

## YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

28th November 2006

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE****1. ENGAGEMENTS**

Since the last meeting of the Authority, the Chief Executive has been involved in the following:-

**(a) Media**

- An interview with the Yorkshire Post on a range of National Park issues.

**(b) Events**

- A presentation to the Annual National Parks Society's meeting held at Scargill House, Kettlewell.
- The Regional Launch of Natural England in York.
- A visit to Catterick Garrison to discuss the MoD's expansion plans for the Garrison.
- Along with the Chairman, attended the Environment Agency Annual Conference.

**(c) Meetings**

- The Richmondshire LSP Forum at Scotch Corner.
- Chaired the penultimate meeting of the steering group managing the 'Prosperity and Protection' project.
- Craven Local Strategic Partnership.
- The quarterly meeting of the BBC Rural Affairs Committee.
- Craven Public Sector Working Group (a sub-group of the LSP).
- Officers from the Peak District National Park Authority to discuss our approach to dealing with priorities and partnerships.
- Chaired the annual meeting of the Historic Environment Working Group and agencies responsible for the Historic Environment in the UK.
- Along with the Chairman, a quarterly meeting of ENPAA.
- Along with the Chairman of Audit & Review, a meeting with the Audit Commission to discuss the annual audit letter.
- The English National Park Officers Group.
- The UK National Park Officers Group.
- Along with the Deputy Chairman, a meeting of the Association of North Yorkshire Councils at Selby.
- The Director of ENPAA to discuss current issues facing National Park Authorities.
- Along with Mr Butcher and Mr Weston, the half-yearly full staff meeting.

## 2. MATTERS FOR MEMBERS' CONSIDERATION

### Council for National Parks

Members will recall that earlier in this year, to celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Council for National Parks (CNP) commissioned work on how the 3 national parks in the Yorkshire and the Humber region were contributing toward the regional economy. A report on this matter is nearing its conclusion and will be launched at the Harrogate Pavilions at 10am on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2006.

Minutes of the last meeting will appear in the next Members' Information Bulletin to bring members up to speed on progress. The launch will be during the morning and will include working groups looking at the implementation of the recommendations arising from the report.

#### Recommendation:

That the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and up to four members attend the Council for National Parks event in Harrogate on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2006 on behalf of the National Park Authority, and that their attendance be an approved duty.

## 3. ISSUES FOR MEMBERS TO NOTE

### a) Local Development Framework Working Groups

At the last meeting of the Authority, it was agreed that two Working Groups should be established to oversee the production, consultation and progression of the Housing and Minerals and Waste Development Plan Documents on behalf of the National Park Authority.

It was also agreed that each Group should consist of seven members and set out below are the names of members put forward to serve on each Group:

	<u>Housing Working Group</u>	<u>Minerals and Waste Working Group</u>
County Council	RA Bird J Blackie	SR Macaré S Shaw-Wright
District Council	KJ Lancaster Mrs Y Peacock	SHK Butcher Mrs Y Peacock
Secretary of State	JJ Pearlman W Weston	Mrs D Millward Dr KM Petyt
Parish	WH Brown	HA Kirkbride

**b) Review of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Boundary - Update**

A paper was presented to the Authority meeting on 26 July 2005, outlining the process, and timescale for reviewing the boundary of both the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Park Boundaries. At that time consultants (Alison Frammer associates) had been commissioned, by the Countryside Agency, to look at whether any countryside within, or in the vicinity of, the corridor between the Yorkshire Dales and Lake District National Parks could meet the criteria for designation as either new Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) or National Parks, and/or as extensions to existing AONBs or National Parks. The consultants' report on the 'Area of Search' was considered by the Countryside Agency Board on 5 May 2005. At this meeting the Countryside Agency Board agreed with the consultants findings, and instructed Countryside Agency officers to identify draft boundaries for Designation (Variation) Orders for the Yorkshire Dales and Lake District National Parks, and to consider other proposals for change to AONB boundaries in the region at a later date.

Officers working on the 'National Park Extension Project' have now received consultants' advice on a draft extension to the Lake District National Park and are using this advice to prepare detailed recommendations for Natural England. They are also undertaking a review of that part of the Orton Fells, identified in 2005 as being worthy of National Park designation, to consider whether it is desirable that the Orton Fells become part of a National Park or be designated as an AONB or neither. Following this work those areas identified in the 'Area of Search' as a possible extension to the Yorkshire Dales National Park will be considered namely the northern Howgills, Mallerstang, Firbank Fell, Barbon Fell, Middleton Fell, Leck Fell and parts of the Lune Valley.

The Countryside Agency and Natural England's progress since 2005 has been severely impaired by a challenge in the High Court (November 2005) against a small part of the New Forest National Park designation. An appeal by Defra against this decision was heard by the Court of Appeal on 1 November 2006 but the judgment is not expected until early spring 2007. Due to this uncertainty Natural England officers cannot estimate their timetable, for this work to be completed, but it is unlikely that Natural England will take any formal steps towards designating any part of the areas under consideration in the North West until after that judgment has been received. However, Natural England officers are working to be ready to progress this matter, as quickly as possible, when the judgment is received.

**c) Limestone Country Project**

The Authority is in discussion with the European Commission about a potential extension to the Limestone Country Project. Members will be aware that the current project is due to end on 31 March 2007. However, we are now seeking to extend the project (probably by 12 months) in order to be able to assist farmers who are in the scheme to convert to new agreements under Environmental Stewardship. An extension to the project would also provide some time for the

Authority to work with Natural England, the Regional Development Agency and others to develop potential follow-up schemes. This cannot be done meaningfully until details of the new national Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) – and the Regional Implementation Plan – are confirmed next year.

**DAVID BUTTERWORTH  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Background documents: None  
15<sup>th</sup> November 2006