

North York Moors National Park Authority Scrutiny Committee

11 July 2016

Staff/Member Training and Development

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with information regarding training and development activity to enable them to assess performance during the Business Plan period and discuss training requirements that may be considered as part of the current Business Planning process

2. Background

- 2.1 In the 2012-15 and 2015/16 Business Plans there were no specific numerical targets for either staff or Member training, but there are existing Performance Indicators for both areas and Members have regularly been updated on performance against these. The Business Plans, however, did contain delivery actions including;

- Delivery of the Leadership Development Programme with post implementation review;
- Retain skilled and motivated people to deliver Business Plan priorities;
- Continue to widen the scope of vocational training;
- Deliver Skills Workshops;
- Ensure that changes to the Members' Code of Conduct are publicised and training given

- 2.2 Sections 3 and 4 of this report provide commentary and explanations of the training and development work done with staff and Members respectively. The training of Volunteers is not mentioned here as this has been dealt with, and progress reported to Members, as part of the Volunteer Strategy.

3. Staff Training Budget and Training Days 2012 - 2016

- 3.1 The table below illustrates the changes in recorded training days per full time equivalent member of staff and the training budget during the Business Plan period as;

Year	Recorded Training Days	Average training days per fte staff member	Training budget £000
2012/13	576	4.8	£59
2013/14	392	3.2	£50
2014/15	278	2.5	£30
2015/16	329	3.1	£33
2016/17	-	-	£33

Note - £10K of the 2013/14 training budget was used to balance the budget for the Northern Apprentice Team leaving £40K to spend.

- 3.2 There has been a long term aspirational target number of 7 training days per year per full time equivalent member of staff. Members have approved the reduction of this to 5 days for the coming year. This target will be reassessed in view of the revised Business Plan and the People Management Strategy that will support its delivery. The higher training budget figures from 2012/13 and 2013/14 represent expenditure on the Leadership Development Programme. In the years immediately preceding this, the training budget was £39K in 2010/11 and £37K in 2011/12.
- 3.3 The training days record reflects staff attendance on formal off-site training courses, internal courses, skills workshops, Directors training days and so on. It does not attempt to record or estimate the training that is carried out on-the-job, for example, as part of a new starter's induction training. The staff-time cost of training will of course be much greater than the figures given above for the cash training budget. For example, 300 days of staff time on training courses costs the Authority approximately £32,000
- 3.4 There is also a considerable amount of training activity via the apprentice programme that is not recorded either. The day to day training and work at college undertaken by our 15 Apprentices and 2 trainees is not included in these figures although any formal training courses attended will be in here. In 2016/17, approximately £215K will be spent on running the two conservation apprentice teams and other apprentice/trainee salaries.
- 3.5 Although there are clearly some caveats, the amount of training undertaken does reflect the budgetary commitment. Additional funding was provided in 2012/13 and part of 2014/15 to pay for the Leadership Development Programme. Since then the training budget has reduced as has the number of training days which is not altogether surprising, though significant training is done without any cash cost, such as the Directors' training days.
- 3.6 While the financial resources available are a factor, there are additional non-financial reasons which have contributed to the reduction in the number of training days;
- Skills Workshops – from around 2008 onwards these formed a regular feature of the training calendar. On these occasions, staff shared their skills with others. The format was popular and has been successful, particularly in improving the level of IT skills among (mainly older!) members of staff. The need for this form of training activity has declined over the last couple of years and the workshops are more infrequent and scheduled only when there is a defined training need – for example, training in how to use a new piece of software.
 - Directors' Training Days – The Chief Executive and Directors have historically organised a training day each year. This has given staff, especially those who are largely office based, the chance to go into the National Park, look at aspects of our work and spend time with colleagues outside their normal work teams. These were generally popular, but given workload and redundancies in recent years it was felt prudent to drop them from the training calendar. They are being organised again for this year as Officers recognise their value both in terms of understanding work that colleagues do and discussing work issues with colleagues outside their normal teams.
 - The Staffing Update paper at the recent FRASC meeting mentioned the changes in workload and breadth of responsibility brought about by the various organisational changes that have been made since 2010. There is certainly a feeling amongst staff that they may be more reluctant than was previously the case to use a significant amount of the Authority's money for their own skills development and a sense of 'guilt' at spending time out of the office to leave colleagues to deal with workload. While Officers feel that neither of these factors should be regarded as significant, it is an area that needs further work during the next Business Plan period.

- 3.7 The revisions to the Staff Performance Appraisal Scheme that were implemented this year have placed greater emphasis on the individual to be responsible for thinking about their own personal development and training programme. This can, of course, mean a variety of different things from learning new skills on the job from a colleague to studying for a higher level qualification. It is too early to tell whether this change of emphasis has had the beneficial effect intended, but Officers are keen to continue to encourage all staff to think creatively about their personal development.
- 3.8 Over recent years, the amount of money allocated to the training budget has reflected the adverse financial picture, but the fact that money has continued to be spent on training (nearly £250K per annum if apprentice/trainee expenditure is included) is evidence of the Authority's continued commitment to training and skills development. The priorities in the new Business Plan will, of course, be influential in determining the focus of future training initiative and this will be reflected in the People Management Strategy.

4. Members Training

- 4.1 Table below shows breakdown of training sessions organised by Officers and undertaken by Members during the 4 year period 2012-2016, plus targets and actuals achieved.
- 4.2 There are a number of factors which have led to a decrease in the number of training sessions attended by Members, including the following;

2012-2013 Sessions	2013-2014 Sessions	2014-2015 Sessions	2015-2016 Sessions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewable Energy Technologies • Standards Training x2 • Planning Appeal Decisions • Dalby Forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members Evening Seminar • Planning Training x2 • Levisham Estate • Bat Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fracking • Major Development Test • Informal session at Sutton Bank • Potash x2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S106 Planning Training • Health & Safety and Financial Training • Askham Bryan
Av no. of training days per member	Av no. of training days per member	Av no. of training days per member	Av no. of training days per member
Target – 5 days Actual – 3.7 days	Target – 5 days Actual – 3.7 days	Target – 5 days Actual – 2.5 days	Target – 5 days Actual – 2 days

- The opportunity for Members to attend one of the Planning Summer Schools is now no longer available as this training ceased at a National level two years ago;
- The figures above do not include other elements of training undertaken by individual Members such as Planning Chairs training, National Parks UK Members' induction training, our own NYMNPA new Member induction training or additional training which takes place sometimes after committees;
- As agreed previously by Officers and Members, training sessions would only take place if there was a particular need to do so, to ensure the best use of Members' time. On a number of occasions (not included in the table above) Members had one to one training to ensure that they were able to access agenda papers via their particular IT equipment;
- On occasions, sessions/dates have been moved or cancelled due to other more pressing commitments of both Members and Officers;

- The Members' Development Scheme which was originally implemented in 2010 and designed to offer Members elements of training, both mandatory and optional, was reviewed in 2015 with Members opting to retain the one to one discussion element of the scheme, but with agreement that these discussions should only take place informally once every two years, the next ones are due to take place by the end of 2016.

4.3 Officers would welcome Members' views about the training that they are provided with and whether or not it meets their needs. Any thoughts about further areas for Member training and development would also be welcomed.

5. **Financial and Staffing Implications**

5.1 At this stage, there are no additional financial or staffing implications to the contents of this report.

6. **Legal Implications**

6.1 There are no significant legal implications to the issues outlined in this report.

7. **Recommendation**

7.1 That Members note the contents of this report, comment on Section 3 with regard to staff training and specifically give their views as requested in Paragraph 4.3 with regard to their own training needs.

Contact Officer:
Ian Nicholls
Assistant Director of Corporate Services
01439 772700

Background Documents to this Report