

North York Moors National Park Authority

Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee

19 May 2014

External Funding

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update Members on the work currently being undertaken to secure external funding and to discuss options for the future delivery of this area of work, all of which will help support the Authority's work programmes and priorities.

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 for securing external funding in the future.
- 2.2 This report is set against the backdrop of the continuing reduction in National Park Grant, which is clearly impacting on the National Park Authority's (NPA) core funded activity and places an increased driver on securing new income streams and more external funding.
- 2.3 The Authority has for ten years had within its structure a part-time External Funding Officer in order to oversee the programme of external funding and to work with Departments to develop and shape ideas that will hopefully lead to additional resources to deliver National Park Purposes. Currently this post is vacant, with the previous post holder having taken up the role of Programme Manager for the 'This Exploited Land' Project. The budget for 2014/15 includes sufficient funds to make the post full-time if this is considered to be the best option. The second half of this report discusses what these options are.

3. Current External Funding Activity

- 3.1 Table 1 below sets out an update on projects that are in development, that have been approved, have been submitted and that the Authority is awaiting a decision on, projects that have been unsuccessful and projects or programmes that have been approved and are going through further development. Please note that the Table does not include project ideas that have not been agreed for development at this stage. It is envisaged that this table will become a standing part of our update to Members and staff on how we are progressing with external funding across the organisation.
- 3.2 The National Park Management Plan will guide the strategic scope and priorities for external funding, but the NPA Business Plan (2012 – 2015) sets out an overview list of the elements that might feature in these. They are as follows:
- Improving habitats on the Connections Map or addressing an imminent threat or priority opportunity;
 - Planted Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS);
 - Alcathees Bat;
 - Esk Pearl Mussel;
 - Daffodils;
 - This Exploited Land;

- Tourism;
- Skills;
- Temples in Duncombe Park;
- Undergrounding; and
- Geodiversity Projects.

3.3 Through the projects that are covered in Table 1 below it is felt that progress has, or is being made on all of the elements listed in the Business Plan. This Exploited Land has received first round approval and will include elements of habitat connectivity, PAWS, habitat work along the Esk, wild daffodils and some elements of geological conservation and understanding. There are ongoing discussions about the future funding approach for work along the Esk which include the Yorkshire Esk Rivers Trust and the new Esk and Coastal Streams Catchment Partnership. A number of significant funding bids have been developed for tourism projects in the Park. A skills and apprenticeships paper is being developed with the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership and there has been significant success in terms of the northern apprenticeship team working with Prior Pursglove College. Work has been undertaken on the temples in Duncombe Park, which included external funding provision. Alcathe's Bat could be taken forward through the potential new landscape scale project ideas that have been developed for the River Rye.

3.4 A new series of external funding priorities will need to be developed for the new Business Plan (2016 – 2018). Work has already begun in order to scope out some of these priorities. Initial workshops have been held to develop these ideas, but further consultation will be required with Members before consideration is given to whether these should be progressed to full project stage and if so which funding streams will be most relevant. The Conservation Department has recently held a number of workshops in order to develop the next tranche of large-scale funding bids for taking forward Management Plan priorities. These have been taken further with involvement from Parks Services and the Building Conservation team. The ideas from these workshops include a skills and training programme, a coastal and marine environment project and two landscape scale projects, one of along the River Rye and upper Derwent and another in the Newtondale area. Both of these landscape-scale projects would be multi-objective, but with strong Habitat Connectivity and PAWS components. Further development would be required for these two landscape-scale projects, including how much support they might receive from landowners, how they might mesh with project ideas that landowners themselves may have, how the schemes mesh with the aspirations partners have and finally how they could link in with the next round of agri-environment scheme support, notably the New Environmental Land Management Scheme (NELMS), currently in development.

4. **External Funding Support and Expertise**

4.1 As the External Funding Officer Post is currently vacant support for this type of activity is less than it previously was. However, a range of measures have been put in place to make sure that the rate of external funding activity does not suffer. This is allowing officers to experiment with different approaches to deriving and drawing up external funding bids, which helps to shape the options for long-term provision of this support. These short-term measures include drawing in external consultancy advice, utilising the skills and experience of other staff who are within the Authority, and working with partner organisations who have access to appropriate external funding support and expertise.

Table 1: Externally funded projects update showing projects in development, those that have been submitted, those that have been unsuccessful, those that have been approved and those that have been approved and are going through further development.

No.	Project Title	Brief Description	Funder(s) if Identified	Update	Lead Department	Budget
Projects in Development						
1	New LEADER North York Moors, Coast and Hills Programme (2015 onwards)	<p>Work to develop a new LEADER programme is well underway following the very successful conclusion of the previous programme. A new programme will have much more emphasis on rural economic growth, including forestry, farming and coastal priorities that provide opportunities for the communities and businesses in LEADER area and the National Park as a core part of this.</p> <p>There is a strong opportunity for the new LEADER Programme to attract additional funds for specific areas of activity from the York North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership (YNYER LEP), in particular a 'top-up' allocation to the Programme as part of the LEP's plans to implement a Community Led Local Development (CLLD) approach. As the source of this extra funding will either be the European Social Fund (ESF) or the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) these funds will be available to undertake activity within the market towns of the LEADER area, settlements which may not be eligible to receive LEADER funding, which comes via the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).</p>	LEADER via Rural Development Programme (Defra) as part of CAP and wider European funding via the LEP.	Transition funding (£36.5k) is in place for the period between April and December 2014. The NPA will continue as lead partner and North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) as accountable body. Defra has set out six priorities that LEADER will work to. Four initial consultation events held. Discussions about LEADER area geography underway. Potential for top-up funding from LEP(s). A new Local Development Strategy (LDS) needs to be developed and submitted to Defra by early September with a new programme starting as early as January 2015.	Conservation	£36.5k secured for transition stage, new programme potentially circa. £2.5m
2	Protected Landscapes Apprentice and Skills	This programme is a follow-on from the Local Growth Plan for the Moors and Dales which has been prepared for the YNYERLEP (see Number 8 below for details). It sets out a broad programme	Various funds through the LEP and	Positive discussions have been held with the YNYERLEP about how to progress this programme	Conservation	Total Programme circa. £850,000 <i>per</i>

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	Programme	of support for skills and training linked to the special qualities of the protected landscapes of the LEP area. Key elements include skills and apprenticeship programmes on farm business, tourism and various other landscape linked apprenticeship schemes.	potentially LEADER.	with two key areas being identified to progress some potential early work and investment (Tourism and Farm Business Support).		<i>annum</i> , initial elements circa. £250,000.
Projects Submitted						
3	Sustainable Transport Promotion	A partnership bid with the Yorkshire Dales NPA and NYCC. The aim of the project is to promote and facilitate active travel (cycling, walking, public transport) as the sustainable means of accessing and experiencing the special qualities of the two National Parks and to encourage visitors to stay longer, spend more and return to the area.	Department for Transport's Local Sustainable Transport Fund.	The outcome of the bid will be known in July 2014.	Parks Services	£1.3m
4	Coastal Sustainable Tourism	The aim of the project is to showcase nature, fishing and culinary heritage, art and traditional crafts on the North York Moors National Park's coast, by undertaking a series of small-scale infrastructure improvements, and creating and promoting new experiences, activities and festivals. This will encourage visitors to experience the real life of the sea and coastline, reducing seasonality and increasing revenue from tourism.	Coastal Communities Fund (Big Lottery).	A Stage one Expression of interest has been submitted. Successful organisations will be invited to complete a Stage two application by mid-July, with a submission date of October 2014. Awards will be announced in February 2015.	Parks Services	£455,000
Unsuccessful Projects						
None at present						
Successful Projects						
5	Connections North: Mirror Images	Working closely with Chrysalis Arts Development Ltd, 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. Connections North: Mirror Images will	£25,530 from the Arts Council, £1,000 match from Scarborough	Bid successful and the award was confirmed on 7th March 2014.	Parks Services	£26,530

No.	Project Title	Brief Description	Funder(s) if Identified	Update	Lead Department	Budget
		take place in May and June 2015, with simultaneous exhibitions in Finland and Sweden, before the exhibition tours to additional venues in North Yorkshire, Cumbria and Scotland. The programme also includes a residency in the National Park by an artist from one of the partner areas, with an accompanying exhibition of work inspired by the North York Moors.	Borough Council (via Chrysalis Arts Development Ltd).			
6	Flood Recovery: Bridges	The recent storms caused damage to access infrastructure across five Parks in England, including bridges in the North York Moors. This funding will help the Park to repair flood damage caused around the Grinkle Park area.	Defra Flood Recovery Fund.	Bid successful and funding awarded in March 2014.	Parks Services	£32,000
Approved with Further Development Needed						
7	Local Growth Plan for the Moors and Dales	The North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales NPAs have led, in Partnership with the Howardian Hills and Nidderdale Areas of Outstanding Nature Beauty (AONBs), the production of a local growth plan for the wider Dales and Moors areas. This is not a funding bid in itself but it does set out a number of priorities for potential investment through the YNYERLEP's growth plans. The Plan includes priorities to improve the resource efficiency of 'High Nature Value' upland farming; develop green, high-quality tourism with a unique, locally-distinctive offer; support a locally-led, environment-based economy of micro-businesses; develop 'Green Infrastructure' that provides services to the wider economy; provide skills and training, including apprenticeships and volunteering opportunities; and increase production and deliver better environmental outcomes in arable farming.	Various funds through the LEP and potentially LEADER.	The Plan has now been finalised and submitted to the YNYERLEP. The LEP and other partners have shown support and enthusiasm for the plan's contents and this has now been included as an Annex to the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan and has informed parts of all three of the LEP's key strategic documents providing useful 'hooks' for potential funding opportunities.	Conservation	TBC

No.	Project Title	Brief Description	Funder(s) if Identified	Update	Lead Department	Budget
8	This Exploited Land	<p>'This Exploited Land' tells the story of forgotten communities, the pioneering of ironstone exploitation and the early development of railways along the remote valleys of the North York Moors. It uses an innovative approach to biodiversity conservation to restore the outstanding habitats and species in this landscape. It will introduce this almost forgotten chronicle to new audiences and craftspeople and secure its legacy for future generations.</p>	Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme.	<p>We have now received the official Permission to Start confirmation. Both the Programme Management and part-time Heritage Project Officer are in place. Development work progressing and successful partnership event held. Working towards the Stage 2 application in October 2015. The NPA Committee recently approved the £250k match funding from the NPA.</p>	Conservation	Total £3m (current Development stage £)

- 4.2 Whilst interim arrangements are in place to ensure the Authority does not lose momentum this is not seen as a satisfactory long-term approach given the need to increase the momentum of work in this area and the amount of external funding and other income generation we are able to achieve. It is therefore proposed that some form of long-term approach to external funding support is implemented from August 2014 and that between now and then the details of what this may look like is worked up, whilst also considering the need to meet the savings required for the 2015/16 budget. Options include recruiting to the External Funding Officer post on a like for like basis (the post is currently part-time), investing to recruit a full-time role doing the same things plus other income generation, including commercial partnerships, or making available the budget to secure support through a consultancy arrangement. The likelihood is that the preferred solution will include a flexible mix of these elements.
- 4.3 Regardless of how the support is delivered it is clear that this will be an area where more investment is needed if we are to move to an organisation that is less dependent on Government grant. It will also be important that however the support is delivered it allows the Authority to be flexible and responsive to opportunities, whilst always seeking funds for activities and programmes which help to deliver the National Park Management Plan. Finally it will become increasingly important for the Authority to integrate different funding streams for best effect, as we will not be able to match fund bids to the same extent as we have in the past (for example as we have for 'This Exploited Land').

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

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

6. **Legal Implications**

- 6.1 None at this stage.

7. **Recommendation**

- 7.1 That Members approve the contents of the report, the current work being done to secure external funding and the future approach outlined.

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