

6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT (PM)

1. Purpose of the report

To up-date members of key items since the previous Authority meeting

2. Recommendation:

1. For Members to note the report

3. Key Items

Since my last report on 28th July I have continued to meet with stakeholders, partners and organisations based in and around the National Park Authority including:

- Chief Superintendent Dave Kirby Derbyshire Constabulary
- Paul Wilson, CEO & Cllr Steve Flitter Derbyshire Dales DC
- Natural England
- Severn Trent Water
- Great North Bog Board Meeting
- Visit to Ecton Mine
- Olivia Blake MP Defra Access Team Site Visit
- Moors for the Future Partnership Strategic Management Board
- Defra Protected Landscapes future funding discussions
- Kate Josephs, CEO Sheffield City Council
- Attending the Hope Show
- Stephen Vickers, Chief Executive Chatsworth
- Peter Dewhurst, Business Peak District
- David Rutley, MP
- North York Moors NPA Visit
- Thomas Noel – Peatland Farmers network site visit
- NPUK Chairs Forum, hosted by Lake District National Park Authority

- NPUK Chairs Forum, Lake District
- Joint Members briefing between PDNPA & Derbyshire Dales District Council Cllr Tom Hunt/Michael Johnson/Cllr Mike Chaplin (SCC) Chair & CEO
- Meeting with Maxwell Ayamba & Maxine Greaves (Sheffield Environmental Movement)

As you can see the list is extremely varied and my diary has been filled with some really interesting meetings and conversations with partners and organisations. Some that have stood out for me over the past couple of months have been:

Ecton Mine

The Ecton Mine Educational Trust has been formed with the principal aim of promoting education in applied geology, mining and mineral extraction and I had the opportunity to visit the mine and meet with some of the officers and trustees. It was a really informative, the whole area is a site of special scientific Interest (SSSI), and the Ecton mine itself is an underground SSSI. The Trust provides the facilities for school and university teachers to run one-day or two-day field courses that introduce young people to subjects relevant to the minerals industry. I feel the local area could make more of this important heritage asset although access will always be an issue. FiPL is currently funding restoration of the balance cone on the top of the Ecton hill which was an important part of allowing the mine to go deeper into the ground.

Defra Protected Landscapes future funding discussions

Defra are beginning to scope work around strengthening the bid for protected landscapes in the next full spending review. At the meeting discussions were had around developing a strategic business case for a significantly enhanced settlement for protected landscapes and to review the existing grant funding model to ensure it is more transparent and equitable between existing National Parks and with AONBs.

Defra Access and Peatland Team Site Visits

Last month we hosted separate visits by Defra's access team and the peatland team to show them what we do. The peatland team got a chance to see Moors for the Future Partnership restoration work whilst feeling the bog squelch under their feet and to experience just how healthy our midge population is up on the moors. The access team saw first hand some of the recent access improvements we have made thanks to additional one-off funding we received last year from Defra. Both teams could have visited work in other National Parks and it is notable that they choose to come to the Peak District.

North York Moors NPA Visit

I spent a day as a guest of the North York Moors National Park and I learnt a great deal from meeting colleagues in the Authority there. I was really impressed by their Planning function and it was notable that the Authority do not face the same recruitment challenges we do despite having some of the same pressures and issues location. Not least in their success has been a commitment to 'growing their own' (which is something we want to do more of) and I couldn't believe they take on almost 20 apprentices or graduate trainees every year. I also managed to see Danby Lodge, one of their visitor centres, where there is a lot we can learn from, although they do face some similar challenges to us.

Members Tour

This really was a great opportunity to see our planning work in action and get to know some of our sites better, in particular the Warslow estate and the Roaches. It was also a good opportunity to mix with Members old and new and for Officer/Member relations to develop further. The attendance of Members on a full day out was much appreciated and I know all of us that were able to make it learnt a huge amount.

MP Catch ups

I recently met with two of our local MP's, Olivia Blake, Sheffield Hallam MP, and David Rutley, MP for Macclesfield. David is an enthusiastic supporter and advocate of the National Park, which forms a large part of his constituency. As always, the meetings were engaging and informative and allows the opportunity to discuss the challenges we face and how we overcome them. When walking around the Longshaw estate with Olivia we talked about how the National Park could build more relationships with Sheffield, given we are in effect the back garden of the city.

Organisational Change

We are now moving into the implementation and transition stage of our organisational review. During the rest of September and into October we will be appointing people and starting to operate in our new teams.

The new Senior Management Team are now operating and meeting weekly. We are also introducing a new monthly Wider Management Team meeting for those that report to the Heads of Service so that as a wider management team we can work more collaboratively, increase connections and reduce silo working. To accompany this, the next phase of changes at Aldern House will shortly begin, to bring those working in news teams together more, as much as is possible with the limitations of being in such

a disjointed and compartmentalised building.

Permanent appointments for the Head of Assets and Enterprise and Head of Resources will be taking place over the next few weeks. A new Authority Solicitor has been appointed and separately to the work of our own Authority, we are hosting the new National Parks UK Communications Director role, which has also successfully been appointed to.

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Phil Mulligan, CEO, 21st September 2023