

North York Moors National Park Authority

25 March 2019

Progress on Business Plan Delivery

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide members with an overview of progress against the objectives and targets in the Authority's Business Plan at its halfway stage.
- 1.2 To propose a limited number of changes to targets and timescales for achieving Business Plan objectives

2. Background

- 2.1 The National Park Authority's current Business Plan was completed in December 2016 and sets the Authority's Medium-Term Financial Strategy as well as a series of objectives, targets and actions for the period April 2017 to April 2021.
- 2.2 Reporting back on performance against the Plan has focused on a set of 'headline indicators' to provide a snapshot of progress, as well as presentations by Directors at the Authority's annual scrutiny committee. In addition the Authority has introduced an annual 'Performance and Learning Review', which last year focused on the Authority's rights of way programme and this year will focus on wildlife work.
- 2.3 With the current Business Plan now at the half way point, this paper provides Members with an overview of progress to date; setting out what's been achieved, and the work still to do, as well as areas of work that are not fully on track.
- 2.4 Presenting a review of progress at this stage in the Business Planning cycle demonstrates the constantly changing context that the Authority is working in, and highlights the issues that we need to respond to achieve the best possible outcomes for the National Park. It also helps to highlight longer term opportunities and concerns that will have an impact on future Business Plans.

3. Consideration

Summary of Overall Performance

- 3.1 Of the 54 objectives in the Plan
35 of them are achieved/ have made substantial progress,
15 have made some progress but may be behind schedule / not on track to be fully achieved,
2 haven't yet started
1 is an area of concern
1 requires an assessment on progress by members

Strategic Priorities

- 3.2 The NPA highlighted four strategic priorities for this Business Plan: covering working with young people, strengthening wildlife corridors, raising the profile of the National Park and maximising income. In relation to these four areas:
- 3.3 There have been significant achievements working with **young people** across a range of initiatives, for example the Education Service has made more than 18,000 contacts each year. (Objectives U1 and U7).

- 3.4 A huge amount of work has been delivered on **raising the profile** of the National Park through a wide range of initiatives such as the North York Moors Tourism network, growing the brand and logo, and specific projects such as 'Destination Partnership Moors & Dales' (Objective B4, U11, U12, and U13)
- 3.5 The NPA is on course to exceed the £6 million target for generating **external income** (Objective CR6) and scored well in terms of value for money studies (Financial Principle 8 and Objective C8).
- 3.6 Work on **Wildlife Corridors** has made progress but not to the extent originally envisaged. Across the 132 connection 'sites' identified, 176 agreements have been established but this hasn't necessarily led to improvements on all 132 sites. This programme is currently being evaluated and long term targets reviewed as part of a broader review of the Conservation Department's action plan.
- 3.7 For the remaining period of this Business Plan it is proposed that work on wildlife corridors and connectivity should focus on the river Rye catchment and Esk, if funding becomes available. The other priorities for the conservation department will be:
- Work on restoration of PAWs sites and woodland creation
 - Development of a new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMs) pilot as part of Defra's tests and trials programme
 - Work on Moorland policy and management

This will impact on staff deployment at an operational level.

Objectives Not Yet Started

- 3.8 There are two objectives (E10, B1) where work has not yet got underway, and one objective (E13) that is an area of concern.
- Work to secure funding for the marine environment (E10) is planned for the second half of this Business Plan period. Capacity remains an issue here and the Authority will seek to work with partner organisations who may take the lead on any initiatives.
 - Efforts to support agricultural businesses (B1) are being challenged by uncertainty about future farming policy.
 - The availability of data and records (E13) for monitoring and surveying work is an area of concern; this reflects data/record management beyond the needs of legal compliance as an area of relative weakness for the Authority.

Issues to bring to Members' attention

- 3.9 There are two issues to bring to Members' attention related to Business Plan targets. The first follows on from the review of the Rights of Way programme (objective U2) presented to Members in July 2018. At that meeting members agreed to the principle of monitoring the 'ease of use' of rights of way that recognises a differentiation between priority and non-priority routes and defines clearly what these are. It is proposed that Priority routes will have a higher 'ease of use' target than other routes. Subject to Members agreement, officers will present a full proposal to Members outlining the identified priority routes and new targets for their ease of use, which will be monitored annually. This proposal will be presented by October 2019.

3.10 The second issue relates to the initial target set for accessible routes (objective U3). Consultation with the ARB forum and Disability Action Group related to this target has highlighted the importance of ensuring existing routes are in good condition before working on additional routes. To date 2.1 km of additional route has been installed at Codbeck reservoir. Subject to Members approval, officers propose that further work on additional routes is not progressed in this Business Plan period, unless significant external funding can be sourced. Instead it is proposed that work focuses on improvements to existing routes along with high quality information to promote the routes. External funding for accessible routes should be a priority in the next Business Plan.

3.11 Another issue to bring to Members attention relates to the monitoring of Objective B4 on increasing the profile of the National Park. The monitoring of this objective has relied on periodic surveys being undertaken to assess 'Regional Awareness' of the National Park. A recent survey completed as part of the Section 106 Tourism Impact Review is currently being assessed to ascertain whether it can provide comparable data. If this doesn't provide the required information officers will seek estimates for a bespoke Regional Awareness survey and report back further to members as necessary.

3.3 **Detailed Assessment of Progress**

Appendix 1 provides an overview of progress against each of the Business Plan's 54 objectives.

4. **Conclusion**

4.1 At the halfway point, a significant amount of progress has been made towards the objectives and targets in the Authority's Business Plan. There are a few areas where work is yet to commence and a small number of issues arising related to proposed changes to targets that require Members approval.

5. **Financial and Staffing Implications**

5.1 None arising directly from this report

6. **Contribution to the National Park Management Plan**

6.1 Performance reporting sets out what the Authority is achieving to contribute towards the ambitions in the National Park Management Plan.

7. **Legal Implications**

7.1 None arising directly from this report.

8. **Recommendation**

8.1 That Members discuss and note progress on the 2017-20 Business Plan and agree the proposals for changes to the targets for objectives and priorities in U2 and U3 and para 3.7.

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Appendix: North York Moors NPA Business Plan 2017 – 20

Overview of progress to date February 2019

Achieved/ on track		Some progress		Little/ no progress		Not yet started	
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Environment

Objective	Progress
<p>E1. Establish effective wildlife corridors in the National Park. <i>Target: Complete improvements in all 132 key wildlife connections by 2019.</i> Some progress has been made in this area. Approximately 176 agreements have been established across the 132 connection ‘sites’, which have included a mix of capital works, options for hedges, tree planting, riverside fencing and grassland management. This programme is currently being evaluated by conservation department staff; issues being looked at include setting longer term targets, opportunities for working in partnership and level of coverage.</p>	
<p>E2. Initiate the restoration of PAWs woodland. <i>Target: 700ha of PAWS woodland initiated by 2021.</i> Significant progress has been made with works initiated on over 200ha since 2017 and a further 175ha already in the pipeline for next year – part of a total of 1,056ha since 2005. However, restoration of ancient woodland sites is still not the default position for woodland owners, especially where access allows valuable conifers to be grown. Officers are developing new ways of supporting restoration, including longer term agreements. Further consideration needs to be given as to how to address the long term economic losses to the landowner if we want to persuade them to restore their woodlands.</p>	
<p>E3. Implement This Exploited Land of Iron (TEL) with lasting legacy. <i>Target: Achieve all HLF output targets and outcomes and maximise benefits.</i> Implementation of the programme is going well and is on track; extra funding of £300k from the David Ross foundation has been secured. A huge amount of work has been completed to date focusing on industrial heritage, natural landscape and biodiversity, which is engaging a wide range of groups. A number of new volunteer groups have been established as well as a new young archaeologists club. The programmes community grant scheme is also proving popular.</p>	
<p>E4. Improve water quality and river habitats for key species on the River Rye and River Esk. <i>Targets: Secure stage 2 pass for Ryevitalise and deliver. By 2021 River Esk ready to receive reintroduced juvenile Fresh Water Pearl Mussel (FWPM)</i> Work in this area provides an exemplar of the challenge that time / externally funded limited projects face. The River Esk Pearl Mussel and Salmon Recovery project has been completed and new funding bids are being working up and submitted to continue this work. A decision on the ‘Stage 2 pass’ for Ryevitalise should be made in March 2019.</p>	

<p>E5. Improve the conservation and awareness of the historic environment and cultural heritage of the National Park <i>Targets: 20 monuments and 20 buildings removed from the Heritage at Risk register; 8 new Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans for most vulnerable settlements completed</i></p> <p>A range of work has been completed within this objective including a condition survey of all listed buildings in the National Park, removal of some (but not yet 20) listed buildings from the at risk register, eight draft conservation area appraisals completed and progression of work on the designation of Grosmont as a conservation area.</p> <p>In relation to scheduled monuments the third Monument Management scheme was completed (and targets met) in May 2018, and funding has been secured for a new 'Monuments for the Future' programme with a grant from Historic England.</p>	
<p>E6. Create new areas of woodland and wood pasture. <i>Target: Create 200ha of new woodland or wood pasture by 2021</i></p> <p>Although some progress has been made, and 26 ha of woodland creation has been funded through Countryside Stewardship, this target won't be met. There are a number of reasons for this, including the complexity of applying for Woodland Grants under the ERDP and uncertainty around Brexit which is inhibiting some landowners from committing to long term land management changes such as woodland creation. We will review this target in the next Business Plan in light of the extensive programme of woodland creation planned through the Woodsmith Mine S106 work.</p>	
<p>E7. Lobby on grassland issues, maintain high quality grassland in the Authority's care and restore or create grassland where it is a critical part of a wildlife corridor in the National Park.</p> <p>Progress is being made in this area: with ongoing work to secure conservation agreements and maintain quality grassland that has been supported previously, as well as involvement in the development of the new Environmental Land Management Scheme' and related options for conserving grassland quality. However lobbying work related to grassland issues has been limited.</p>	
<p>E8. Propose practical solutions for wildlife, farmers and landscape in the National Park as a result of Brexit and National Policy changes</p> <p>Various strands of work are being pursued within this objective, at a time of deep uncertainty in relation to policy changes that could have major impacts on the National Park. The delivery of a trial of the new 'ELMS', discussions with Natural England on the definition of 'favourable condition', and work to influence future moorland management support are all ongoing.</p>	
<p>E9. Increase volunteer involvement with conservation and environmental work through practical tasks and survey/monitoring. <i>Target: Increase the number of volunteer days directly engaged in conservation work by 5,000 days extra per year by 2021.</i></p> <p>There has been an increase in the contribution of volunteers involvement with conservation and environmental work since 2017. In particular volunteer inputs on the Land of Iron project, conservation survey work and work on the Esk catchment have been significant.</p>	

<p>E10. Secure external funding for work on the marine environment. <i>Target: Funding secured by 2020.</i> The Authority is keen to progress this work in the future, and will be looking to other organisations rather than necessarily taking the lead in this Business Plan period</p>	
<p>E12. Maintain landscape character and quality and conserve the distinctiveness of landscape character areas. <i>Target: 40 Traditional Boundary Scheme grants each year.</i> Work to deliver Traditional Boundary Scheme grants has been completed and targets met. Other work in this area has included the production of an up to date tranquillity map and ongoing work to assess landscape impacts of development. A refreshed Landscape Character Assessment still needs to be completed.</p>	
<p>E13. Ensure that all data and records are well managed and readily available to inform the Authority's and partners work and complete appropriate survey and monitoring work Some data is available but there is work to do in this area</p>	
<p>E14. Administer grants to land managers and communities (including traditional boundaries and archaeology). <i>Target: see financial principle.</i> This work is ongoing and targets being met</p>	
<p>E15. Maintain and develop relationships with land managers, partners and other stakeholders working in the Environment sector to deliver Park purposes. This is ongoing and opportunistic, focusing on prioritising the relationships that can have the most impact on delivering Park purposes.</p>	
<p>E16. Protect and promote the geodiversity of the National Park. Some work has been completed in relation to recognising the geological assets in the National Park – although not a large area of work more has been done than before this business plan.</p>	

Understanding and Enjoyment

<p>U1. Inspire more young people to understand and experience the North York Moors and be actively involved in its future <i>Targets: Achieve 18,000 contacts via the Education Service each year, Maintain customer satisfaction with the Education Service at 95% or above, Support 800 school contacts through the targeted transport scheme, 2000 Volunteer days pa by young people by the end of the Business Plan</i> A huge amount of work has been delivered on a wide range of activities with young people; targets for the Education service and school contacts have been exceeded. Work to offer more volunteer days for young people is being progressed with a focus on quality of experience.</p>	
<p>U2. Manage maintain and improve public rights of way and other priority access routes in the National Park <i>Targets: 80% of public rights of way easy to use At least 90% user satisfaction with rights of way 85% ease of use in 2016, updated results due May 2019 99% user satisfaction in 2017</i> This is one of the Authority's biggest and most prominent programmes. An in</p>	

depth review of the Authority's rights of way work was completed in 2018, resulting in a number of recommendations being adopted for future management of the programme.. One of these relates to the monitoring of 'ease of use' It is proposed that routes are differentiated, with the monitoring of 'priority routes' being separated from other routes and new targets set for 'ease of use' for both categories as envisaged in 2015 and 2018

U3. Improve the accessibility to landscapes of the National Park

*Targets: Cleveland Way is stile free by end of Business Plan period
Additional 5km of rights of way network each year accessible for disabled people*

This ambitious target was originally intended as a combination of route creation and route promotion. Over the Business Plan period the length of routes that are usable has decreased: for example Forge Valley which is in need of a new boardwalk has been removed from our promoted routes. Officers are working in partnership with Scarborough Borough Council to secure funding to replace the boardwalk.

A new **2.1km** route has been created around Cod Beck reservoir and will be promoted alongside our other Easy Access routes,. This new route has been delivered through partnership working with the National Trust and Yorkshire Water.

Since Members were updated on Easy Access Routes (June 2017) advice from the Disability Advisory Group and consultation at the Access, Recreation & Business Forum supports our view that the first priority is to get our existing routes into good condition before attempting to open up any more new routes, and that accessible routes need to be accompanied by high quality information.

U4. Provide high quality facilities for people visiting the National Park

*Targets:
Maintain number of public toilets available in the NP
Achieve annual income targets for car parks
At least 60% of visitors surveyed say no improvements are required to facilities (next survey 2021)*

Most annual targets have been met for this objective though achieving the additional expectation for the car park income budget in 18/19 is looking doubtful. A new post of Commercial Properties Manager (managing car parks and toilets) is in the process of appointment and will look to generate significant additional income as well as delivering efficiencies in the maintenance of Authority managed car parks and toilets. In addition, plans to improve access and replace the viewing platform at Cawthorn Camp are underway, funded by S106.

U5. Assist local communities in providing key visitor facilities.

Target: Two extra Village Caretaker Schemes, four extra community managed public toilets

Small grants to local communities for visitor facilities have continued and two new communities (Kildale and Brompton-by-Sawdon) have joined the village caretaker scheme. Local communities have also been supported to care for their village environment: for example at Thornton le Dale through the new Hub and through the coastal communities fund at Staithes beach. The number of community managed toilets supported by the Authority has risen from 3 in 2016/17 to 5 in 2018/19.

<p>U6. Minimise conflicts between recreational use and land management, conservation and other users.</p> <p>This ongoing work has continued, for example with joint actions alongside the police to tackle illegal off road driving, coordinated action with landowners to highlight lambing time and fire risk, as well as minimising the impact of large scale events. Work related to unclassified unsurfaced roads has been handed back to NYCC, but the Ranger Service continues to advise the NYCC UUR project officer on UUR work within the National Park.</p>	
<p>U7. Engage with people from target areas who are currently less able to visit and enjoy the National Park.</p> <p><i>Targets: Support 2000 contacts from target areas with the targeted transport scheme</i></p> <p><i>Expand the network of Community Champions to 30</i></p> <p><i>Carry out review of monitoring and targets for outreach work in 2017 (ARB Forum)</i></p> <p>The target relating to a major project in partnership with National Parks England has not been taken forward at a national level, but instead has been addressed locally. In 2018 the Social Return on Investment Report was commissioned and a successful bid was made to HLF to develop the Young Explorers Club and young rangers in targeted areas. Work to build relationships and develop joint initiatives in the Tees valley is ongoing. In addition work is continuing with a network of community champions in Teesside as well as the transport scheme for targeted groups (1,842 to date in 2018/19). The cost of transport is increasing which, with no extra resource, is likely to affect numbers going forward.</p>	
<p>U8. Identify key audiences and messages and deliver communications priorities.</p> <p><i>Target: Commission, develop and deliver a communications strategy by April 2018</i></p> <p>The new communications strategy has now been completed and will be 'rolled out' in 2019/20. The Strategy will influence the review of the website, Authority publications, social media, promotion and marketing introducing new and consistent messages and look.</p>	
<p>U9. Maintain, review and improve website effectiveness as a key communication tool (in line with Communications Strategy)</p> <p><i>Target: New website developed by April 2019</i></p> <p>This work will be completed in this Business Plan period with a review of the website completed by March 2020. The number of unique users to the Authority's website has increased by 21% while social media reach has increased by 69% since 2017.</p>	
<p>U10 Continue production of a limited range of high quality, key publications</p> <p>This ongoing work is continuing to a high standard with the publication of the Out and About Guide, Annual Report and Moors Messenger as well as visitor publications.</p>	

<p>U11 Provide on-site visitor information at key locations The number of 'on-site' interpretation boards is being increased through the Land of Iron project. A small number of new mobile display units have been trialled but haven't worked brilliantly, and discussions are also ongoing with Arriva at Whitby bus station for more information to engage with National Park visitors. Approx. 600 tourism businesses and organisations are working with the NPA and accessing support for promotional activities.</p>	
<p>U12 Provide a communications service across the Authority This ongoing work is being delivered to a high standard – a new image library has recently been purchased for all staff to use and volunteers are also receiving more information through their regular publication 'Involve'</p>	
<p>U13 Continue to provide, develop and improve excellent National Park Visitor Centres. <i>Targets: Meet Medium Term Financial Strategy income targets at Visitor Centres;</i> Annual income targets are being met at the centres and an ongoing programme of events, improvements and income generating activities is being delivered. Both centres will retender their catering 'offers' this year, the Cycling offer at Sutton Bank is being improved and the 'Inspired by...' gallery consistently draws in healthy visitor numbers.</p>	
<p>U14 Deliver major investment at Sutton Bank Following an in depth look at the opportunities presented by Sutton Bank a range of improvements / developments have now been agreed, focusing on; increasing Car Parking spaces, improving the outdoor activity 'offer' with a small building to host birdwatching and dark skies activities, and improvements to cycling trails. Large scale development of the Visitor Centre building will not be pursued at present.</p>	
<p>U15 Deliver Engagement and interpretation elements of This Exploited Land of Iron project <i>Target: Meet all relevant TEL project targets</i> All of these targets are being met - including a full and popular events programme, guided walks, and interpretive displays.</p>	
<p>U16 Provide more opportunities for volunteers to contribute to all aspects of delivery of the National Park Authority's second purpose <i>Target: 2,500 additional volunteer days across delivery of second purpose (excluding youth volunteering)</i> See overview of volunteering– objective C5</p>	

Business and Land Management

<p>B1. Support the agriculture sector to become more resilient and capable of adapting to changing economic circumstances whilst contributing to the National Park's special qualities</p> <p>Uncertainty around future policy and post Brexit schemes makes it difficult to provide targeted advice. Some work is ongoing however, and includes support to farmers entering new 'higher level' schemes, (particularly focusing on Moorland options in the schemes), trialling the national new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMs), and supporting two Facilitation Fund farmer groups.</p>	
<p>B2. Help to promote and support Local Businesses</p> <p>A wide range of work has been delivered to support local businesses, including the delivery of 63 grants through the LEADER programme (which has been extended to March 2020), advice on sustainable timber and wood fuel production, and involvement in a wide range of business forums; for example the Woodland Partnership, Yorkshire Peat Partnership, North York Moors Tourism Network, Helmsley in Business, and Staithes/Robin Hood's Bay business associations</p> <p>Work with the Local Enterprise Partnerships has been limited as they're currently restructuring / merging</p>	
<p>B3. Lead on the development of National Apprenticeship standards for countryside management, rural tourism and built heritage conservation on behalf of English National Park Authorities.</p> <p><i>Targets: Countryside worker standard adopted September 2017</i> <i>Rural tourism standard adopted September 2018</i> <i>Built heritage standard adopted September 2019</i></p> <p>The NPA's own apprenticeship programme goes from strength to strength and is seen as an exemplar across the National Park family. In relation to new Apprenticeship standards, progress is being made but the NPA is not leading on all of them – due to the complex nature and resources required to get the standards to a stage where they can be adopted. The National Trust are currently working on the Countryside worker level 3 standard, Northumberland NPA on the built heritage standard and the National Parks UK '<i>Working Together</i>' project is looking at the rural tourism standard. The Level 3 Ranger Apprenticeship has been successfully established, with apprentices working alongside the Senior Rangers. Two Apprentice Rangers have progressed to full time employment in the past 12 months, with one more securing a job this month.</p>	
<p>B4. Increase the profile of the North York Moors to achieve the Second Purpose and support the local economy</p> <p><i>Targets: Maintain visitor awareness of at least current levels (targets to be reviewed following completion of Communications Strategy)</i> <i>Continued growth of the visitor economy</i></p> <p>This is another very broad objective, which encompasses a range of initiatives and ongoing work; nurturing the North York Moors brand (over 100 businesses are now using one of the National Park partnership logos), working with local councils on joint promotion initiatives (especially Scarborough), delivering marketing campaigns through the North York Moors Tourism Network, and implementing project such as the EARDF-funded 'Destination Partnership Moors & Dales' project and the Coastal Communities Fund 'Moor to Sea' project - which are both coming to an end this year.</p>	

The ambition to build our working relationship with the new combined Teeside Authority has been replaced by working at a more local level on health and education initiatives which has proved beneficial.

The Authority is currently involved in gathering a range of data related to profile, awareness and visitors and we want to ensure that comparable data continues to be available in order to provide a picture of changing trends over time. New work on a Tourism Impact Review, funded by the Section 106 agreement is currently being analysed to assess its suitability for providing an update on a long term Management Plan indicator related to Regional Awareness.

Communities

C1. Deliver a customer focused Development Management service that supports economic and community development whilst helping to protect and enhance the special qualities of the National Park.

Targets: 80% of planning applications determined within 8 weeks.

At least 80% of applicants satisfied with the Development Management service.

Targets for planning application determination and satisfaction have been consistently met. Progress has been made on a number of initiatives focused on improving the efficiency and quality of the Development Management service including: implementing actions arising from two independent DM Reviews which confirmed cost efficiency, including reduction in paper files through increased e-planning, preparation of a new enforcement policy, meeting income targets for pre-application advice, and delivering the Biennial Design Awards. The target for S106 income hasn't been met due to over ambitious assumptions on the submission of schemes for larger developments... Work on replace the new planning software system is progressing steadily but won't be fully implemented in this Business Plan period.

C2. Complete the Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan, through a public examination to final adoption to ensure a robust planning framework is in place to assess minerals development including conventional and shale gas proposals, in or affecting the setting of the National Park.

Target: New Joint Plan adopted by November 2017

This work is behind schedule but due to be completed in 2019. Extra hearings on the Plan took place in January 2019, modifications were prepared for the Inspector in February and the Plan is due to be adopted in July 2019.

C3. Prepare and adopt a new Local Plan to provide a clear framework for planning decisions in the National Park

Target: New Local Plan adopted by November 2018.

Intense work on preparation is ongoing with the examination due to take place in September 2019. Target date for adoption is January 2020.

C4. Provide a high quality service for the implementation of the Sirius Minerals Polyhalite Mine and Tunnel (MTS) Planning Approval/ Deal with new or amended application if required. (See separate Plan)

Target: S106 funded work successfully implemented. Construction programme for mine and MTS is successful in terms of mitigation to ensure any adverse impacts on the National Park and its communities are minimised.

The team to implement this work is now well established and integrated into the NPA's business objectives.

C5 Deliver the volunteer strategy, developing a 'one team approach' and embedding volunteering in all areas of the Authority's work

Targets: 23,000 Volunteer days each year by 2021 (including 3,000 via TEL project)

Volunteer Satisfaction survey to be carried out in 2017, this will set a baseline and enable agreement of annual targets for volunteer satisfaction for 2018 - 2020

Good progress has been made to integrate the Authority's commitment to volunteering across the organisation; this is an ongoing progress and there's plenty more to do. The target of providing 23,000 volunteers days annually was ambitious and is unlikely to be met, although the contribution of volunteers to the Authority's work continues to increase (the number of volunteer days is expected to increase by 8-10% in 2018/19) The quality and variety of experiences that the NPA is able to offer to its volunteers is continuously improving and has included; provision of high quality training for volunteers, introduction of the 'My Volunteering' system, deployment of volunteers in teams which haven't hosted volunteers before and volunteers taking on the role of 'task day leaders'. This work has been informed by the completion of two volunteer satisfaction surveys with related actions, (see separate paper on this agenda)

C6: Enable communities to influence the delivery of services and decisions affecting the National Park

Extensive opportunities for community involvement in the development of the new Local Plan have been offered. Ongoing community consultation through Parish Forums , village caretaker schemes, and community champions as well as deep community involvement in projects such as TEL all reflect the Authority's commitment to the importance of community.

C7. Support local communities to be more sustainable by supporting the provision of new facilities and resisting the loss of uses which provide an important service

The most recent stats (below) from the Community facility survey provide an overview or progress:

2018 Percentage of settlements (in Local Plan) with key facilities (2015 figures in brackets)

General Store - 26% (27%)

Post Office - 31%* (includes outreach and mobile services) (23%)

Village Hall/Other Hall - 76% (73%)

Village Pub - 74% (69%)

Play Area - 38% (36%)

In addition it has been agreed to transfer Community Grants during the course of the year 2019/20 from the Conservation Department to Park Services which will be administered by the Ranger Service. This will effectively replace the Village Improvement Scheme which was stopped several years ago but with revised criteria. Progress will be reported to Members in due course.

C8. Ensure the Authority has a robust framework of planning policy documents and processes in place to help meet local housing needs and ensure new development protects and enhances the National Park's landscape and built heritage

See C3 on Local Plan preparation

C9. Work jointly with others to strengthen national protection for National Parks, including in relation to the NPPF and environmental assessment.

Joint responses have been coordinated with other National Parks and National Parks England on several national policy consultations including the new NPPF. A successful outcome of this was a request being met for National Park protection to be included in the NPPF with the recognition that National Parks have the highest status of protection in relation to the conservation and enhancement of landscape and scenic beauty .

Corporate

CR1. Provide inspiring strategic People Management support to the Authority and ensure that people are supported to enable them to deliver services in a way that makes the most of their skills. *Targets: 7% staff turnover, a maximum of 4 days / year sickness absence and incremental improvements in outcomes to staff satisfaction survey*

Good progress has been made in this area with consistently low sickness and staff turnover figures, good staff questionnaire outcomes and a work force which consistently achieves a high level of delivery. In recent years the Authority has made a conscious effort to delegate appropriate decision making in the organisation, which has led to more 'decision makers' having the skills and being trusted to make decisions about the Authority's work programmes and deliver on them.

CR2. Improved delivery of excellent customer service, across all of the Authority's functions. *Target- to retain Customer Services Excellence (CSE) at or beyond current high levels of achievement*

The Authority has continued to deliver to a high standard in this area with full compliance on all measures in the CSE standard and with an increased number of 'compliance plus' results; other external verification continues to highlight high standards. With less people working in this area some of the metrics on correspondence turnaround times have decreased slightly. Work related to information requests and data requirements have been responded to in a timely manner.

CR3. Deliver resilient, supported and compliant IT services based on needs of users/customers. *Target – key systems available 99% of working time*

The Authority's IT services have been strong on every measure with outstanding reliability. There is one area of risk, which is now a priority to resolve sort out in this Business Plan period -related to a more secure location for the Authority's servers.

<p>CR4. Ensure that Health and Safety is appropriately controlled and managed across all activities, with all staff, volunteers and members properly engaged in working safely. <i>Target – use external assessment to help develop/ deliver annual health and safety action plans; incremental improvements in outcomes to health and safety attitude surveys</i></p> <p>A lot of time and effort has gone into work on Health and Safety in recent years. The Authority has been particularly mindful of increasing volunteering time and changing roles for volunteers with related responsibilities, for example the introduction of volunteer task leaders and the management and practicalities associated with these roles. Regular papers are presented to FRASC and annually to NPA outlining the progress made in this area.</p>	
<p>CR5. Ensure the Authority has timely access to high quality financial data to facilitate effective decision making at all levels. <i>Target – review at least once in Business Plan period to seek views from users</i></p> <p>Early on in the Business Plan period, progress with this objective was slow, mainly due to long term staffing issues,. The establishment of the Financial Collaboration Agreement has resulted in the provision of a greater focus on financial information enabling better and more timely decision making. The planned action to review the Authority's finance system has been postponed to the next Business Plan period, although the existing system has been significantly upgraded to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.</p>	
<p>CR6. Support the securing of £1.5m of external funding annually across the Authority. <i>Target – achievement of £1.5 million target annually during Business Plan period</i></p> <p>There has been outstanding success in this area with the annual target for external funding exceeded. However, there is still a culture change required to embed our approach across the organisation, to ensure that externally funded work is combined effectively with 'core' work. This doesn't however diminish the excellent results achieved to date.</p>	
<p>CR7. Ensure effective/transparent Corporate Governance and provide high quality support to the Authority's Committees and Members. <i>Target – no justified complaints regarding member conduct</i></p> <p>A solid job has been done well here, without spending a large amount of time and resources on it.</p>	<p>For members to comment</p>
<p>CR8. Ensure that the costs of Corporate Services remain at 5% or less of the Authority's gross costs. <i>Target – report on achievement against this financial principle annually</i></p> <p>Corporate services have been consistently delivered at a low cost - well in line with the Authority's financial principles.</p>	
<p>CR9. Maximise the effective use and income generating potential of the Authority's property portfolio. <i>Target – development and delivery of the actions contained in revised Property Management Strategy</i></p> <p>Some progress has been made in this area, but overall it hasn't yet fulfilled its potential. For example some work on securing Car Park income and work to refresh the offer at Visitor Centres has been completed. There is more to do in this area including a full review of Car Park income potential. Income generated from office space has reduced as the Authority's need to use its own premises has grown.</p>	

CR10. Maintain excellent working relationships with key partner organisations to assist in the delivery of the National Park Management Plan. *Target – Corporate Services to lead an assessment on the effectiveness of partnership arrangements*

The Authority has continued to develop and strengthen individual Partnerships, to deliver on specific objectives in the National Park Management Plan. There is without doubt an ongoing challenge related to public sector resourcing which has an impact on the ability of partner organisations – and the NPA - to contribute to Management Plan targets. In general awareness of the Management Plan as a whole should be higher.