

Date: 29 May 2007

Report REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ENGAGEMENTS

1. Since the last meeting of the Authority, the Chief Executive has been involved in the following:-

(a) Events

- Hosted a visit from Peter Unwin, the recently appointed Director General of the Natural Environment Group at Defra, in order that he might learn more about national park authorities. The visit included a dinner with the Chairman and the Head of Conservation and Policy and visits to examine work on the Limestone Country Project, green lanes issues and the implementation of the Pennine Bridleway.
- A visit from the Authority's Natural England Board representative, Mrs Pam Warhurst, to discuss a range of matters on the developing relationship between the National Park Authority and Natural England. These included: the future of agri-environment schemes and HLS, access and recreation issues, the joint biodiversity agenda, potential joint working on climate change, the future of the Limestone Country Project and the role of Natural England in the implementation of the National Park Management Plan.
- Along with a number of members, attendance at the ANPA Workshop in Newcastle on the theme of climate change. A report on this matter, and feedback from Members who attending the Workshop, is included in today's agenda.
- Attendance at the inaugural Dalesman Yorkshire Rural Awards. Members may wish to note that among the award winners were: Louise Williams, the Authority's Limestone Country Project Officer, who won the Young Achievement Award - Colin Speakman, the Secretary of Yorkshire Dales Society who won the Lifetime Achievement Award; and Raydale Preserves who won the Food and Drink Producer of the Year Award.

(b) Meetings

- The Acting Area Manager for Natural England to discuss a number of issues including: the Authority's general relationship with Natural England at a regional

level, the approach to the current LEADER funding, Natural England input into the Limestone Country Project, the regional allocation of HLS monies, regional funding priorities and the implementation of the National Park Management Plan.

- With officials from the New Forest NPA to discuss matters connected with the establishment of the new National Park Authority, its impact and funding.
- The Joint National Park Officers' Group to discuss: reports from the country associations, progress by the professional officer working groups, the members' workshop and members' induction initiative, 2007 public relations activities, progress against the work programme for 2006/07 and the development of the work programme for 2007/08.
- The English National Park Officers' Group to discuss, among other matters, the development of the National Parks 'Ambition' document, how ENPAA engages externally, CNP's report on Prosperity and Protection, future funding formula, the incorporation of ENPAA, the Local Government Bill, the accounts for 2007/08, the relationship between Defra, Natural England and the National Park Authorities, to receive specific feedback from the working groups, to deal with consultations that have been received by ENPAA and the establishment of position statements for farming, transport, and tourism.
- The Craven Local Strategic Partnership which included, a presentation by the Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber, a presentation given by the NPA Strategic Planning Officer on the 'Housing issues and options' consultation paper, an update of the review of the Craven Community Strategy, a Safer Craven Community Partnership update, a renaissance market town update, a local area agreement update and a presentation on Craven District Council's Corporate Equalities Scheme.
- Meeting with officials from Yorkshire Forward and the Chief Executive of the North York Moors National Park Authority to discuss a range of issues including: Yorkshire Forward's response to the Prosperity and Protection report, the development of the LEADER programme, the Regional Cycling Strategy, potential relationship in the delivery of the regional climate change agenda, future of Langcliffe Quarry, implementation of the SRIP, the development of the city region approach, the implementation of the National Park Management Plan, the future of the Sustainable Development Fund and the development of the 'Green Communities' Project.
- Along with the Member Champion for Promoting Understanding representatives from Hudson House to discuss the new agreement arrangements (a report will be presented to the July AGM on its proposals).
- The first meeting of the National Park Management Plan Steering Group to discuss its implementation.
- With the Authority's new auditors, Deloitte & Touche, who were represented by Ivan McConnell.

MATTERS FOR MEMBERS' CONSIDERATION

New Members' Code of Conduct

2. As members may be aware, the Government has introduced a new model code of conduct for all members of local authorities and other bodies such as parish councils, police authorities – and national park authorities. The relevant legislation came into force on 3 May, and authorities have until 1 October to adopt a new code of conduct, based on the model. However, authorities are being urged to take this step sooner rather than later, and it clearly makes sense to do so, in order that the public – and members themselves – can be clear about the requirements.

3. One of the statutory functions of the Standards Committee is to advise the Authority on the adoption of its code of conduct, and the Standards Committee will therefore need to meet to consider the matter, with a view to making a formal recommendation to the Authority at its July meeting. Various national briefing events are also taking place early in June, including a Standards Board roadshow, and this Authority will be represented at those. The Standards Committee will then meet on 19 June, shortly after those events.

4. Members will be bound by the new code as soon as it is adopted. It therefore seems sensible to arrange training for members *prior to* the July Authority meeting. It is therefore proposed to have this training at 1pm on Thursday 19 July at Yoredale. This is immediately prior to the Policy Development Forum, so hopefully will be a date that many members have already reserved in their diaries.

Recommendation:

5. That training on the new model code of conduct be arranged for all Authority members at 1pm on 19 July 2007.

Member Mentoring

6. On 4 May, the Audit and Review Committee met but the meeting was not quorate. One of the issues that the Committee was to have considered was the possible introduction of a member mentoring scheme for new members appointed to the Authority. For members' information, an extract from the relevant Committee report is attached to this report as an **Appendix**.

7. As, potentially, several new members have been/will be appointed to the Authority following the recent elections, it was considered that it would be timely to bring the matter to this meeting for members' consideration.

8. Members supported the principle of mentoring and suggested that it might be useful to establish a list of volunteer members willing to act as mentors. The report suggested that a member from the same 'Group' as the new member might be appropriate as a mentor, but members felt that a geographical link between mentor and

mentee might be more appropriate. If a list of mentors was established, new members could then choose who they wanted to act as their mentor.

9. As the proposal is that the 'scheme' should be very informal, it would be hoped that every existing member would offer their services as a potential mentor. On that basis, perhaps the easiest way to establish the proposed list would be to request members to contact the Secretariat if they do NOT wish to be a mentor.

Recommendation:

10. That an informal scheme of Member Mentoring be established to provide assistance to new members of the Authority, those new members to be invited to select a Mentor from a list of Authority members who have agreed to make themselves available for such a role.

Committee Memberships

11. At the January meeting of the Authority it was agreed that the Audit and Review and the Finance and Resources Committees would continue until the annual meeting of the Authority in July with reduced memberships following the reduction in size of the Authority from 26 to 22 members and following the departure of some members as a result of the elections earlier this month. However, changes to the membership of the Planning and Access Committees following the retirement of Jerry Pearlman and the standing down (albeit possibly temporarily) of Harold Brown were both addressed and, at the March Authority meeting replacement members were appointed to both Committees.

12. There are now further changes to the memberships of the Planning and Standards Committee following the departure from the Authority of David Ireton and as a result of Messrs Dent and Kendall and Mrs Gina Ramsbottom not seeking re-election.

13. The County Council and the District Council Groups of members have both been invited to nominate replacements as follows:

- County Council Group – to replace David Ireton on the Planning and Standards Committees
- District Council Group – to replace James Kendall on the Planning Committee and Gina Ramsbottom on the Standards Committee.

14. The following nominations have been received:

- County Council Group – still awaited
- District Council Group - SHK Butcher to replace Mrs Ramsbottom on the Standards Committee. The nomination of a replacement for Mr Kendall on the Planning Committee will need to await Richmondshire and South Lakeland District Councils' decisions on their appointees to the Authority, which should be made before this meeting.

Recommendation:

15. That the nominations from the County Council and District Council Groups of members in respect of replacement members on the Planning and Standards Committee be approved.

ISSUES FOR MEMBERS TO NOTE

Car Park Permits

16. Members will recall that last year the Authority took a decision to charge residents of the National Park for car park permits (previously issued free of charge) to permit them to use National Park car parks without having to pay a fee on the occasion of each such use. The free permits had also been available for all staff and members.

17. Whilst permits are still available for staff and members, they will only be valid for 'business use'. Members and staff have been advised that the test to be used is if the visit and car park use is one for which travelling allowance would be claimable and for which, without the benefit of the permit, the cost of parking charges could be re-claimed.

Pennine Bridleway

18. Following consideration of the matter at the last Authority meeting, the Authority has been informed that Natural England has allocated funding to its National Trails programme and a positive formal offer of grant for the proposed capital works on the Pennine Bridleway is expected in the near future.

Limestone Country Project

19. The Authority (through our Senior Wildlife Conservation Officer, Tim Thom) has been successful in negotiations with the European Commission to extend the Limestone Country Project for a further 12 months. The project will now run until 31 March 2008. As a result, the Authority has been able to keep the project officer, Louise Williams, in place to assist the remaining farmers in the project to transfer into new long-term agreements with Natural England. During the final year, the Authority will also host a workshop to assist development of Limestone Country Beef Ltd; carry out a programme of local, regional, national and international promotion of the project's lessons; and complete research on cattle movement and grazing impact.

David Butterworth
Chief Executive

16 May 2007

Background documents: None

EXTRACT FROM REPORT

Committee: AUDIT AND REVIEW

Date: 4 May 2007

Report: MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Member Mentoring

4. Mentoring is a process that is still relatively new in local government, although it is becoming more widely used. In its simplest form, mentoring within any authority would be a means whereby a new member would be provided with a contact, either a member colleague or an officer, to help them following their appointment to the Authority, with particular emphasis on the first few months of their appointment.
5. It is not intended that this scheme should be prescriptive or particularly onerous, but be more of a means of providing a first point of contact for new members to assist them to get 'up and running' following their appointment to the Authority.
6. Whilst all officers of the Authority, but particularly the Chief Executive and Secretariat staff, are available to offer support for members, it is suggested that a mentor would be a fellow **member**.
7. A mentor would be someone with a degree of experience on the Authority; someone who is aware of the likely issues that new members face; someone with sufficient experience and knowledge of the organisation and its personnel to be able to guide the new member to the right contact; and someone able to advise on the Authority's protocols and procedures.
8. It may be appropriate for the mentor to be from the same 'Group' of members as the new appointee(s). If so, each Group could either nominate a mentor who would take on the responsibility of making themselves available for any new member(s), or appoint a mentor whenever a new member is appointed, that way the group would be able to consider which of them would be appropriate for the person concerned, and have the time available at that point in time.

RECOMMENDATION

15. That members consider and agree ways forward on the issues raised in this report on:

- (a) Member Mentoring;

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