

North York Moors National Park Authority Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee

23 November 2015

External Funding

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update Members on the work currently being undertaken to secure external funding which will help support the Authority's work programmes and priorities.

2. Background

- 2.1 This report provides a brief update on projects for which external funding is being sought and continues the previous reports to this Committee which have kept Members abreast of our activity in this important area of work.
- 2.2 This report is set against the backdrop of the continuing reduction in National Park Grant, which is clearly impacting on the National Park Authority's (NPA) core funded activity and places an increased driver on securing new income streams and more external funding.

3. Current External Funding Activity

- 3.1 **Table 1** below sets out an update on projects that are in development, that have been approved, have been submitted and that the Authority is awaiting a decision on, projects that have been unsuccessful and projects or programmes that have been approved and are going through further development. Please note that the Table does not include project ideas that have not been agreed for development at this stage.
- 3.2 Currently we are operating with a refreshed 1 year extension to the 2012-15 Business Plan and specific external funding priorities have not been developed for the interim period prior to the development of a new Business Plan. However the Management Plan and the priorities from the previous business plan are still relevant and continue to inform external funding activities.

Table 1: Externally funded projects update showing projects in development, those that have been submitted, those that have been unsuccessful, those that have been approved and those that have been approved and are going through further development.

No.	Project Title	Brief Description	Funder(s) if Identified	Update	Lead Department	Budget
Projects in Development						
1	River Derwent	<p>The Authority has been in discussions with partner organisations in order to develop a joint approach for the Derwent Catchment as a whole, which includes a large part of the Park, but also stretches beyond as the Derwent eventually drains into the Humber. This has the potential to unlock significant funding opportunities and demonstrate nationally important best practice.</p> <p>The partnership developed will help enable the National Park to deliver key priorities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Habitat Connectivity; and • Restoration of Planted Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS). <p>The National Park is looking to take a lead role in the Rye and Upper Derwent sub-catchments of the Derwent.</p> <p>Further development will be required including what input and ideas land owners and managers have and how the schemes mesh with the aspirations of partners.</p>	TBC	<p>Building on the initial development work done by consultants, as outlined in the previous report to FRASC, the East Yorkshire Rivers Trust (EYRT), on behalf of the Derwent Interim Steering Group are in the process of letting a contract to further develop the Derwent Catchment Partnership. The Authority is contributing £2,000 towards this work, in addition to the £15,000 that the EYRT has secured, which will facilitate the establishment and engagement of the partnership.</p> <p>The Authority is also in the early stages of developing plans for a Rye Catchment-based project incorporating PAWS, connectivity, and water quality work and is in discussion with potential funders as to how to progress this work.</p>	Conservation	TBC

No.	Project Title	Brief Description	Funder(s) if Identified	Update	Lead Department	Budget
2	VIP Landscape Enhancement Initiative	<p>OFGEM has agreed provision of £500 million to mitigate the visual impact of existing electricity infrastructure within the UK.</p> <p>The majority of the fund will be used for a small number of major capital projects (significant undergrounding works) of which the Park is not eligible however 5% (£24million) of the total allowance has been ring-fenced for smaller localised visual improvements and landscape enhancements schemes within the designated areas.</p> <p>The Park is one of the 26 National Parks and AONBs identified as eligible for the fund.</p>	National Grid / OFGEM	<p>National Grid has now selected the 4 protected landscapes which have been prioritised for the main VIP scheme of major undergrounding. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dorset AONB; • New Forest NPA; • Peak District NPA; and • Snowdonia NPA <p>The Landscape Enhancement Initiative is still currently in development with a likely opening date in winter 15/16. Progression of the scheme is dependent on further discussion of the eligibility of any programme the Authority would like to develop.</p>	Conservation	Up to £600k per year from Autumn / Winter 2015 to March 2021
3	National Parks England Green Care Bid	<p>The project is National Park England led initiative aimed to build on the successful approaches, including Mosaic, to improve health and well-being of in-need groups within populations around England's ten National Parks and by so doing to ultimately reduce differences in life expectancy.</p> <p>The project aims to develop a methodology and best practice for the delivery of health and well-being outreach services within the National Parks.</p>	BIG Lottery – Reaching Communities Fund	The Authority has officially submitted an Expression of Interest with NPE to proceed as one of three parks that will form the basis of the project delivery as is currently awaiting confirmation of the next stages.	Park Services	~£500,000

No.	Project Title	Brief Description	Funder(s) if Identified	Update	Lead Department	Budget
		It is envisaged that the project outcomes would likely form the basis for a larger subsequent aimed at scaling-up the methodology developed in the initial project across all NPAs.				
4	Moors Centre Riverside Trail (2) – Dragon Installation	Part of the wider Moors Centre Riverside Trail Project (Refer to Project No. 7: Moors Centre Riverside Trail). A further project to install a large wood and metal Dragon. Interpretation is to be included that links it with the Woodlings/Boggles of Crow Wood and the local area. Construction of the dragon will include on-site workshops for the public while it is being constructed by local craftsmen.	Arts Council England	The bid is being prepared by Officers for submission to Arts Council England and will be submitted in winter 15/16 for implementation in spring 2016.	Park Services	£14,000
Projects Submitted						
5	Health & Wellbeing Outreach Officer	The key purpose of the post would be to work with target communities and individuals in neighbouring urban areas to link them with activities across the NP with mental and physical health benefits. They would also work with NPA staff to identify how the public health benefits of existing programmes of work could be maximised. A two year post with the aim that the officer would identify sources of external funding support to enable continuation.	RCBC and NYCC	RCBC is assessing the bid in light of response to recent government cuts in Public Health budgets. Negotiations are ongoing with NYCC and alternative funding opportunities are being sought.	Park Services	£45,000 pa for two years

No.	Project Title	Brief Description	Funder(s) if Identified	Update	Lead Department	Budget
Unsuccessful Projects						
Successful Projects						
6	North York Moors Rural Coastal Communities Team	<p>The North York Moors Rural Coastal Communities Team is being set up to with the aim supporting the development of local solutions to economic issues facing the rural coastal communities of Staithes, Robin Hood's Bay and Runswick.</p> <p>The Team's focus will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouraging the sustainable use of heritage/cultural assets to provide both a focus for community activities and enhanced economic opportunities • developing sustainable tourism with the three areas <p>The Team will be responsible for developing an economic plan that will identify the local priority areas/issues that require further investment to enhance local tourism and heritage. The priorities set out by the group will inform any subsequent bids into the forthcoming £3 million Coastal Restoration Fund that looks to provide capital funding for coastal heritage works. The Team will be comprised of local community groups, businesses and local authorities.</p>	Coastal Community Teams via DCLG	Working is currently underway to begin developing the Team's Economic Plan.	Park Services	£10k

No.	Project Title	Brief Description	Funder(s) if Identified	Update	Lead Department	Budget
Approved with Further Development Needed						
7	Local Growth Plan for the Moors and Dales	The North York Moors and Yorkshire Dales NPAs have led, in Partnership with the Howardian Hills and Nidderdale AONBs, the production of a local growth plan for the wider Dales and Moors areas. This is not a funding bid in itself but it does set out a number of priorities for potential investment through the YNYERLEP's growth plans and it now forms part of the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan.	Various TBC.	<p>The Protected Landscapes Rural Growth Plan has been delivered to the LEP in preparation of forthcoming discussions to help best align prioritised activities with LEP-administered funding opportunities.</p> <p>As an extension of the original work, a new document, The Protected Landscapes Rural Growth Plan has been developed that details specific projects the Authority and its partners have prioritised covering the following thematic areas:</p> <p>Supporting High Nature Value Farming: Projects aiming to provide environmental, flood management and bio-diversity returns while improving business performance, energy efficiency and developing new products and markets.</p> <p>Tourism- Creating new Visitor Experiences: Projects aiming to deliver an enhanced visitor experience within the 4 Protected Landscapes that is amongst the country's best with excellent service integration.</p> <p>Rural Skills: A programme of work to increase the number of young people gaining the skills that will support the rural economy enabling them to live locally and sustain local communities.</p>	Conservation/ Park Services	TBC

No.	Project Title	Brief Description	Funder(s) if Identified	Update	Lead Department	Budget
8	This Exploited Land	<p>'This Exploited Land' tells the story of forgotten communities, the pioneering of ironstone exploitation and the early development of railways along the remote valleys of the North York Moors. It uses an innovative approach to biodiversity conservation to restore the outstanding habitats and species in this landscape. It will introduce this almost forgotten chronicle to new audiences and craftspeople and secure its legacy for future generations.</p>	<p>Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme.</p>	<p>This Exploited Land is on schedule to make its submission by 30 October 2015 for Stage Two approval from the Heritage Lottery Fund. A comprehensive Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) and associated application documents have been produced by TEL staff with support from the wider TEL team including NPA staff and the TEL Partnership. These documents put forward an exciting Programme of activity over five years. Significant progress has been made in securing agreement from land owners and managers for elements of the scheme.</p> <p>Over the summer months, TEL officers promoted the programme at summer shows and through the Heritage Open Day programme to keep public interest levels high and enthusiastic.</p> <p>We expect to receive the HLF decision in either February or March 2016 with a planned programme start of 1 April 2016.</p> <p>A bid for match funding has been made (£300,000) to a local independent charitable trust and a decision on this is due in early November.</p>	Conservation	<p>Total £3 million - current stage £198,000</p>

4. **External Funding Strategy**

- 4.1. As part of developing the Authority's External Funding Strategy, a Project Pipeline has been developed to provide a high-level view of current and future external funding activity to support strategic decision making and forward planning. The Project Pipeline will be briefed at the February 2016 FRASC committee.

5. **2014 – 2020 LEADER Programme in the North York Moors, Coast and Hills Area**

- 5.1. Progress is being made towards launching the new 2014 – 2020 LEADER Programme in the North York Moors, Coast and Hills area. North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) as Accountable Body for the Programme is currently in the process of finalising their contract with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). Once sufficient assurances have been provided, the contract will be signed and a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between NYCC and the RPA will be drawn up. It is hoped that this will take place before Christmas. It is proposed that as soon as all contracting arrangements are in place the Programme will launch locally and applications will initially be sought for four of the six priorities – Farm Productivity, Micro and Small Enterprise, Rural Tourism and Forestry Productivity.
- 5.2. Eligibility criteria have been established by the RPA and this varies between the six priorities. Local Authorities will be permitted to make applications to the Programme under the Rural Tourism priority, and the Culture and Heritage and Rural Services priorities which will be incorporated into the Programme from 2017. The RPA and Defra are keen to see a LEADER Programme which allocated the vast majority of its resources to capital expenditure and for the projects supported to strongly and directly contribute towards economic growth in the area. The creation of new employment opportunities, the expansion of businesses and an increase in spending in the visitor economy all form part of this vision. There may be an option to extend the scope of the Programme to include revenue costs in the future; however further guidance is expected on this.
- 5.3. In conclusion the challenges faced in establishing the new LEADER Programme are being overcome and the Programme continues to represent a valuable opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to supporting local economic growth within some of the area's key sectors and the establishment of a firm base from which to progress in future years. Its increased economic focus and its links with the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding, and Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnerships, means a range of new and innovative opportunities can be investigated with the possibility of accessing considerable additional investment via the LEPs. The opportunity it also offers to engage with new audiences, in particular the agricultural and forestry sectors, and deliver activity in some of our key landscape areas including along the coast, is noteworthy.
- 5.4. Whilst the national emphasis being placed on LEADER is strongly economic the Local Development Strategy (LDS) that the Local Action Group produced for the new programme expresses the crucial link between the landscape, the economy and how the interplay of the two is needed to underpin sustainable approaches. Officers believe that it should still be possible to have a scheme which is positive with respect to National Park purposes but will continue to watch this closely. The challenges in delivering the LDS as developed are being considered and wider creative approaches that harness the energy and enthusiasm of the LAG Partnership are being supported.

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

- 6.1. The rationale behind seeking external funding and new income generation is to secure the delivery of the Business Plan and the Management Plan in the current scenario of year-on-year reductions to core grant funding.

5. **Legal Implications**

- 5.2 None at this stage.

6. **Recommendation**

- 6.1. That Members approve the contents of the report, the current work being done to secure external funding and the future approach outlined to developing and prioritising projects.

Contact Officer:
Tom Stephenson
External Funding Officer
Tel No. 01439 772700