield University to undertake land cover change monitoring. Furthermore, progress has been made with the repeat of the landscape description unit photographs.
14. Under Intention 4.1: Overcome physical barriers to access. Create a programme to develop a sustainable visitor economy that encourages the Peak District National Park to be a welcoming place for all. We aimed to produce and adopt a Recreation Hubs Supplementary Planning Document in 2020. Work has been undertaken to complete the necessary definitions and vision statement with an expectation that it would have been complete in April 2021, but progress with this was delayed as the priority changed to emergency planning for the easing of lockdown restrictions. Officers plan to resume progress during quarter1 of 2021/22.
15. A further six actions have been recorded as amber. Two of these relate to moorland birds under Intention 2.2: Ensure that the management of upland moors delivers environmental, social & economic benefits. Specifically; Bird survey in 2018 to confirm population trends and to review the work of the Bird of Prey initiative with the target to restore populations of birds of prey to at least the levels present in the late 1990s, with the addition of hen harrier as a regularly successful breeding species.
16. The bird survey data issues have now been resolved and reprocessed and a new version of the data report was published April 2021. The final Bird of Prey Initiative report for 2020 showed that it was a relatively good year, but incidents of wildlife crime increased and there is still progress to be made to restore bird numbers to the target levels. Therefore for the moment this remain as at amber.
17. The remaining four amber actions are all connected with Intention 1.1: Reduce the effects of climate change on the special qualities. Initiate an ambitious low carbon rural transport scheme that is environmentally and economically sustainable. They are:

Research programme launched May 2020

2023 target for emission reduction from car borne traffic identified August 2020

Project plan published August 2020

Pilot scheme launched April 2021
18. All of these targets were part of additions to the Management Plan approved in 2020. These actions are progressing with a continuation of developing our integrated low carbon travel ambitions. We are looking to develop integrated travel partnerships across various transport authority areas, using the Hope Valley Explorer as a demonstration area with scope to roll the principles out more widely across the National Park. Work with universities continues to improve our understanding of visitor travel behaviour and potential interventions to promote low carbon alternatives. In addition, a community led initiative in the Hope Valley has successfully secured funding for an individual to work on sustainable transport. However, the uncertain long term impacts

on public transport from Covid19 and the disruption it has caused to work programmes has led to these areas being recorded as amber.

19. As target dates have passed for the actions that have been rated as 'red – the delivery action was not achieved', it is proposed that the target dates for these in the delivery plan are updated. The actions are 'establish monitoring at a landscape scale' and 'produce and adopt a Recreation Hubs Supplementary Planning Document. As the target dates have passed, they no longer provide a useful assessment of progress. We do not intend to change the delivery action or anything else in the delivery plan, just these timescales so they are up to date.
20. Thriving and Sustainable Communities
21. The National Park Management Plan contains the intention to support thriving and sustainable communities and economy. The actions associated with this include; define what is meant by thriving and sustainable communities, in the context of the National Park Management Plan, as an essential first step.
22. To develop the definition, a draft version of the thriving and sustainable definition was arrived at through combining ideas supplied by the Peak Park Parishes' Forum (PPPF) and comments received from parishes through the Parish Statement process. This draft version was then consulted on in the last quarter of 2020 and was further developed, with the agreement of the PPPF, using comments received during this consultation. Final comments were invited from our constituent Council in April and this has resulted in the final version which is included in Appendix 3 of this report.
23. Members are asked to approve and adopt the definition of the thriving and sustainable communities, as set out in appendix 3, to be utilised in future work, plans and strategies such as the Local Plan and National Park Management Plan.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

Financial:

24. The delivery plan elements of the NPMP that the Authority is responsible for will be funded through the usual delivery plan mechanisms.

Risk Management:

25. The greatest risk to the delivery of the NPMP is ensuring that there is support from partners and stakeholders, especially the elements of the delivery plan where their contributions are essential. This risk has been mitigated by liaison with partners and stakeholders throughout the delivery of the NPMP and monitored by the Advisory Group.
26. Please note that the National Park Authority is the Sponsoring Partner in 26 of the 40 delivery actions. Therefore fourteen of the delivery actions are led by external bodies and all of the delivery actions require the cooperation of multiple partners to be successful.

Sustainability:

27. National Park Management Plans were subject to the EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) which is delivered via a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), and are also subject to the Habitats Regulation and require a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). The SA and HRA were undertaken prior to the adoption of the NPMP.

Equality:

28. The National park Management Plan's vision contains the aspiration to be a sustainable, welcoming and inspiring place for all. This is expanded through Area of Impact 4: A National Park for everyone, with actions under overcoming physical and perceived barriers to access.
29. The vision also aspires to thriving and sustainable communities and economy. This is expanded through the intention to improve access to services and support the provision of locally needed housing.

30. 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.

31. Background papers (not previously published)

None

32. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23 Annual Monitoring Report 2020/21

Appendix 2 - Peak District National Park Management Plan Actions Table April 2021

Appendix 3 - Definition of Thriving and Sustainable Communities

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

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