

Date: 31 July 2007

Report: APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER CHAMPIONS

Purpose of the report

1. To appoint members champions for 2007-08, for the Authority's seven areas of responsibility.

Background

2. The Member Champion initiative has now been operating for a year. Members will have considered a report reviewing its effectiveness earlier in today's agenda. Some of the decisions taken as a result of that report may have an impact on decisions/principles contained in this paper.
3. Members may recall that it was at the Authority meeting on 30th May 2006 when the following resolution was passed: *that*
 - (a) *the establishment of member champions across the seven areas of the Authority's work be approved;*
 - (b) *the principles and role of member champions as outlined in the Chief Executive's report be agreed;*
 - (c) *No special responsibility allowance be paid to Member Champions. The matter to be considered as part of a wider review of the Scheme of Members' Allowances in 2007;*
 - (d) *The role of Member Champion be classed as an approved duty for the purposes of the payment of travelling and subsistence allowances;*
 - (e) *The Chief Executive's report and its appendices be used as background information during the group meetings to be held between May and July 2006; and*
 - (f) *Any member who wishes to become a Champion may submit to the Chief Executive their nomination together with reasons in support of their nomination(s). The self nominations and supporting papers will be circulated without alteration to the annual meeting of the Authority, to be considered together with any further nominations that may be made at the meeting.*

Principles

4. Before dealing with the issue of appointments it is worth reminding members of the principles that the Authority has adopted in relation to these key roles. They are:-

- Members appointed by the Authority need to be committed and enthusiastic about the area of work in question (of all the principles, this is the most critical);
- It is important to recognise what Member Champions are not. They are not policy makers, executive members or a cabinet, nor will they direct staff.
- Champions will be appointed to cover the seven areas of the Authority's work:-
 - Conservation of the Natural Environment
 - Conservation of Cultural Heritage
 - Recreation Management
 - Promoting Understanding
 - Development Control
 - Forward Planning
 - Corporate and Democratic Core

Role of the Champion

5. Specific roles for Champions are dealt with later in this report. In addition to these roles Member Champions had more generic responsibilities. These are:
 - To assist officers with the implementation of the Authority's policy;
 - To assist and advise officers in the development of policy proposals for consideration by the Authority and its committees;
 - To champion their area of work within the Authority;
 - To represent, and promote externally, their area of work;
 - To report back to the Authority and its Committees on their brief;
 - To act as a 'sounding board' for senior officers regarding the discussion of new ideas and initiatives. They are expected to bring the 'member perspective' to these discussions;
 - Undertake a programme of induction to familiarize themselves with key issues relating to their area of work.

6. Officers are expected to consult champions regularly, but particularly on difficult or sensitive issues where they are taking decisions under the Authority's delegation scheme. This consultation with member champions is in addition to, not instead of, existing consultation with members.

7. Arrangements should be appropriate to the resources and capacity of members and officers. Therefore:-
 - Up to two members can be champions in a particular area
 - A member can only be a champion in one area
 - Champions cannot be members of the Planning Committee.

8. It was also agreed that once champions have been appointed, it would be useful for them to meet regularly with the Chairman to share information, monitor the implementation and development of the initiative, and identify good (and bad) practice. This should assist in not only 'tweaking' the champion's initiative as required, but would help when reporting back to the Authority in a more formal manner.

Submissions from Members for 2007-08

9. At the time of writing, submissions to be Member Champions had been received in the following areas:

Conservation of the Natural Environment:	Mrs D Milward
Conservation of Cultural Heritage:	None
Recreation Management:	Dr M Petyt
Promoting Understanding:	SR Macaré
Development Control:	None
Forward Planning:	Mrs Y Peacock
Corporate Management:	KJ Lancaster

10. Of course these expressions of interest do not prevent any Member from nominating another Member, or self nominating, at today's meeting.

11. Finally, if the Authority decides to appoint as a Member Champion any of the members who have been appointed to membership of the Planning Committee (Agenda Item 13a), it will be necessary to 'elevate' one of the substitute members (who is not a Member Champion) to become a member of the Committee and to make the new Member Champion a substitute member of that Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

12. Members are requested to appoint Member Champions across the seven areas of the Authority's work.

David Butterworth
Chief Executive

16 July 2007

Background documents: National Park Authority Performance Assessment