

# North York Moors National Park Authority

17 December 2012

## National Park Authorities Performance Assessment Action Plan

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To present an update on the Actions agreed in the National Park Authorities Performance Assessment (NPAPA) Action Plan.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The report of the Peer Review Team was presented to Members at the National Park Authority in March 2011.

- 2.2 The Authority approved an Action Plan to address the recommendations made within this report.

**3. Commentary**

- 3.1 **Appendix A** to this report details the draft Action Plan based on the 19 recommendations in the report and proposes actions identified to date to address these issues.

**4. Financial and Staffing Implications**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial consequences. The work will be carried out by existing staff. The proposed actions take account of reduced staff time available.

**5. Sustainability Appraisal**

- 5.1 A Sustainability Assessment is not required because the report is an Administrative Issues report.

**6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1 None.

**7. Recommendation**

- 7.1 Members note the contents of the report including the work undertaken to date.

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**Background documents to this report****File Ref.**

1. SOLACE documentation circulated prior to process
2. North York Moors National Park Authority Performance Assessment Self Assessment and summarised Improvement Plan
3. North York Moors National Park Authority Performance Assessment Report
4. Report to Performance Monitoring and Management Committee on 23 May 2011.
5. Report to Authority on 26 September 2011.

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Recommendation	Proposed Action	Lead Officer	Target Date
<b>1. Quality of Vision and the Authority's plans to help achieve it</b>			
1.1 In making arrangements for the delivery of the new National Park Management Plan, consideration should be given to establishing an overarching structure that facilitates partner knowledge, ownership and monitoring of the National Park Management Plan.	The links between the National Park Management Plan and the strategic documents of key partners are to be clarified and strengthened.	Director of Planning	Complete
	A major 'Launch' event for the revised Management Plan in which key partners 'sign up' to the plan	Director of Planning	Complete
	Strengthening the practice of having annual meetings with key partners to discuss progress against jointly agreed actions	All SMT	On-going
	Consideration to be given to having an 'Annual' event where all key partners meet to discuss progress and issues relating to the delivery of the plan	Chief Executive	Complete
	Continuation of ongoing formal and informal liaison with Partners through the delivery of specific actions, for example through bilateral agreements	All SMT	On-going
1.2 The objectives of the new National Park Management Plan should provide a clear focus for delivery and monitoring.	Outcome based targets to be included in the revised National Park Management Plan where appropriate, relevant and capable of collection in a manner which does not require disproportionate resource. Broader aspirations will also be included - some divergence of view from Review Team on ideal nature of Management Plan.	All SMT	Complete
1.3 The preparation of a new National Park Management Plan offers the opportunity to provide a more visible 'golden thread' link throughout the whole of the Authority's strategic planning framework	Revised Business Plan to 're-establish' the Golden Thread with the new National Park Management Plan	Director of Corporate Services	Complete
	Departmental Action Plans and Work Programmes to be based on revised Business Plan	All SMT and Line Managers	On-going
	Content and Format of the Annual Performance Report and Plan to be reviewed in the context of the revised Performance Management environment and new strategic plans. This layout will be consistent with the revised Business Plan to enable easier comparison between the two documents.	Director of Corporate Services	June 2012 Target date revised March 2013

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	Internal Communication Plan to be developed to ensure that the 'Golden Thread' is cascaded, understood and owned by all Members and officers. This will include a variety of actions to inform staff at the time when the new documents are produced and actions to incorporate into Induction and Appraisal processes.	Director of Park Services	Complete
<b>2. Setting and Using Priorities</b>			
2.1 Managers and staff should be encouraged to have a wider appreciation of how their work can contribute to the Authority's whole agenda.	Work with Value Adding to analyse the Authority's activities across the organisation and not on a 'functional' and 'departmental' basis. This will assist in linking priorities, performance and costs more clearly and ensure that future plans take a 'wider view'.	All SMT	Complete
	New and more innovative ways of delivery including options for Social Enterprise, shared services, third sector and private sector partnerships to be considered as part of the Structural and Organisational Review	All SMT	On-going
	Revised Business Plan to be developed using information gathered during the activity based costing exercise and to consider changing the format to move from the 'departmental' focus of the 2009-2012 Business Plan. The focus will be on priority and performance as well as considering customer expectations and innovative ways of working.	Director of Corporate Services	Complete

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Recommendation	Proposed Action	Lead Officer	Target Date
<b>3. Achievement of outcomes: to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage of the National Park</b>			
3.1 Consideration needs to be given on how the Authority will assess the outcomes and impact of its conservation projects in terms of enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park	Long term conservation outcomes and impacts are already widely established within the National Park Management Plan which is currently being revised. These are then translated into the Business Plan and agreements or concordats with partner organisations. The measurement of success is undertaken in a wide variety of ways, for example State of the Park Reporting, monitoring of changes such as PAWS restoration, monitoring of populations of key Biodiversity Action Plan species; condition of habitats and User Satisfaction surveys. Resources will not be available to expand these arrangements further and it is proposed that there is no fundamental change to the current arrangements. There is a much bigger issue of how well all the information collected is used after it has been assessed. The current National Park Management Plan review can help address this.	Director of Conservation	On-going
3.2 The Authority needs to set clear quality standards for its main conservation services and benchmark those standards with comparable organisations.	Explore the possibility of establishing a benchmarking club with the Northern National Park Authority Heads of Conservation group. This will need to take into account the availability of resources to fund such activity. Family Indicators already perform this task to some extent.	Director of Conservation	March 2012 Target revised June 2013
3.3 The Authority needs to review its approach to delivering its conservation work in order to maximise the opportunities to engage partners and others and the benefits of cross-fertilisation with second purpose activity and the socio-economic duty.	The review of the Conservation Department will address this issue; revised structure and job descriptions in Park Services Department. Work in this area will continue to be partly dependent on external funding and efforts will continue to allow the National Park Authority to access suitable sources of money and delivery. Local Nature Partnership to engage partners.	Director of Conservation	On-going
	A landscape scale partnership bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund is being considered which could also engage with a wide variety of partners and involve second purpose and socio-economic outcomes in addition to conservation outcomes.	ALL SMT and External Fundraising Officer	On-going

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Recommendation	Proposed Action	Lead Officer	Target Date
<b>4. Achievement of outcomes: promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities by the public</b>			
4.1 The Authority should consider how it might apply its approach to service provision for the disabled to other under-represented groups.	<p>On further discussion with the Assessment Team it emerged that this recommendation referred essentially to providing more resources to other groups (since the Authority's overall approach to different groups – encouraging dialogue and listening to needs and providing services where possible – was the same). This inevitably raises funding issues</p> <p>The Authority has however strengthened the process whereby under-represented groups address the full National Park Authority and this allows requests for services to be put direct to Members. A Community Champions Group and will continue to work to develop relationships in this area.</p>	Director of Park Services and Assistant Director of Corporate Services	On-going
	Explore the options for the development of a Junior Ranger programme subject to resources being available.	Director of Park Services	March 2012 Target revised June 2013
	The Authority's consultation on priorities was designed to allow the views of different groups to be recorded separately. This information is being used to influence service priorities.	Director of Park Services	On-going
4.2 Consideration needs to be given to identifying opportunities to develop a sustainable visitor experience.	To continue to develop strong relationship with Welcome to Yorkshire Greening Tourism Officer	Director of Park Services	On-going
	Review the role of the National Park Authority in tourism considering new local structures.	Director of Park Services	On-going
	Work with North Yorkshire County Council and Esk Valley Railway Development Company develop Sustainable Transport Fund bid	Director of Park Services and Planning Officer (Policy)	Complete

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Recommendation	Proposed Action	Lead Officer	Target Date
<b>5. Achievement of outcomes: wider sustainable development</b>			
5.1 The Authority should consider how it might use the new National Park Management Plan to define a more effective framework for sustainable economic development in the National Park.	Clear definition of sustainable development to be used to inform planning decisions within the context of the National Planning Policy Framework and as a basis for more effective liaison with economic development strategies at local and sub-regional level. New Plan has covered branding and other economic issues more extensively. Novel approach showing what Park can produce sustainably. Authority does not want to duplicate sub-regional economic structures and priorities, so work will be tightly focused.	Director of Planning	On-going
5.2 The Authority should seek to develop a leadership role in relation to climate change in the National Park.	Continue to promote the Authority's role in Climate Change through existing mechanisms, such as the Sustainable Development Fund and the National Park Management Plan.	All SMT	On-going
	Capture and record current activity within the National Park	Director of Park Services	March 2013
	Establish mechanisms for sharing best practice including the development of a website forum and give these mechanisms appropriate publicity subject to the availability of resources	Director of Park Services	March 2013
<b>6. Organisational Capacity, use of resources, and governance</b>			
6.1 The National Park Authority needs to improve its understanding of its unit costs for activities and how they link to performance and service standards.	Within the Financial Planning and Prioritisation Programme a workstream: Understanding Costs Better has been developed which will include, where relevant, unit cost calculations, benchmarking and assessment of performance and priority	Director of Corporate Services	Complete to review later in Business Plan period
	Use information to identify options for change and to develop Business Plan 2012-2015 including any links to performance and service standards where relevant and proportionate.	All SMT and Members	Complete

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Recommendation	Proposed Action	Lead Officer	Target Date
	Discuss future benchmarking on Development Management using the Value Adding baseline data with similar organisations who are involved in the process (e.g. Hambleton and Richmond). Use the data to identify best practice.	Director of Planning	On-going
	Discuss further benchmarking opportunities with other National Park Authorities through the Joint Improvement Group subject to the proportionality and available resources.	Director of Corporate Services	On-going
6.2 The Authority's purchasing policy should be reviewed and updated in line with current best practice.	Review of Procurement Arrangements including policies, financial regulations and working practices to be conducted	Director of Corporate Services	June 2012 Target revised June 2013
6.3 Committee items should consistently address the full range of corporate implications	From further discussions with the Team, a simpler system based on the use of drop down menus in the Committee paper template is being considered.	Assistant Director of Corporate Services	June 2012 Target revised June 2013
6.4 Consideration might be given to reducing the more formal demands on Members to enable them to develop their community leadership role.	Review of Committee Arrangements as part of Change Programme considered opportunities for this. New forums established replacing more formal committees. Member discussions at Evening Seminars queried any lack of Community Leadership – this might need recording better.	Assistant Director of Corporate Services	Complete
	Review the Member role in the Parish Forums with a view to further strengthening the 'Community Involvement', wider publicity and explore the potential for small budgets to be allocated to the Parish Forums	All SMT	Complete
6.5 Internal Communication structures should be reviewed to improve the two-way exchange of 'big ideas'.	Work done in relation to possible Heritage Lottery Fund and Community Sustainable Transport Fund bids has involved the creation of cross-department groups to develop the ideas on a big scale.	All SMT	On-going
	Continue to promote the wide range of mechanisms for sharing	All SMT	On-going

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	ideas including the Ideas Group, steering groups and opportunities to input into external funding which already exist.		
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Proposed Action</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
<b>7. Improving Performance</b>			
7.1 The community leadership and ambassadorial role of Members needs to be strengthened.	Review of Committee Structure include of consideration of the implementation of 'Area Based Decisions' to be facilitated through the Parish Forum network and consideration of the enhancement of current informal processes by reducing the formal burden placed on Members. Members' role in new forums is more directional.	Director of Corporate Services	Complete
7.2 New sources of funding need to be secured if the Authority is to continue to deliver on the ground at or near present levels	Senior Management to discuss Priority for grant funding and direct staff time to the planning and implementation of projects which are consistent with the objectives in the new Business Plan	All SMT and External Fund Raising Officer	On-going
	Review of the Financial Principle relating to External Fundraising for the Business Plan 2012-2015 to ensure that a challenging but 'SMART' target is set in the plan in the light of the changed funding climate	Director of Corporate Services and External Fund Raising Officer	Complete
	Continue to develop relationships with key partners to secure funding for the achievement of the statutory purposes and the duty through community, charitable and other public sector organisations	All SMT and External Fund Raising Officer	On-going
	Explore options for Visitor Payback and Corporate Sponsorship	External Fundraising Officer	On-going

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	Explore options for Social Enterprise	Director of Park Services	On-going
	Calculation of a local scale of fees in relation to Development Management applications	Director of Planning	No longer applicable
	Revised Retail Strategy	Director of Park Services	On-going
	Income generated from Authority's Property through lease and licences to private sector and others	All SMT	On-going
7.3 Increase transformational leadership capacity of Members and senior management.	Develop further the Work with 'Value Adding' on the Priority Led Budgeting process to embed within the culture of the organisation.	All SMT	Complete
	Work with an 'inspirational leader' to develop the work and future focus on promotion of the National Park (key Members and Officers).	All SMT	March 2013
	An extensive Leadership Development Programme focused on the Core Values and Staff Competency and Development Framework has been established and is proving productive.	Assistant Director of Corporate Services	March 2013
	Changes to structure of Senior Management Team to evolve the 'strategic' focus of the role and to delegate more of the operational tasks to middle managers	All SMT	On-going