

# North York Moors National Park Authority

19 December 2016

## Parish Forum Update

### 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Members of the issues and actions arising from the last round of Parish Forum meetings and to enable them to raise any issues arising from the Forums.

### 2. Issues and Actions Arising

- 2.1 A list of main issues raised at the last round of Parish Forum meetings is attached at **Appendix 1**. The response from the Department of Culture Media and Sport on the failed Mobile Infrastructure Project is shown at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.2 The issues raised will be used to help inform Members and Officers about local Priorities and concerns which will be used in Customer Service Excellence and service delivery decisions.

### 3. Financial and Staffing Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial or staffing implications.

### 4. Contribution to National Park Management Plan

- 4.1 Communities will be better able to influence the delivery of services and decisions affecting the National Park under policy C1 of the National Park Management Plan where local views will be sought in developing policies, priorities and activities in the National Park.

### 5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications.

### 6. Recommendation

- 6.1 That the issues raised at Parish Forums be noted.

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#### Background documents to this report

|                               | File Ref. |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Northern Parish Forum File | 1031/6    |
| 2. Coastal Parish Forum File  | 1031/7    |
| 3. Western Parish Forum File  | 1031/8    |
| 4. Southern Parish Forum File | 1031/9    |

### Issues raised at the Coastal, Western, Northern and Southern Parish Forum Meetings.

#### All Parish Forums considered the following items:

- a) The letter regarding the Mobile Infrastructure Project from all four Chairs was read out at each meeting. A response has now been received and is available at this meeting shown at **Appendix 2.**
- b) A presentation on Community Grants was given to all Forums with a request for suggestions of any changes recommended to the procedure for future grants.
- c) A reminder that the Authority offers grants for Parish Caretakers.
- d) A reminder of the First Steps Local Plan Consultation
- e) Following initial results from the Residents' and Visitors' surveys, a brief analysis was given to the Forums.
- f) The BT consultation on removal of phone boxes was highlighted. Clair Shields is collating responses for the National Park area.
- g) Community Led Housing presentation/handouts from Pete Duncan from Social Regeneration Consultants

#### 1. Coastal Area Parish Forum

- The Director of Conservation gave a brief update on the Countryside Stewardship scheme.
- A statement from the Authority's solicitor was read out by Mark Hill updating on the enforcement action of the untidy property in Hawsker.
- Following a question from a Whitby resident, a statement from Richard Gunton was read out regarding the closure of Whitby TIC which advised that the Authority is actively seeking a suitable alternative venue and is open to suggestions.

#### 2. Western Area Parish Forum

- The Forum was advised that several meetings have taken place with Sutton Bank local residents regarding parking at busy times at the Visitor Centre - Highways have agreed to extend the yellow lines before next summer to prevent on road parking.
- Tim Swales, Osmotherley, praised the collaboration of National Trust, Yorkshire Water, Police, Simon Bassindale at the Authority and local landowners on the Sheep Watch Action Group. Acknowledgement was given to the Authority officers for their hard work and willingness to assist.

#### 3. Northern Area Parish Forum

- Danby Group requested an update on the Pearl Mussel Project. Simon Hirst has given updated information to the Group
- The closure of rural post offices and the introduction of mobile post offices were discussed and the inadequate consultation done by the Post Office. A suggestion was made that letters should be written to MPs regarding the reduction in rural services as a whole.
- Affordable housing, right to buy and housing policies was discussed particularly relating to the development at Lealholm.
- An update on Scarborough Borough Council's closure of public toilets was read out.
- A presentation by Whitby Esk Energy on the hydro project.

#### 4. Southern Area Parish Forum – nothing additional was discussed.



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7 November 2016

Ms Christine Lewis  
Sir Michael Carlisle  
Mr Jake Duncombe  
Mr John Cummins  
[j.seaton@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:j.seaton@northyorkmoors.org.uk)

Dear Chairs,

Thank you for your letter of 24 October to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, regarding the Mobile Infrastructure Project. I am replying as a member of her Ministerial Support Team.

I understand the frustrations of those residents of the North York Moors National Park Authority (NYMNPA). Providing mobile coverage in rural areas for the first time was challenging by its very nature, and delivering infrastructure to some areas proved to be more difficult than others. It is worth noting that the project, when originally commissioned, was only to deliver voice and basic data (2G and 3G). The delivery of 4G was added to make it future-proof but that added difficulties for delivery.

I can confirm that 18 potential Nominal MIP site locations in the original National Radio Plan created in July 2013 were in the NYMNPA, which was communicated at that time to Chief Executive Andy Wilson and Director of Planning Chris France.

The number of potential Nominal site locations was reduced to 12 when the National Radio Plan had to be re-done in 2014 as a result of changes in the original Not Spot Data on which it was based. Of these 12, there were only 3 viable Nominals remaining in September 2014, as communicated by Arqiva/Harlequin in a meeting with NYMNPA on 22/09/2014.

The rollout of superfast broadband is progressing well in North Yorkshire; the local superfast broadband project remains on track to deliver 88% superfast coverage by the end of 2016. Broadband Delivery UK are also reinvesting project savings and take-up revenues to extend the reach of superfast broadband further.

Of the 16 Not Spots on the A169 in the revised National Radio Plan, only the site covered by the Nominal site location NYO0179 could be progressed as the rest had no identified means of connecting back into the Mobile Network Operators' (MNO) networks. NYO0179 is one of the sites built. The other fundamental difficulty encountered in dealing with Roads Not Spots is that even if the MIP Project had managed to provide coverage for all the Roads Total Not Spots,



the project was not allowed to cover partial Not Spots where some but not all MNOs provided mobile service. This would mean that a mobile call would still be dropped when passing through such a partial Not Spot, unless the caller happened to subscribe to the MNO covering it.

The original communication by DCMS was correct in stating that there were 18 Nominals in the NPA, which at that stage were just potential unproven approximate locations for masts, and correctly advised that it was vital to obtain planning permission for the actual candidate location for the MIP mast during the Site Acquisition stage.

However, as was also explained at the time, unless it was established in the preceding Site Search stage that there was a clear line of sight from the proposed MIP mast to an MNO mast into which the proposed MIP mast could connect for each MNO, then the location would be a complete non-starter. This difficulty tends to be significantly worse in areas with hilly terrain. There were also other conditions that would have to be met at that stage before the candidate mast location could be taken forward into Site Acquisition.

As noted above, the further communication by Arqiva in September 2014 reduced the expectations down to 3 viable locations. Whilst the original timescale for the project had an end date of 31 March 2015, for a variety of reasons including the need to revise the Not Spot Data, the project timescale was extended to 31 March 2016. On 3 October 2011, a press release was published on gov.uk stating that, "the Government will aim to extend mobile service coverage to 99 per cent of the UK population." However by June 2013, the ambitions of the project were scaled back and this is no longer a requirement.

In total, the project delivered 75 masts (rather than 16) in the three years to March 2016. Of these 75, 6 of the masts (8% of the total) are in North Yorkshire, including the very first MIP mast which went live at Weaverthorpe in September 2013. In addition to the 6 masts built in North Yorkshire, planning applications were also made for a further 7 North Yorkshire masts but none of these managed to get to the end of the site acquisition process by the cut-off date in 2015 for starting site build. The remainder of the North Yorkshire Nominals suffered from the lack of ability to connect to MNO masts for all MNOs as described above.

I understand your disappointment in the outcomes of the MIP project, however I would like to take the opportunity to clarify some of the concerns raised. The MIP project was re-baselined to deliver 40 masts when the project's original ambitions became unfeasible. This re-baselined target was subsequently exceeded as 75 masts were built across the UK, providing coverage to nearly 8,000 homes and businesses when all fully operational. DCMS sent out a letter to North Yorkshire County Council on 10 December 2015 outlining the masts that would be progressing into build.

Although MIP has now concluded, I would like to assure you that improving digital connectivity across both mobile and broadband remain a top priority. In December 2014, a landmark agreement was reached with the four UK MNOs to improve mobile coverage throughout the UK. As a result of that agreement, each MNO has taken on a legally binding coverage obligation to cover at least 90 per cent of the UK landmass by 2017.

This is a significant change in the way MNOs relate to coverage in this country and will guarantee £5 billion of investment in mobile infrastructure. Mobile services will be improved across the UK, with partial not-spots (areas where there is coverage from one or two operators but not all four) being halved and complete not-spots reducing by two-thirds. This obligation will have a far larger impact than would have ever been achieved by MIP.

I hope that this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Hannah Hood  
**Ministerial Support Team**