

# North York Moors National Park Authority

16 December 2019

## DEFRA Environmental Land Management System

### 1. Background

- 1.1 A paper was brought to the Authority on 25 March 2019 to update Members on the Authority's engagement with DEFRA in relation to its test and trials process and to seek Members' approval to continue to work with DEFRA to assist in the development of a new land management system that delivers positive outcomes appropriate to the North York Moors National Park (NYMNP) and those whose livelihoods depend on the sustainable management of the land, for which approval was given.
- 1.2 It was reported in the March 2019 paper that a proposal development form was to be completed that set out the details of what was to be tested and/or trialled, the rationale for this and the timescales that we would be working to. It was anticipated that a DEFRA panel was to assess the completed form on 2 April before confirmation to proceed with the work could be given.
- 1.3 Due to a number of factors beyond the control of the Authority, including a change to the assigned Project Officer, the offer of a contract from DEFRA to undertake the work proposed in the Project Development Form was not received until 24 September 2019 with a revised start date of 1 October 2019. The contract is for 13 months ending on 30 November 2020 and has been accepted by the Authority.

### 2. North York Moors Test and Trials Proposal

2.1 The Authority has agreed to undertake the following two tests:

- Identify which public goods farmers and land managers within the NYMNP want to deliver and consequently identify which public goods are less popular and/or more demanding to deliver.
- Develop a tool that models the economic impact of attaching different values (payments) to the delivery of different public goods and the impact this has on different farming sectors active within the NYMNP.

In addition to these tests the Authority will undertake the following two desk studies. These studies, whilst not funded through the Test and Trials proposal are integral to the tests proposed:

- Undertake a desk study to aggregate the known public goods that can be delivered within the NYMNP.
- Identify what the current flow of public money (agri-environment and Basic Payment Scheme ) is to the different farming sectors active within the NYMNP by utilising the on-line Farm Business Survey Data Builder system.

On completion of these elements of work the Authority will undertake the following trial:

- Identify and develop a range of delivery mechanisms that allow for the appropriate delivery of public goods.

### 3. **Progress to Date**

- 3.1 Initial focus has been on engaging with farmer groups across the Park to promote the test and trials work and to encourage participation in the process. Presentations have been given at four farmers meetings in recent weeks and meetings have been held with the CLA and NFU to secure their support in the distribution and promotion of the questionnaire that is due to be sent out in December.
- 3.2 The desk study to aggregate the known public goods has been completed.

### 4. **Financial and Staffing Implications**

- 4.1 The service delivery contract between DEFRA and the NYMNPA provides funding for up to £80,040 over the 13 month contract. This includes provision for a 0.6 FTE Project Officer, reimbursement for farmer's time for those who engage in the focus groups and 1:1 interviews and the costs for the hire of halls and provision of refreshments for the focus groups.
- 4.2 The budget also includes provision to contract consultants to assist in the development and analysis of the questionnaire and the development of the financial modelling tool and to engage the Rural Business Research Unit at Askham Bryan College to sense-check the delivery mechanisms identified during the trial.
- 4.3 The Future Farming Policy Officer who has previously been working 3 days a week and has led on this work to date has increased her working days to 4 days a week from 1 October 2019. This has allowed her to take on the role of Test and Trials Development Officer for 3 days a week, with the additional day to focus on other aspects of future farm policy that sits aside from the test and trials work.

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

- 5.1 It has been widely recognised that a well-designed environmental land management system that delivers sustainable land management and secures the provision of public goods will contribute to a wide range of the aims and policies identified in the National Park Management Plan.

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### **Background papers to this Report**

### **File ref**

- 1. DEFRA Environmental Land Management System Pilot. Paper taken to NPA 25 March 2019.