

6. MOORS FOR THE FUTURE PARTNERSHIP (CD)

BUSINESS STRATEGY TO 2030 AND ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN

1. Purpose of the report

This report is to bring before Members a new reporting process for the business of the Moors for the Future Partnership. This will take the form of a Business Strategy to 2030 and an annual Business Plan. Members are asked to approve this process and the Strategy and Plan, and to recommend both to the Partnership's Strategic Advisory Board.

Key Issues

- The head of Moors for the Future Partnership previously brought the Partnership's Operational Plan to Committee at the start of each financial year. This represented mainly contracted work which, through standing orders had already been approved by committee. What the staff team feel is now more useful, and gives better engagement with members, is to look at what is being planned for the future rather than a collection of the work already agreed (the previous annual Operational Plan).
- A Business Strategy guiding the strategic approach of the Partnership to 2030 has been produced and consulted on with the Partnership members. This will be really useful in giving a remit / instruction to the team in developing the Partnership's business.
- An annual Business Plan for 2023/24 has been produced and this will become the annual report brought before committee in late winter. It will look forward, proposing the business development work to be undertaken and highlighting how the delivery of the programme will be funded throughout the forthcoming year. It also gives an opportunity once a year for members to generally scrutinise the whole programme.
- All our funding streams, traditional grants, corporate giving, public giving and our partners from time to time require us to supply clarity on how business works. This is often required to meet their own due diligence in working with us. It is difficult to provide this to meet the timescales of developing a specific business opportunity but having this in advance of these requests shows a robust approach which makes us easier to work with.
- Recommending both of these documents and the process and proposed business development contained, will be a major vote of confidence of the team to our partners. It will go some way in mitigating any risks they may see in working with the team, knowing that team and its business development approach is supported by this committee.

2. Recommendations

- 1. The process - Approval of a new reporting process which replaces the previous operational plan with a long-term Business Strategy to 2030 (to be constantly rolled forward so it always has at least a 5 year future). In addition, an annual Business Plan will be presented to committee for approval in late winter each year. At this time members will also expect a general update on the progress of the Partnership's work and this Business planning process. Any changes and updating to the Business Strategy are delegated to the Moors for the Future Partnership Manager in consultation with the Head of Assets and Enterprise.**
- 2. The Business Strategy – Approval of the Business Strategy and the remit and instruction this gives the Partnership team in developing business. Maintained to at least a five-year horizon.**

3. The Business Plan – Approval of the 2023 – 2024 annual Business Plan working within the Authority’s Standing Orders to develop business within the agreed Business strategy.

How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

The MFFP Business Strategy and Annual Plan will develop a pipeline of funded projects, thereby maintaining the 20-year trajectory of nature recovery through peatland restoration and other initiatives across the Partnership’s working area. It will guide the team to the most appropriate related funding and activity to achieve the Partnership’s mission. It will help capitalise on vital opportunities for the future financing of the urgently needed peatland restoration that is still required. It is relevant to the Peak District National Park Management Plan and the delivery of the Authority Plan it covers many aspects which will support the delivery aims of both, especially objective areas of Climate Change, and Landscape & Nature Recovery.

In addition, this approach will emphasise and support the compliance with the Authority’s financial procedures and Standing Orders.

It will add continuity to the Moors for the Future Partnership programme and will retain skilled and valuable staff who are key to achieving nature recovery across this degraded landscape.

Background Information

Since 2003 great steps have been taken to avoid the environmental catastrophe the blanket bog landscape of the Dark Peak and South Pennines was heading towards. Our Partnership has a long way to go to fully realise the goal of our mission but we are on a positive trajectory to achieve this.

The partners and programme team have worked hard to continually raise funds and put new projects together. We have proved to be capable and successful in this role and this business strategy guides how the resource for this important work will be developed and managed.

We still have the most degraded Blanket Bog landscape in Europe in the South Pennines SAC. The urgency to restore blanket bog function across this landscape is a race against climate change. We cannot afford to lose this race. The IPCC have stated that global warming must be limited to 1.5°C by the end of this century to avoid irreversible and catastrophic impacts. Collectively our partners have a significant influence over a large landscape holding opportunities to mitigate these impacts.

At a UK level, peatlands occupy approximately 12% of the UK’s land area and store 5.5bn tonnes of carbon, over half of the UK’s current carbon storage. Peatlands also provide over a quarter of the UK’s drinking water. The UK Natural Capital Peatlands Report estimated that fully restoring the UK’s peatlands could cost between £8bn and £22bn over the next 100 years but predicted savings of £109bn in terms of reduced carbon emissions. The UK Committee on Climate Change suggested in 2019, and again early in 2020, that 50% of upland peat and 25% of lowland peat should be restored by 2050. The net benefit of achieving this objective is estimated to be £45 billion to £51 billion over the next 100 years. This is promoting a new context for financing peatland restoration through the offsetting market (currently voluntary) these are currently in their infancy but are likely to provide a new source of finance in the near future.

11.5 million people live in the Local Authority areas bordering the Partnership’s working area. It should be noted that three adjacent City Regions sit immediately on the borders of the Partnership – Greater Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield. As indicated earlier, the upland landscape needs to be in the best ecological condition possible to withstand the impact of this large population and its associated infrastructure, and to supply these communities with

hardworking natural processes, in particular being resilient to moorland fires, flooding and drought conditions.

Proposals

3. Providing Committee approve this new process and the business planning documents, the team will share these with our partners and will then use the guidance this gives in developing new business and clarifying how we work to any organisation that needs to explore this.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

Financial:

4. No metrics are given in the Business Strategy as the longer time frame makes speculation over this period difficult, a target area for business development is given in the strategy and is copied here;

Priority focus areas

1. The past three Asset Management Programmes (AMP) over 15 years have been a bedrock of delivery and have provided the essential first piece in the future funding jigsaw. The AMP8 delivery (2025 – 2030) across United Utilities, Severn Trent and Yorkshire Water will be fundamental to capital delivery across many drinking water catchments across our working area. It is essential to work with our utility company partners to maximise this opportunity.
2. In step with the above, the Environment Agency have a challenging requirement to reduce the increasing flooding issues in communities at risk at the foot of the hills across our working area. The Flood Defence Grant in Aid and other funding of the Environment Agency could add value to the AMP 8 programme to optimise delivery for natural flood risk management.
3. Green finance from public and corporate giving is growing. This includes mechanisms such as the Peatland Code and that being designed through the Great North Bog Coalition, in addition to our in-house initiatives on place-based schemes, the BMC Climate Project and 1% for the Planet. Using private and corporate funding to deliver environmental benefits and (where applicable) meet corporate ESG aims. These need staff capacity to be maintained and increased to fully capitalise.
4. Grant applications to NLHF and government schemes such as the present Nature for Climate fund. These need a staff capacity to be maintained and increased to fully capitalise on all relevant grant streams available.
5. The developing business for 2023 / 24 FY is laid out in the annual Business Plan and this is monitored through a mechanism called the Programme Tracker which is scrutinised at each of the Authority's monthly Resource Management Meetings.

Risk Management:

5. Within the Project Team and Programme Team are an array of skills and experience to match large commercial providers. Prince 2 project management and in-house project tool kit provision with Project Managers experienced now in large scale complex delivery. Added to this IOSH and CDM qualified staff and contract and grant management skills. Backed up through the high degree of diligence which the Authorities Standing Orders provide. All this gives a deal of risk reduction and confidence.

Sustainability:

6. From a business sustainability perspective, this proposal fits within the context of the Moors for the Future Partnership Mission and Objectives. 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 immense improvements to the landscape and conservation of the Dark Peak and beyond. Creating synergy and succession between projects is a key component of the sustainability of the Moors for the Future programme.

Capacity requirements to maintain business sustainability impacts on the Partnership in two forms. These can loosely be described as pre and post-contractual commitment. This report is careful to confirm that the capacity is fully considered and planned for in order to execute the contractual commitment, which will arise for the delivery planned for 2023-24. The first priority of the staff team is to ensure that this is always the case. All projects are planned and then monitored to ensure full cost recovery can be achieved. The staff establishment is increased and decreased to achieve this and resource is built in at project inception for this purpose.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:

7. There are no equality issues arising from this report

8. 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? The Partnership will use this strategic approach to accelerate delivery leading the way in sustainable land management and on the pathway to being exemplars of sustainability.
2. How does this decision contribute to the Authority meeting its carbon net zero target? This partnership will continue to add to the 560k tonnes of avoided carbon loss already achieved as further work is delivered.
3. Are there any other Climate Change related issues that are relevant to this decision that should be brought to the attention of Members? The future works being proposed will be engaging with the water resources and flood risk management issues, and also considering registration with the Peatland Code. Increasing drinking water quality and restoring water-tables as blanket bogs are restored. A restored water table will contribute to the moors' resilience against wildfire.

9. Background papers (not previously published)

No background papers that have not been previously published.

10. Appendices

Moors for the Future Partnership Business Strategy to 2030
Moors for the Future Business Plan 2023 - 2024

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

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