

5. CLIMATE CHANGE AIM OVERVIEW (SG)

1. Purpose of the report

To inform Members about the Authority's progress in responding to climate change since January 2023 and approve joining the UN 'Race to Zero' initiative.

Key Issues

- This report is the first climate change theme report in the Programmes and Resources Committee programme for 2023/24 (to be approved at the 29 September 2023 Authority Meeting).
- Paragraph 6 outlines the UK National Parks progress towards joining the United Nations 'Race to Zero'.
- Since the January 2023 Programmes and Resources meeting the Authority has undertaken many activities, both on our own and in partnership, that assist in meeting our climate change ambitions. These are outlined at paragraph 10.

2. **Recommendations:**

1. **To note progress in delivering to the National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan climate change aim and targets.**
2. **To approve the Authority joins the UK national parks in the United Nations 'Race to Zero' initiative to halve global greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.**

How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

3. The Climate Change Act 2008 as amended in 2019 commits the UK government by law to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050. At the CoP 26 Climate Conference in Glasgow in 2021 the UK government made further commitments to achieve at least a 68% fall of 1990 levels by 2030.
4. The UK Government Vision and Circular for National Parks (2010) places climate change as central to National Park Authority objectives. The January 2023 Programmes and Resources meeting noted the National Park Management Plan (NPMP) aim on climate change as set out in Appendix 2 (minute reference 8/23): The Peak District National Park is more resilient and net-zero by 2040 through its exemplary response to climate change.

Background Information

5. Members agreed at the 22 July 2022 Authority meeting to align the programmes for Programmes and Resources to the National Park Management Plan 2023-28 aims (minute reference 65/22). The same paper also agreed climate change would be the first aim reported. The September 2023 Authority meeting will be presented with the annual report for Programmes and Resources that outlines the order of programmes for the forthcoming year. This paper fulfils the proposed commitment, as climate change is proposed as the first programme.
6. At the CoP 26 Climate Conference in Glasgow in 2021 the United Nations launched Race to Zero. A global initiative imploring non-state actors (like cities, local authorities, businesses, universities) to take rigorous and immediate action to halve global emissions by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050 at the latest. UK

National Parks have been working towards joining Race to Zero following a discussion at the 2021 Chairs and CEO's fora to consider the package of activity in support of our engagement with the CoP26. Joining the Race to Zero initiative will support our role in sharing best practice in how to make the case for action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions effectively with different stakeholders. A UK national parks briefing paper is provided at appendix 1.

7. Climate change has been prominent in the recent news. Extreme weather events driven by greenhouse gas emissions have led to long drought, flooding, record high temperatures and large scale wild fires around the world. Low winter ice records have been set in the Antarctic and the oceans are warming faster than anticipated. Debate around energy supply, fossil fuel use and renewable energy is increasing in the UK and abroad with potential implications for climate change mitigation and adaptation.
8. Achieving net zero and adapting to climate change remains dependent on national and international policy and implementation. The government's Climate Change Committee's most recent report (March 2023) noted for the UK:
 - Credible planning was found for only five climate change adaptation outcomes out of 45.
 - Greenhouse gas emissions policy development and implementation is too slow making reaching net zero a significant challenge.
 - Climate change adaptation is not being implemented at levels needed to address climate driven factors.
 - Key climate risk factors such as opportunities from species introductions, changes in land suitability for agriculture and forestry as well health from changes in air quality are not considered.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's most recent report (AR6, March 2023) found that globally:

- The pace and scale of climate action are insufficient to tackle climate change.
 - Multiple, feasible, and effective options are available to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to human-caused climate change.
 - Enabling conditions include finance, technology, capacity building, and international cooperation.
9. The Authority's strategies and actions in the National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan are intended to address the challenges of meeting Net Zero and adapting to warmer global temperatures. We and our partners recognise that climate change means climate variables are no longer fixed pattern, broadly predictable factors, at landscape scales. Our work will help to manage the profound consequences of greenhouse gas emissions for the special qualities of the national park, their biological conservation features, their cultural heritage features and the communities, business, access and activities enjoyed by people in the Park.

Proposals

Progress Since January 2023

10. Programmes and Resources will be aware from the report to this Committee in January 2023 that climate change is a key focus in the National Park Management Plan (minute reference 8/23), the Authority is undertaking many activities, both on

our own and in partnership, that assist in meeting our climate change ambitions. The summary below updates Members on our climate change related activities since January 2023. Members will recognise that this is not a full years' achievements, as last years programmes and resources cycle had to start later than expected, as the National Park Management Plan had not been adopted.

- Development of a partnership with Sheffield University developing our understanding of how landscape change is perceived and how we can better articulate, share and evaluate the difficult choices we need to make in the face of climate change.
- Implementation of the Authority's Carbon Management Plan 2. We have progressed projects to further reduce our carbon emissions including installing a Heat Pump at North Lees Campsite, the conversion of 2 Warslow tenanted properties to lower carbon heating and increasing the number of Electric Vehicles in the pool fleet. Work on a more detailed understanding of our land based emissions and our blended working patterns/policies which will help our reporting in this area. A full report of our performance over the last financial year and a detailed report on our land based emissions will follow later in the year.
- Development of a Sustainable Travel Framework for the National Park (minute reference 7/22) is progressing. As a result of priorities identified at a transport symposium held in February 2023 a Sustainable Travel officer post has been established to support delivery of sustainable travel initiatives. Recruitment to the post is currently underway.
- Our work on climate change through land management activities is being taken forward in a number of ways. The April 2023 Programmes and Resources Committee received an update progress on the landscape and recovery aim (minute reference 17/23). Further progress is presented in a later paper to this meeting. Moors for the Future progress is also presented in a later paper to this meeting.
- The Local Plan review continues to consider the scope to seek enhanced requirements for energy efficiency, low carbon construction and renewable energy potential. Furthermore, the spatial strategy will continue to advocate the need to reduce the need to travel by private car, foster a move a low carbon travel, and seek stronger contributions from new development to nature recovery.
- The development of a carbon baseline for all National Parks (minute reference 28/21) is now complete. The high level findings of this were used to underpin development of the National park Management Plan. It is envisaged that a summary of the report will be presented to the January 2024 Programme and Resources Committee Meeting.
- The annual Member Training Workshop on climate change will be delivered on the 24th November 2023.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

11. Financial

There are no additional costs associated with these proposals. The activities in the early years of the Authority Plan 2023-28 and National Park Management Plan 2023-28 have funding and resources identified to deliver them. The resources for activities in future years will be identified as we move through the delivery period.

12. Risk Management

The main risk to delivery of the climate change aim is the resource challenge of both our

partners and the Authority in terms of a flat cash settlement. This risk is mitigated by the focus of the three priorities that the objective outlines.

13. Sustainability

Our work on climate change directly improves the sustainability of both the Authority as a business and National Park as a place.

14. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

There are no direct implications for equalities in the activities contained within this report. Indirectly, responding to climate change could have a positive impact on the nine protected characteristics by providing a more resilient environment.

15. 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? Joining the 'Race to Zero' initiative will help the Authority to deliver its leading role in climate change mitigation and adaptation as set out in the Vision and Circular.
2. How does this decision contribute to the Authority supporting the UK's COP 26 commitments?
Joining the UK national parks in the United Nations 'Race to Zero' initiative will raise the profile of and help to deliver the COP 26 commitments.
3. How does this decision contribute to the Authority meeting its carbon net zero target?

Delivering to the National Park Management Plan climate change aim and joining the 'Race to Zero' initiative will align the Authority with other National Parks commitment to be carbon net zero. It will help us to share best practice and make the case more effectively with different stakeholders. It will also give us stronger opportunities where a collective voice may be needed for additional funding and support.

- If a carbon reduction can be calculated please provide this.
 - If it increases the Authority's carbon emissions, what are the benefits to the Authority that outweigh this increase?
4. How does this decision contribute to the National Park meeting carbon net zero by 2050?

Committing to join the Race to Net Zero alongside our climate change objectives will enhance our leadership role in working with all partners and stakeholders on greenhouse gas emissions reduction. It will also strengthen our strategic partnership base and help us to influence change as we do not have the powers and resources to deliver the targets alone.

- If a carbon reduction can be calculated, please provide this.
- If it increases the carbon emissions in the National Park, what are the benefits to the National Park that outweigh this increase?

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

None.

16. Background papers (not previously published)

None.

17. Appendices

Appendix 1: Climate Change Overview (UK NP Race to Zero briefing)

Appendix 2: National Park Management Plan (NPMP) aim on climate change

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

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