

Date: 31 July 2007

Report REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ENGAGEMENTS

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

(a) Media

- Interview on the BBC Farming Today programme commentating on Bill Bryson's first remarks as the new President of CPRE.
- Letter to the Darlington and Stockton Times re Yoredale art.
- Letter to the Craven Herald re the Grassington Festival.
- The BBC Rural Affairs Committee to discuss: On Your Farm presenters; Romania (Countryfile); and debate on 'Is the Archers losing touch with the real rural agenda?'

(b) Events

- Launch of the Market Town Research Initiative, as the guest of Yorkshire Forward, at the Great Yorkshire Show.
- As a Richmond shire LSP member, the opening of Reeth Road play scheme in Richmond.
- SMT 'away day' looking at the issues surrounding the extension of the north-west boundary.
- The launch of the Yorkshire Dales barns and walls socio-economic study 'building value'

(c) Meetings

- Mr Alderson's induction.
- The IDeA Richmondshire DC Peer Review to discuss governance and perception of Richmondshire DC.
- The Interim Chief Executive of Richmondshire DC to introduce himself and discuss their relationship with the NPA.
- A meeting of English National Park Officers which discussed: National Park Circular; NPA needs analysis, member performance appraisal; position statements on farming and transport; changes to the permitted development rights for micro-renewables; the Planning White Paper; Natural England's policy on landscape; feedback from working groups; ENPAA Action Plan;

ENPAA accounts; Dartmoor National Park Officer recruitment; and consultation.

- The Annual Finance Meeting with Defra and Natural England officials to discuss: government priorities for National Park Authorities; the financial settlement for the next three years; National Park Circular.
- The North of England Civic Trust to discuss current issues.
- The member champion for Corporate and Democratic Core to discuss; Member performance appraisals, future staffing levels, LGA Rural Conference, Member Champions, future of NPAPA, Unitary Authorities, Member development programme.
- Along with Mr Hammond, a meeting with the residents of Grassington and Linton to discuss the car park/toilet review.
- The first teleconferencing of NPOs (UK) which discussed: working group reports; the Parliamentary Working Group; member training and development; ANPA business plan; ANPA accounts; VAT registration; ANPA AGM; debt collection; 2008 ANPA Workshop; IUCN categorisation of national parks; ANPA Conference 2007.
- Chaired the third meeting of the Joint Improvement Group (JIG) and discussed: sharing good practice between NPOs; the future of NPAPA; performance indicators; best value reviews; the new 'duty to consult'; 2008 corporate plans.
- Officers from Yorkshire Forward to discuss proposals for the future of Langcliffe Quarry.
- Along with SMT, a meeting with Bill Cross (NYCC) to discuss the National Park Authority's role in the current and revised LAA process.
- Along with the Chairman, the ENPAA AGM (minutes to appear in MIB).
- Along with the Chairman, the ANPA AGM (Minutes to appear in MIB).
- Along with Gary Smith, a meeting with officials from ENPAA to discuss their requirements for benchmarking and data analysis.
- Along with the Chairman, a meeting with the Chairman and Chief Executive of Yorkshire Forward to discuss the NPA/Yorkshire Forward relationship.

MATTERS FOR MEMBERS' CONSIDERATION

Association of National Park Authorities (ANPA) Annual Conference

2. The theme for this year's ANPA Conference, to be hosted by the Peak District National Park Authority from 19-21 September, (www.tcp-events.co.uk/ANPA2007/) will be "National Parks – the next ten years" and is intended to allow consideration of:

- Where will government direction come from in future – global, regional or local?
- How will we achieve our environmental goals – centrally controlled or through market forces?
- What will organisations be like in the future – new bodies or will partnerships take over?
- Will people and communities play a bigger role than government – doing it for ourselves?

- What about that inconvenient truth – what impact will climate change have on National Parks?
- Will we ever have the information to make good decisions – science, data and evidence.

3. Attendance is usually the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and up to four members.

Recommendation:

4. Members are asked to appoint members to attend the 2007 ANPA Conference.

The Implementation of Traffic Regulation Order Powers under the NERC Act 2006

5. Members will be aware of the new legislation contained with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 giving powers to National Park Authorities to make traffic regulation orders (TROs) on unsealed routes within their areas.

6. The current scheme of delegation relating to the use of TROs delegates the following to the Access Committee:

“B.5.2

- g) agreeing and reviewing the Authority’s approach to the management of recreational vehicular use of ‘green lanes’ including the use of Traffic Regulation Orders and partnership working with the Highway Authorities.*
- h) agreeing the making of permanent traffic regulation orders to manage the use of recreational motor vehicles under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.”*

7. This delegation was agreed before the enactment of the NERC Act 2006 and requires some updating to reflect the new TRO powers for National Park Authorities (which are expected to commence on 1 October 2007).

8. In addition, at its meeting on 19 April 2007, the Access Committee considered a report on the likely regulations and guidance that will accompany the new powers. It is widely expected that the process for making TROs, by National Park Authorities, will follow a similar format as that currently made by Highway Authorities. On this basis, and to be ready to proceed with the implementation of the new legislation as soon as it is commenced, the Access Committee considered the steps that the Authority is expected to have to take to make a TRO. The process will contain two rounds of public consultation, firstly on the Authority’s general intention to consider making a TRO on a specific route and secondly on the specific details of the TRO to be applied. In order to streamline the process the Access Committee members resolved that:

‘The Authority be recommended to amend the Scheme of Delegation to authorise the Head of Park Management to be able to undertake statutory consultation on the possibility of making a Traffic Regulation Order, on any individual route, in accordance with Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Section 72 and any regulations pertaining to them.’ (Access Committee 19 April 2007, minute 20/06).

Recommendation:

9. Members are therefore recommended to:
 - a) amend the scheme of delegation in line with the resolution in minute 20/06 of the Access Committee, 19 April 2007; and
 - b) agree to change the wording of the current delegation scheme B.5.2.h) to read:
Authorise the making of traffic regulation orders to manage the use of recreational motor vehicles under the Road Traffic Act 1984 (as amended by section 72 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006).

ISSUES FOR MEMBERS TO NOTE

Membership of the Authority

10. Following Parish Council elections in Richmondshire an election was held between four candidates for the vacant parish seat on the Authority. Harold Brown was elected and his nomination for membership of the Authority was approved by the Secretary of State.

11. For members' information, from a total of 25 Councils that were eligible to vote 10 did so. Mr Brown received four votes, Mr Kirkbride three votes, Ms Whelan one vote and Mr Wilkes two votes.

Europarc Conference 2007

12. Europarc 2007 is to be organised by the Czech Ministry of the Environment and the EUROPARC Federation together with the EUROPARC Czech Republic. The conference is to be held in the medieval town of Český Krumlov, which is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, from 26 to 30 September 2007.

13. The main theme of the EUROPARC 2007 conference will be Trans-European Co-operation in nature and landscape protection, which is expressed by the Conference motto "NATURE – BRIDGING BORDERS".

14. The Authority will be represented at the conference by the Chairman and the Chief Executive. If any Member is interested in knowing more about Europarc 2007, further information is available either from the Secretariat section or from www.europarc2007.org/index.php.

Boundary Review - Update

15. In 2005, following work by consultants Alison Farmer Associates, the Board of the Countryside Agency formally agreed that land between the Yorkshire Dales and the Lake

District National Parks was worthy of designation as National Park or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

16. A 'North West Designation Team' was set up, by the then Countryside Agency, to undertake the process of proposing and consulting upon new boundaries for extensions to the National Parks. However, progress has been much slower than hoped, mainly for a number of legal reasons relating to designation of the New Forest and South Downs National Parks.

17. In October 2006, responsibility for designating National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty passed to Natural England. The latest news from Natural England is that they are hoping to consult on whether the areas identified as part of the Yorkshire Dales and Lake District boundary review, which met the natural beauty and recreation criteria, (Mallerstang, Barbon and Middleton Fell, Leck Fell and the Howgills) should have this recognised through National Park designation, and for the area, known as the Orton Fells, whether this should be designated as National Park or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

18. The timescale for the consultation is 'late winter' and is expected to be at least 12 weeks. Indications have also been given that the formal consultation of whether any of the areas, identified above, should actually be designated, could be sometime in late 2008. Natural England is very keen to remind people that, as yet, no decision has been taken on whether to designate any land.

Pennine Bridleway – Funding for 2007/8

19. At the end of May 2007, the Authority received its grant offer from Natural England, for work on implementing the Pennine Bridleway during 2007/8. The grant offer is for £449,000 of capital works which is £170,000 less than the bid that was submitted by the Authority, in October 2006, but a similar amount to that received in 2006/7.

20. The difference between the bid and grant for 2007/8 having been agreed with Natural England because work programmed to take place this year, on Far Moor Common, has had to be postponed to 2008/9 and is pending the signing of a legal agreement with the landowner. This section of the route is a new 'creation' and not an existing right of way, so the legal process, creating the right of way, has to be completed before any work on this section can commence.

21. In addition to funding capital works, Natural England provided funding for the Pennine Bridleway Project Officer post and the Pennine Bridleway Technician post - until March 2007. There has been written agreement 'in principle' to fund the project officer post for a further two years (2009/10), with a verbal agreement to fund the technician post 'in principle' for a further year (2008/9).

22. At the start of 2007/8, 71% of the route had been upgraded to National Trail standard. The programme of works for 2007/8 means that a further 17.5% should be completed, bringing the total to 88.5% at the end of 2007/8. Whilst this figure does not match the performance indicator target set a few years ago, the Authority is still on target for 100% completion and opening by 2009. This is assuming an adequate grant for capital

works from Natural England 2008/9 and a number of outstanding legal issues being resolved in the next 12 months - the timescale for which is largely out of the Authority's control.

(For more details of overall progress and individual projects, see the Pennine Bridleway Annual Report - Access Committee July 2007).

Agri-environment schemes

23. Members have previously asked for an update on the position in relation to current and future support to farming through agri-environment schemes within the National Park. Officers are arranging for a representative of Natural England to attend the Authority meeting in September to discuss this issue in detail.

Elections to ENPAA and ANPA

24. At a meeting of the English National Park Authorities Association (ENPAA) held in Darlington on the 12 July, the Authority's Chairman was elected as the new Chairman replacing Mr Steven Pugsley (Exmoor NPA) who has stood down after a year in the role. Mr Nigel Hoskin (Dartmoor NPA) was elected Deputy Chairman. A press release is attached for Members' information.

25. On the following day Mr John Riddle (Northumberland NPA) was elected Chairman of ANPA with Mr Caerwyn Roberts (Snowdonia NPA) elected as his Deputy.

David Butterworth
Chief Executive

16 July 2007

Background documents: None

News Release



YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

Extra job for Authority Chairman

Grassington, 17 July, 2007.

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Chairman Carl Lis has been elected to head a major national organisation.

The 58-year-old Craven District Council Leader has been named as the new Chairman of the English National Park Authorities Association (ENPAA), which exists to promote and further the needs of the nine National Park Authorities in England.

Nigel Hoskin, Chairman of the Dartmoor National Park Authority, has been elected as his Deputy.

Mr Lis's new responsibilities will see him representing the interests of all National Park Authorities with Government and other national agencies.

"It is a great honour to be elected Chairman of what is a very important and influential organisation and I am looking forward to being able to champion the interests and needs of the National Parks and their communities with the decision makers," he said.

"The post will give me a direct link to ministers and allow me to present the voice of National Park Authorities in discussions with the Government on key issues facing National Parks and rural areas as a whole like affordable housing, climate change and the future of farming and land management.

"We are encouraged by the fact that the new Environment Secretary, Hilary Benn, represents a Yorkshire constituency, and I will be inviting him to the Dales to discuss some of those issues in the near future."

Coun Lis, who lives in Ingleton, has represented the Ingleton and Clapham ward on Craven District Council for more than 17 years and was last year voted Councillor of the Year by Local Government Yorkshire and Humber. He was appointed to the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority to represent Craven in 1996 and has been Chairman since 2004.

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For more information, please call the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's Media Officer Nick Oldham (full days Monday and Friday and Tuesday mornings) on

01756 751616. Alternatively, please contact Communications Manager Kath Taylor on 01756 751617.

- 1. All Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority media releases can be viewed on-line by visiting www.yorkshiredales.org.uk**
2. The Yorkshire Dales National Park is one of 14 National Parks in the UK. It is administered by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, the purposes of which are "to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage" and "to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the park". In carrying out these purposes, the Authority has a duty "to seek to foster the economic and social well being of local communities". The National Park is administered by an Authority of 22 members, made up of county and district councillors and members appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment to represent parishes or in recognition of their specialist skills or knowledge.