

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 29th September I have continued to meet with stakeholders, partners and organisations based in and around the National Park Authority including:

- National Parks UK Chairs Forum in the Lake District
- Cllr Tom Hunt – Leader Sheffield City Council
- Maxwell Ayamba & Maxine Greaves (Sheffield Environmental Movement)
- Collaboration day with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust
- Peak Resort - Chesterfield
- The donor providing support to keep visitor centres open
- English National Parks Chairs and CEOs in the New Forest
- Hartington Village Trail 10th Anniversary
- The Derbyshire Culture, Heritage & Tourism Board
- Cllr Barry Lewis & Cllr Caroline Renwick Derbyshire County Council
- Great North Bog Strategic Management Board
- National Parks Partnership – AGM hosted in the Peak District
- Leader & CEO Chesterfield Borough Council
- Council of Europe visit
- Jo Dille, Visit Peak District & Derbyshire
- Peakland Environmental Farmers Group farm visit
- One of the Authority's tenant farmers Neil Richardson on his farm
- Peak District Environmental Quality Mark 20th Anniversary celebration

More information on some of these meetings and connections is below. A number of Members and staff helped in attending many of these meetings and events, I haven't named everyone but the support is very valuable and greatly appreciated.

National Park UK CEO & Chairs Forum

The forum was held in the Lake District at the end of September with the site visits being really useful. Race to Zero was one main focus of discussion. There remains a strong commitment to joining Race to Zero across all National Parks and the discussion resulted in some clear next steps. Another focus was supporting colleagues in leading on our work on climate change and nature recovery with other relevant international bodies, such as the World Protected Landscapes Forum.

Maxwell Ayamba & Maxine Greaves

I recently met in Sheffield with the inspiring Maxell Ayamba from Sheffield Environment Movement who made me think about how we could further build the confidence and capacity of people from diverse backgrounds to not just visit but to volunteer with us or work for the Authority. I know our engagement team are doing some great work in this area and I'd like to see what more we could do in recruitment of staff and volunteers to better reflect the diversity of the communities who live around the Park.

PDNPA & Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Following on from a number of collaboration meetings between the leadership teams of both organisations, there was a wider collaboration day where 54 of us gathered to walk and learn more about the local environment around Hartington. The spirit of collaboration, the connections, the contacts and the commitments made were all fantastic to witness. The joint vision for our two organisations is “A wilder Peak District that transforms expectations of what a British landscape can be and where people are inspired to connect more with nature.” A useful set of guiding principles for working together were also discussed.

Peak Resort

Myself and Brian Taylor, Head of Planning were invited along to the Peak Resort on the edge of Chesterfield which is progressing well thanks to the resilience and determination of its visionary creator, Rupert Carr. It will become an important new eastern gateway to the Park, with sustainable travel options. Getting visitors and residents into and around the Park in a sustainable way is a huge challenge that is at the heart of our National Park Management Plan just as is the challenge of encouraging visitors from diverse communities into the Park.

Hartington Village Trail 10th Anniversary

I attended the 10th anniversary celebration of the Hartington Trail, in my local village. Rose Clarke, one of our Engagement Rangers, has worked with the local community and school to first initiate and now celebrate this great local attraction. It is a micro initiative with big impact that nicely recognises the cultural heritage and local environment of a very historic area.

Council of Europe Visit

Our Council of Europe Diploma for Protected Areas is due for renewal in March 2024, which is why we had an on-site appraisal visit a couple of weeks ago. The appraisal was carried out by two representatives from Spain and Austria and I hadn't realised how rare the award was. The European Diploma for Protected Areas is awarded by the Council of Europe in recognition of “natural and semi-natural areas and landscapes of exceptional European importance for the preservation of biological, geological and landscape diversity and which are managed in an exemplary way. The award was established in 1965 and is awarded to the place, not the National Park Authority. The Peak District National Park was one of the first 3 Protected Area's in Europe to be awarded the Diploma, in 1966. There are currently 67 Diploma-holding areas throughout Europe, with 5 in the UK, the other 4 being: *Minsmere Nature Reserve*, *Beinn Eighe NNR*, *Purbeck Heritage Coast*, *Fair Isle National Scenic Area*. After the site visit our European colleagues will write up a report for the Council to review in spring and make a decision on re-awarding the Diploma.

Peakland Environmental Farmers Group (PEF)

I attended a meeting and farm visit with a number of PEF representatives, who presented a picture of the ambitions the PEF have for the conservation. It was also a great opportunity to discuss how we can build better relationships and support the PEF group.

Peak District Environmental Quality Mark 20th anniversary celebration

The Authority was well represented at this event, having initiated the project 20 years ago and currently still housing the EQM scheme in its now independent guise. It was wonderful to meet a number of businesses who have held the award for many years and the latest batch of committed businesses to receive their certificate. The EQM scheme is a great success story for the Authority and is going from strength to strength with the ability to now make awards nationally.

Staffing headlines

In recent weeks a new Head of Assets & Enterprise has been appointed. Hannah Turner will be joining us from Savills in January.

Our new Authority Solicitor, Erica Ives, will be joining us from Irwin Mitchell in January.

We will be hosting the new UK National Parks Comms function and have appointed Meg Orpwood-Russell from the Yosemite Conservancy, as the new Communications Director. Meg will also be starting in January.

We were unable to appoint a new Head of Resources at the first attempt but have made some changes to the role and are trying again.

I intend to produce updated organisational charts for Members, including names, which will show the top three tiers of management. This will be sent to you shortly.

We are currently consulting on a preferred new set of pay grades following the restructure and earlier commitment to review staff pay. This should be coming to Members at the beginning of December.

National Park Management Plan headlines

There is now delivery, oversight and engagement structure in place for monitoring and delivering the NPMP. In December we plan to convene the 'Delivery Group', which will ensure that the NPMP is delivered and remains relevant to partners. In the spring we will convene the 'Partnership Group', which will oversee and review delivery of the NPMP at a strategic level, with senior representatives acting as champion and ambassadors for the National Park. We will then convene the wider 'Stakeholder Forum' which will be an online opportunity open to all partner and stakeholder organisations to keep them engaged with the Management Plan.

It is also proposed that the Governance Working Group be reconvened to review a number of governance issues to ensure we have the right level of Member, Officer and public input and that our systems and committees are set up in the most effective way. We need to ensure Members and Officers are making decisions at the appropriate points. I want to bring high quality summary information to Members so that Members can fulfil their strategic decision-making role. I want us to be clearer with Members on what the big issues are and get their input on these.

Government headlines

- At the time of writing we are still awaiting the governments response to the national Landscape Review.
- I will be attending the launch of the new National Landscapes (new name for AONBs) in mid-November.
- A new historic building grant is being made available.
- We are waiting for confirmation of additional funding for protected landscapes to be able to buy land where water quality improvements can be made. Although there would be short timescales for this it is possible we will be in a position to make an application for an area to help consolidate our Warslow Moor estate.
- Our annual grant review meeting with Defra is due to be held on 22nd November.
- We will be hosting a visit of Toby Perkins, Chesterfield MP, who has recently picked up the shadow brief for rural affairs.

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

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31st October 2023