7. EQUALITY PLAN 2024-28

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the work to date to ensure the Authority's compliance with the specific duties under the public sector equality duty (PSED).

2. Context

2.1 The PSED is made up of a general equality duty supported by specific duties. The general duty is set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and it came into force on 5 April 2011.

2.2 The general equality duty applies to 'public authorities', and those subject to the duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

2.3 The specific duties were created by secondary legislation in the form of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011.The Peak District National Park Authority is listed in Schedule 2 of the regulations and as a 'listed' authority is subject to both the general equality duty and specific duties. The purpose of the specific duties is to help listed authorities improve their performance on the general duty, by improving their focus and transparency. In summary, each listed authority is required to:

- Publish equality information at least one a year. The information we publish should be enough to demonstrate to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), as well as service users, staff and other interested parties, how the Authority is performing in the area of equality. The nature of the information depends on the size and purpose of the organisation.
- Prepare and publish one or more equality objectives that is thinks it needs to achieve to further any of the aims of the general equality duty, at least every four years. The number of objectives set depends on the size and role of organisation.
- Publish their gender pay gap information (if 250 or more employees) by 30 March each year. The gender pay gap is the difference in average and median pay, between men and women in the workforce. It is different to equal pay, which means you must pay men and women the same for equal or similar work.

2.4 Previously equality outcomes, objectives and information were reported separately. In the Corporate Strategy 2019-24 two specific key performance indicators and tow workforce metrics were identified as the equality objectives to demonstrate the specific duties.

Key performance indicator	**Success factors**	**Result**
Proportion of under-represented groups reached	Peak District National Park Authority audience reach that is 30% closer to demographics of	In many demographic areas we are now close to regional demographics, although there is still under representation in socioeconomic and

	those within an hour's travel time of the National Park by 2024	age groups. The PDNP continues to stand out from other NPs with the ethnicity of our visitors closely matching that of the region.
No. of residents and other community stakeholders understanding & engaged in the development of strategic policies	50% increase in number by 2024 and 50% increase in range by 2024	34% increase

Equality duty objective	**Success factors**	**Result**
Employee age – range and median	We will seek to reduce the median by 2024	@ 31/03/2024 median age was 49 yrs 2023 49 2022 52 2021 49 2020 50
Gender pay gap – median	We aim to close the gap by 2024	@ 31/03/2024 pay gap was 2.2% 2023 8.8% 2022 4.8% 2021 9.5% 2020 9.4%

2.5 When considering new equality objectives, the aim was to bring all objectives and actions into one document for a better overview and joined up approach across the teams and services to delivery. There was ambition for the equality objectives to be integral to everyday business, and encourage staff at all levels to engage with developing and ultimately 'owning' the actions.

2.6 In December last year, the Senior Management Team attended a workshop with the Human Resource team, and the Workforce Champions (a representative group of 10 employees from across the Authority) with the aim to come up with a list of possible equality objectives to help address some of the equality challenges faced by our workforce and service users. From this workshop three themes with possible objectives and suggested actions were developed.

2.7 Engagement of the members of the Wider Management Team (WMT) is key to the success in achieving the proposed equality plan actions, and therefore helpful to give them opportunity to comment and suggest amendments. The WMT as well as our recognised trade union, UNISON, were consulted on the draft plan initially in January with a discussion held at the WMT meeting 28 January, and consulted again with a revised version in February.

2.8 The Equality Plan 2025-26 is not yet finalised. It has grown organically from the original workshop in December which started at grassroots with the Workforce Champions. It was only recently agreed the Equality Plan should be taken before Members for scrutiny and monitoring in future. There is still work to be done on establishing stronger links with the Authority Plan. Another discussion is tabled at the WMT meeting on 29 April. The manager of the team responsible for each of the actions will be tasked with providing details on how each action will be measured/monitored and the timescale for milestones and delivery. There will also be a discussion and decision made on the mechanism for performance monitoring and reporting.

3. Proposals

3.1 Members agree that as part of demonstrating our public sector specific duties, an update on the Equality Plan 2024-28 should be taken to the Programmes and Resources Committee annually in April.

3.2 That Members note the progress to date on developing the Equality Plan 2024-28. It has been fundamental aim when drafting the plan, to keep the language clear and simple. There has been robust and meaningful consultation to create as much ownership as possible across the Authority to ensure successful delivery of outcomes.

4. Recommendations

1. **An update on the Equality Plan 2024-28 is taken to the Programmes and Resources Committee every April is approved.**

2. **The current version of the Equality Plan 2024-28 is noted.**

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to section 65(5) of the Environment Act 1995, the Authority has power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the accomplishment of its statutory purposes. This power is subject to any express statutory or public law constraints.

The Authority is subject to the general and specific equality duties set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 respectively, as outlined in this report.

Pursuant to sections 5 and 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the Authority must deliver to the statutory purposes and statutory duty, respectively, when carrying out its work. Monitoring the Authority's progress against the aims and objectives set out in the National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan will enable appropriate scrutiny and safeguard legal compliance.

The National Park Management Plan and the Authority Plan are compliant with the Authority's duties in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. Specific projects presented to the Programmes and Resources Committee will identify and address any adverse equality impacts on a case by case basis for consideration prior to approval.

b. Financial
There are no financial implications, as funds are already available.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan
This report demonstrates the work being undertaken on equality as part of our legal obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. More work is planned to crystalise the links to the Authority Plan and the National Park Management Plan. The key objectives to which the Equality Plan will contribute towards are:
Objective C – to have highly engaged, healthy and inclusive staff and volunteers.
Objective 8 - to create opportunities for young people and those from under-served communities to connect with and enjoy the National Park
Objective 9 – to promote the National Park as a place where there are opportunities for the improvement of physical and mental health and wellbeing.

d. Risk Management
The Equality Plan is not yet finalised. Being clear on our PSED legal obligations has enabled development of a draft plan. At which meeting, and how often, the updates on the actions will be monitored and evaluated is yet to be determined. Hereafter, an annual report on the Equality Action Plan 2024-28 will be taken to the Programmes and Resources Committee meeting every April for scrutiny.

e. Net Zero
No issues

f. Equality
The Authority demonstrates due regard to the general equality duty and complies with the specific equality duties with the creation of an Equality Plan.

6. Background papers (not previously published)
None

7. Appendices
Appendix 1 – the draft Equality Plan 2024-28

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

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