

North York Moors National Park Authority

18 June 2018

Recruitment for Director of Park Services

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek Members' approval for delegating the authority to appoint to a Director level post to a Panel.

2. Background

- 2.1 Richard Gunton, the current Director of Park Services, has been with the Authority since June 2001. Richard has given the Chief Executive notice that he wishes to retire and will therefore be leaving the Authority on 31 December 2018.

3. Recruitment

- 3.1 As Members may recall, the Park Services Directorate was set up following an amalgamation of 2 smaller Departments in 2011. The Director's post now manages the biggest Department in the Authority and has wide ranging responsibilities in relation to access, tourism, communications, visitor centres etc. covering the whole of the Authority's second purpose. Recruiting a replacement for Richard is vital if the Department is to continue to meet the targets agreed in the Business Plan and therefore there is a need to start the process shortly.
- 3.2 It is hoped that a brief overlap with Richard will be possible; any period without a Director of this large and complex Department would be likely to cause operational problems, particularly at a point when significant external funding projects are underway. Richard has helpfully given plenty of notice of his retirement in the knowledge that recruitment at this level can be a lengthy process particularly as candidates are likely to be on three months' notice. It is therefore proposed to advertise the vacancy over the summer with interviews in early autumn, hopefully allowing the successful candidate to start just before Richard leaves.
- 3.3 The current scheme of Delegation requires appointment at Director level to be subject to approval by the full Authority, although in practice it usually determines to delegate these powers to a panel. Following discussion with the Chair, Officers therefore propose that Members delegate their powers for the appointment to this Director post to a panel consisting of the Chair, Chair of the Awareness, Recreation and Business Forum and the Chief Executive.
- 3.4 The Authority needs to consider if there are any changes to the role before advertising it, and indeed to confirm it is still needed. On the latter point there is no likely scenario under which this post or one very like it will not be needed. The former system which had split the Department worked less well than the current one, which gives sight across the whole of the second purpose. If funds were to be used to create an extra Director role it would not be recommended in this area since the main pressures on the Authority's management are of a more corporate and project related nature.

The Chief Executive does however intend to redraft the job description to transfer the overall responsibility for Volunteers to Corporate Services. This is consistent with the One Team approach – overall staff and Member responsibility lies with Corporate Services and it is a long time since volunteering was the prerogative of just one Department. This move should help cement the H&S issues around volunteering. Park Services is by a long way the biggest Department in terms of staff numbers and this move would make a small shift towards a more even distribution of staffing responsibilities. Other minor changes will also be made to ensure that the job description is up to date and fit for purpose.

- 3.5 Members are aware that the forthcoming evening seminar will continue discussions about the financial structure of the organisation which may in turn require a longer term debate about the way in which the Authority is organised. Officers don't believe, however, that it is necessary or desirable to postpone recruitment due to this.

4. **Financial and Staffing Implications**

- 4.1 The costs of recruitment for this post will be funded via core budgets.

5. **Recommendation**

5.1 That Members:

- Delegate powers to make an appointment to the Director level post described in this paper to the panel outlined in Paragraph 3.3.

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Background documents to this report

File ref.