

North York Moors National Park Authority

Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee

3 February 2014

External Funding

<p>1. Purpose of the Report</p>
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| <p>1.1 To update Members on the work currently being undertaken to secure external funding to support some of the Authority's work programmes and priorities</p> |
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2. **Background**

- 2.1 This report provides a brief update on projects for which external funding is being sought and seeks to set out potential approaches to future income generation.

3. **Projects Approved**

- 3.1 None to report.

4. **Projects Submitted/Awaiting Decision**

- 4.1 A small £25,000 bid was made in December to the Arts Council under their Grants for the Arts programme. It will support an international collaboration between the Inspired by Gallery at Danby and galleries in Finland and Sweden to exhibit and promote the work of local printmakers in a rural context. If successful there will be a simultaneous exhibition of work in the 3 countries during 2015. The outcome of the bid will be known by Easter.

5. **Projects Rejected**

- 5.1 A small application to the Tour de France Cultural Festival Fund to enable two local artists to work with local schoolchildren and to create an exhibition ahead of the Grand Depart was unsuccessful. This fund was heavily oversubscribed.

6. **New Projects**

- 6.1 The opportunity to promote tourism along the coastal villages is being examined as part of a potential bid for Coastal Communities Funding in 2015. This funding is primarily seeking local economic growth outcomes. Such an approach will address Business Plan and Management Plan objectives. It may be appropriate to set up a small task group to drive this forward.

7. **Future Income Generation**

- 7.1 In the context of diminishing central government core grant funding to NPAs, officers, both in the North York Moors NPA and in the wider family of National Parks, are looking at options for income generation on a larger scale, not simply to support specific identified projects and priorities, but to reduce overall reliance on the core grant.

- 7.2 The 2012-2015 Business Plan adopted increased income generation as an operational principle. Three specific targets were identified and all have made good progress to date: car park fees, visitor centre income and planning fee income.
- 7.3 The Business Plan seeks to enhance outcomes which can be delivered through external funding sources. These are determined by the threats and opportunities that are outlined in the National Park Management Plan. To help to achieve these we employ a dedicated External Funding Officer. The areas identified for action include: improving connectivity of habitats and addressing immediate threats; PAWS; Alcatrazes Bat; Freshwater Pearl Mussel; Daffodils; This Exploited Land; Tourism; Skills; Duncombe Park temples; undergrounding and geodiversity. Significant progress has already been made towards securing the necessary external funding to address a number of these.
- 7.4 The NPA has had a number of successful National Lottery bids but there has never been a 'Family' of National Parks bid to the National Lottery for a very large overarching project. Recognising this, and particularly in consideration of biodiversity issues, Defra has convened a meeting in February 2014 at which we will be represented to look at the barriers to 5 key funding sources including European Funds, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Landfill funds and to charitable trusts.
- 7.5 New income generation is a priority for National Parks England and National Parks UK. It is the key agenda item for the CEOs' meeting in January. A verbal report will be given to this meeting.
- 7.6 Some new activity is already taking place. Defra has commissioned Consultants to produce a report which is looking at opportunities across the National Park 'family'.
- 7.7 National Parks UK has just secured a first 'family'-wide financial sponsorship of National Parks from Reckitt Benckiser, the Anglo-Dutch health and hygiene conglomerate. They are soon to market a range of Airwick air fresheners inspired by some of the National Parks. There will not be a North York Moors edition at first, possibly ever, however we will benefit from a share of the overall £50,000 sponsorship funding at a level to be agreed.
- 7.8 There is scope to look at further sponsorship both at a UK level and at a local, individual Park level. However, the scale needs to be significantly uplifted to make the exercise worthwhile and sustainable.
- 7.9 All potential sources of income generation should be explored. Some of these will work best at a local level, others will yield better results if they are developed at a national or UK level. Not all will work in every Park.
- 7.10 The potential list of sources is not exhaustive but it provides a starting point. Some work is already underway on a number of these:
- Sponsorship
 - National Lottery and other major grant funders
 - Fees and charges
 - Trading and new commercial activity
 - A membership scheme – this could be local or a national scheme
 - Bequests
 - Donations and visitor giving

- 7.11 Some of this activity will only succeed if every National Park participates. All of the approaches will need to be underpinned by a campaign to promote better awareness of National Parks and an understanding of their value to our society and economy.
- 7.12 Any England or UK wide income generation will need to have an agreed means of dividing the proceeds - most obviously that it would be carried out on a principle of equity, with no individual Park or Parks benefitting financially more than any other but this is currently being debated. Potential sponsors might want to cherry pick the better known to support for their own commercial reasons which may limit the choices. It may be appropriate to create a central trust to receive and manage the income created.
- 7.13 In any enthusiasm to make progress, care must be taken to ensure that any new income generation will not damage the National Park 'brand' or compromise our principles, profile or reputation.
- 7.14 To have any chance of success, there will be a requirement to agree who takes any of the potential initiatives forward and an assessment of the resources needed to do so. This will be a challenge to every National Park in the current funding circumstances.
- 7.15 Further work will be carried out proactively to explore these income generation ideas in more detail as they relate to the North York Moors NPA. Necessarily this will be across all Directorates.

8. **Contribution to National Park Management Plan**

- 8.1 The rationale behind seeking new income generation is to secure the delivery of the Business Plan and the Management Plan in the current scenario of year on year reducing core grant funding.

9. **Legal Implications**

- 9.1 None at this stage.

<h2>10. Recommendation</h2>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">10.1 That Members approve the external funding work currently being undertaken. |
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