

North York Moors National Park Authority

Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee

1 September 2014

External Funding

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update Members on the work currently being undertaken to secure external funding which will help support the Authority's work programmes and priorities; and
- 1.2 To update Members on the agreed approach to the employment of the Authority's External Funding Officer post, which will take a lead on this area of activity.

2. Background

- 2.1 This report provides a brief update on projects for which external funding is being sought and builds on the previous report to this Committee which was presented in May.
- 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. In the May report a number of options were outlined regarding the future of this post and this Report outlines the approach that was agreed in the paper presented to the July Special National Park Authority Meeting in relation to the budget reduction approach.

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. 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 and therefore the key Management Plan priorities relevant to external funding are being progressed. However, 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.

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)	Work to develop a new LEADER programme is well underway following the 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.	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. Broad project ideas under the six priorities are being developed and a second round of consultation has been held. 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 Programme	This programme is a follow-on from the Local Growth Plan for the Moors and Dales which has been prepared for the YNYER LEP (see Number 8 below for details). It sets out a broad programme of support for skills and training linked to the special qualities of the protected	Various funds through the LEP and potentially LEADER.	The proposals have been approved by the YNYER LEP's Local Response Fund Governance Group and this allows us to move forward to the next stage which is	Joint approach between Park Services, Conservation and Corporate Services	Total Programme circa. £850k <i>per annum</i> , initial elements

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		landscapes of the LEP area. Key elements include skills and apprenticeship programmes on farm business, tourism and various other landscape linked apprenticeship schemes.		Skills Funding Agency approval and subsequent procurement. The NPA are likely to make a joint bid along with the Yorkshire Dales NPA.		circa. £250k.
3	England's 'Pearl' Rivers Project (River Esk Freshwater Pearl Mussel)	A joint bid covering five fresh water pearl mussel rivers across England which is being led by the Freshwater Biological Association. The Project's objectives are to protect remaining key populations of the freshwater pearl mussel in England and maintain the potential for in-situ breeding capacity, to restore habitat conditions that will support the natural recruitment in existing populations and the conditions for re-introduction of the species into suitable recipient habitats, to put in place the mechanisms to deliver the conditions, infrastructure and support mechanisms (e.g. monitoring strategies) necessary to secure the long term conservation of the species in this habitat and to communicate with local communities to raise awareness of freshwater pearl mussel conservation issues. In the NYM this will help to build and develop the work already done over a number of years on the River Esk.	Biffa Award Partnership Scheme – Rebuilding Biodiversity (invitation only)	Works are currently underway to develop the costings for the NYM part of the bid which will focus on the River Esk upstream of Glaisdale. Parallel bid submitted to Natural England for £10k match funding with a further £20k to be found locally, likely from NPA funds already committed. The bid will be submitted in September 2014 with a decision likely to be given in October 2014.	Conservation	Circa £300k for NYM as part of wider £1.5m national bid
4	River Derwent/Rye Project AND Newtondale Project	Conservation, Park Services and Building Conservation have recently worked jointly to develop the next tranche of large-scale funding bids for taking forward Management Plan priorities. Two key ideas from these workshops include landscape scale projects for the River Rye	TBC	Officer workshops held to initially develop scope for potential future external funding priorities which included these two projects. Further development	Conservation	TBC

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		<p>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 will be required for these two landscape-scale projects, including what input and ideas land owners and managers have and how the schemes mesh with the aspirations of partners. It will also be important to see 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.</p>		<p>needed with Member involvement and also to establish views and input from land owners/managers and partner organisations. Funding of £5k identified for 2014/15 to secure external specialist support to help refine approach for one of these projects, undertake consultation and identify most appropriate funders. A further £5k identified in 2015/16 to do the same for the second project depending on progress with the first.</p>		
5	LIFECYCLE	<p>This is a Life+ Green Infrastructure Project being led by Norfolk County Council in which we are being invited to join them as an Associated Beneficiary. It would provide the opportunity for stakeholders such as landowners and local communities, including schools, to engage in and understand our Green Infrastructure work such as the Connectivity Project, especially along our key recreational corridors such as the Cleveland Way and Cinder Track.</p>	<p>Key Funding is EC's LIFE+ at a rate of 60%. Staff and volunteers costs can provide a significant amount of match funding.</p>	<p>Applications need to be made by 16 October 2014, with projects commencing the following July. This would be a three year project</p>	Park Services	5

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Projects Submitted						
6	Sea Life, See Life: developing vibrant fishing villages to attract more visitors	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 (CCF) - Big Lottery.	A Stage one Expression of interest was submitted in early May and the NPA have now been invited to complete a Stage two application, which is a significant achievement given the high levels of competition for this fund. The second stage application needs to be submitted by 15 October 2014. Awards will be announced in February 2015.	Park Services	£455k (from CCF)
Unsuccessful Projects						
7	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.	Unfortunately the Department for Transport have notified the NPA that the bid was not successful. The Partnership will be looking at alternative ways that some of this work can be taken forward.	Park Services	£1.3m
Successful Projects						
None to report at this time.						
Approved with Further Development Needed						
8	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	LEP's Local Response Fund and potentially	The LEP and other partners continue to show support and enthusiasm for the plan's contents. The Plan is	Conservation	TBC

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		<p>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 and it now forms part of the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan.</p>	LEADER.	<p>leading to work on skills and apprenticeships (see item 2 of this table above). Engagement with the LEP is strong and it is likely this will have progressed by the point this Report is presented and the Director of Conservation can provide an update on this at the Committee Meeting.</p>		
9	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 Manager 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 £198,000)

4. **External Funding Support and Expertise**

- 4.1 At the Special National Park Authority meeting in July Members agreed that, subject to consultation, the Authority's External Funding Officer post would be moved from Corporate Services to Conservation and would report directly to the Director of Conservation. Members also agreed that it would remain a part-time 3 day a week post (0.6fte) and that instead of making the role full-time the equivalent budget would instead be made available to bring in specialist topic specific support for the development of priority projects or programmes.
- 4.2 Members also agreed that the post would have an amended emphasis to allow full ownership of external funding generation within Departments and to ensure that a programme of bids and projects is reported on regularly both to officers and to Members, as this Report seeks to achieve. This officer is not expected to be a bid writer as such but to help officers develop bids to ensure they hit the right priorities for funders. There are a number of benefits to moving and refocusing the post as follows:
- Greater alignment with wider funding opportunities, such as the Local Enterprise Partnerships and LEADER, as well as Heritage Lottery Fund via TEL and other funders through Conservation's interaction with funding streams as it seeks to up its momentum in this area.
 - The practical arrangements will ensure that the role is able to work effectively across all departments but especially Park Services where there are greater opportunities and priorities for external funding.
 - Increased integration with stakeholders who will be essential in terms of taking bids forward e.g. land managers and owners.
- 4.3 It is expected that the External Funding Officer Post will be recruited to during October following a refresh of the job description and other documents and it will be advertised externally.

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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