

## 6. UNDERTAKING PROJECTS WITH THE MOORS FOR THE FUTURE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT BOARD

### 1. Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to ask P&R Committee to approve the extension and continuation of the Authority's work through the Strategic Management Board members of the Moors for the Future Partnership ('**SMB Members**'), through partnership agreements to both accept work delivery from partners and pass the delivery of work to partners.

This will be for work conforming to the partnership's vision and objectives which also meets the requirements of the Authority's standing orders in its execution.

This builds on the previous authority granted by ARP Committee (January 2017, Minute Ref 05/17 and refreshed in 2018) to work in a similar way with the previous MoorLIFE 2020 partners. This previous Approval will cease in September when ML2020 finally comes to a close.

### Key issues

- The large scale works being undertaken by the Authority through the Moors for the Future Partnership have created an opportunity to use existing tenders and contracting arrangements to deliver works in addition to these projects and make use of economies of scale.
- This is in line with the Business Model, in the Moors for the Future Partnership Business Plan, approved by this Committee.
- This applies to a specific group of organisations who are Board Members of the partnership. Most of these either have live projects, or previous projects delivered through the partnership arrangement and the Authorities Standing Orders. They are known entities in terms of working practice.
- The works programme, permissions and resources will dictate the actual expenditure profile in any given year in order to effectively manage capacity.
- This will give staff and partners a clear steer that in principle (whilst requiring the oversight of the delegated function) bidding and creation of new projects will be supported and as such the time investment is worthwhile.
- Resources frequently become available and need to be managed in a shorter timescale than committee approval allows.
- This process has been in place in a similar way for some time and has allowed for efficient capture of resources with no issues.
- The current SMB Members are;
  - Peak District National Park Authority (Chair)
  - National Farmers Union
  - Severn Trent Water
  - Heather Trust / Moorland Association
  - Environment Agency
  - South Pennine Park
  - Yorkshire Water Services
  - The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
  - The Woodland Trust
  - The National Trust
  - Natural England
  - United Utilities

- British Mountaineering Council Access and Conservation Trust
- Nature Finance

## **2 Recommendations**

**That the Authority approves in principle working with SMB Members and supports the proposed delegated function for fundraising and spending to support such work.**

**Specifically:**

- 1. That the Programmes and Resources Committee supports a delegation, until 31 March 2030, to the Head of Moors for the Future Partnership (in agreement with the Chief Finance Officer and Head of Law) to bid for and accept funds from Moors for the Future Strategic Management Board (SMB) Members up to a maximum of £6 million (with a maximum of £2 million for any one project).**
- 2. That this includes entering into associated partnership arrangements with the SMB Members:**
  - a. To accept funds and deliver a project for an SMB Member, including arrangements with other SMB Members to act as delivery partners; or**
  - b. To accept funds and deliver an element of a project where a SMB Member is the Lead Partner for the project and the Authority is a delivery partner (including where project funding is granted to that SMB Member from outside of the Moors for the Future Partnership).**
- 3. That the Authority may, subject to compliance with its procurement standing orders, enter into contracts for the delivery of project work arising from recommendations 1 and 2.**

**How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?**

- 3.** The strategic fit of all the SMB Members is fully integrated within the Operational and Business Planning process of the Moors for the Future Partnership. It is relevant to the Peak District National Park Management Plan delivery aims mainly through giving the MFFP a greater ability to leverage funds, specifically to support :

Special quality 1: Beautiful views created by contrasting landscapes and dramatic geology

Special quality 2: Internationally important and locally distinctive wildlife and habitats

Special quality 3: Undeveloped places of tranquillity and dark night skies within reach of millions

Special quality 4: Landscapes that tell a story of thousands of years of people, farming and industry

Special quality 6: An inspiring space for escape, adventure, discovery and quiet reflection

Special quality 7: Vital benefits for millions of people that flow beyond the landscape boundary.

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

In addition; for many years the value of ecosystem services benefits has been well known. One of the difficulties in fully capturing this benefit has been the need to work on a genuine landscape scale - which working in this way across all the SMB Members interests does. It will also create greater collaboration between the major partners in this field whilst maintaining the Authority as an innovative leader.

## **Background**

4. By the end of the 2022 / 23 financial year the partnership staff team will have raised and invested £50m, since the start of the partnerships work in 2002. This has made a significant positive change, undertaking capital works, and science and communications actions across the dark Peak and South Pennine Park and particularly across the South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation.

## **Proposals**

5. In line with our business plan MFFP seeks to attract additional funding both *from* our SMB Members and *for* our SMB Members as delivery partners. In the past the ability to quickly incorporate resources which require rapid action has been essential. Increasing the effectiveness and reach of projects already in delivery or bringing a long required element into delivery. Achieving outcomes for multiple benefits by dovetailing different sources of funding for tandem delivery. Additionally our partners periodically ask whether the Authority, through the MFFP programme team, can manage and deliver complementary works on their behalf, using the economies of scale and efficiencies of landscape scale working that our work programme generates.

We ask that this Committee approves the MFFP programme team to manage and undertake works on behalf of SMB Members using new funding associated with our SMB Members. A maximum value of £6 million over the period to 2030 is proposed (expenditure will not exceed £2m in any single project action without resorting to a separate committee approval), with approval for this to be delegated to Head of Moors for the Future Partnership, in agreement with the Head of Law and the Chief Finance Officer and subject to a recognised purchase order from the relevant partner, and if necessary a partnership agreement. Any new work will fall within the established programme tracker and agreed expenditure and invoicing profile, before works commence.

6. This approach would enable the Authority to retain the leadership role that it has within the Moors for the Future partnership, which has been critical in maintaining the Partnership since work started in 2002. It would also support and encourage partners work to seek resources.

## **Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?**

7. **Financial:**

The Moors for the Future Partnership has a history of sound financial management, income control (including draw down of funding and claims) is of great importance and overseen by the Programme Office Manager. Regular updates are held with the Chief Finance Officer with monitoring of cash flow through a programme tracker which is updated every month.

It is anticipated based on experience that this approval will drive some useful

funding. In particular it will support the investment by Esme Fairbairn, aiming to grow public and business sector investment into aspects of our work.

## **8. Risk Management:**

### **Delivery Capacity**

Head of Moors for the Future will ensure that there is capacity within the Moors for the Future programme team to complete any new work that is proposed for acceptance under this authority. The MFFP team delivers projects as part of a programme, and the ability to approve complementary projects alongside other major projects means that they can be slotted into that programme in a way that reduces the amount of additional work to a minimum. For example tendering requirements across the programme rather than producing a number of individual tenders. We also have the ability to bring in casual workers to help with the supervision of works on the ground and this can be undertaken very quickly.

Any recruitment required will be evaluated as part of our on-going programme management, with any new posts being funded on an at-cost basis through agreed project management fees.

Furthermore, since the greater majority of our present and future bidding work is focused on attracting further investment associated with active projects, for delivery in tandem with ongoing works, MFFP by design anticipate significant efficiencies in staff resource allocation in working more closely with partners in this way.

All projects will be managed according to our Project Management toolkit, using the skills of our current project managers, ensuring that the synergies of delivering complementary projects can be realised.

### **Contracting Risk with Partners**

The works envisaged are likely to be those which the MFFP programme team are taking the initiative on to build a more effective and efficient delivery arrangement within the existing portfolio of projects. As such the nature of contractual arrangements would be of partners working together in reasonable endeavour.

## **9. Sustainability:**

Protection of the peatlands of our core work area is a key part of protecting land based carbon, which internationally has the potential to have a huge impact on climate change. In addition, the ecosystem service benefits of our blanket peat work is well known, reducing the risk of flooding, improving water quality and improving the landscape, so highly valued for recreation.

From a business sustainability perspective, this proposal fits within the context of the Moors for the Future Business Plan 2022-2023. Undertaking additional projects for our partners, building on work which is already being done, is a key part of our business model and has allowed massive improvements to the landscape and conservation of the Dark Peak and beyond. Creating synergies between projects is a key component of the sustainability of the Moors for the Future programme.

## **10. Health and Safety**

All projects will be managed as currently, in discussion with the Authority's Health and Safety Officer. This includes use of Construction (Design and Management) Regulations, where applicable.

**Equality:**

11. There are no equality issues arising from this report.

12. **Climate Change:**

1. How does this decision contribute to the Authority's role in climate change set out in the UK Government Vision and Circular for National Parks?

Whilst the context of this matter is much wider than the boundary of the Peak District National Park, the benefits from the Moors for the Future Partnership's working area are likely to be more productive to the southern end of the Pennine Chain.

The potential for reduction in carbon emissions in degraded peat is higher at the southern end of the Pennines, so that within the Peak District National Park, as the peat is more degraded and vulnerable to damage due to its legacy damage making it more vulnerable and a higher likelihood of wildfires driven by larger surrounding population.

a. Educators in climate change

The Blanket bog landscape of England is still very much out of sight and out of mind to the majority of the public. The issue needs to be told in a bigger story in order to capture more of the public imagination and drive behaviour change, particularly around fire prevention and litter prevention.

b. Exemplars of sustainability

This is exactly what this initiative will do. It will make a step change happen in adapting the most vulnerable portion of the 7,000 square kilometres of upland peat landscape in the Great North Bog area, the portion in the southern Pennines, , into a more resilient landscape with an increasing quality of ecosystem services delivery.

c. Protecting the National Park  
See above point

d. Leading the way in sustainable land management  
This will set the most degraded of England's upland peat on a trajectory of recovery in context, across the whole upland peat landscape.

e. Exemplars in renewable energy  
This is not a renewable energy solution but it does have a relationship with energy in that it will, in time if restored, provide a continual means of sequestering carbon produced by the creation and use of energy.

f. Working with communities  
There are future opportunities for individuals to balance their own negative effect on the environment through the practical help in volunteering and through contributing funds.

2. How does this decision contribute to the Authority meeting its carbon net zero target?  
(Not applicable )

3. How does this decision contribute to the National Park meeting carbon net zero by 2050?

A rough calculation has been made that the poor condition of the upland Peat of the North of England is losing 3.7m tonnes of carbon a year, a bigger share of this loss is in the southern reaches of the Pennine chain. One of the objectives of the Moors for the Future Partnership is to develop and refine this data.

4. Are there any other Climate Change related issues that are relevant to this decision that should be brought to the attention of Members?

Preventing the loss of carbon from the upland peat of the South Pennine and West Pennine Moors and bringing this into an active condition is the biggest and easiest way of preventing terrestrial carbon loss.

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

None

**Appendices –**

None

**Chris Dean Head of Moors for the Future**

**07/07/2022**