

**Date:** 26 January 2010

**Report:** MEMBER CHAMPION ACTIVITIES

### **Purpose**

1. To report back on Member Champions' activities since the last meeting, and to **attach** a more detailed report from the Member Champion for Corporate Management.

### **Reports**

2. The minutes of the Champions Meeting that took place on 15 December are attached as **Appendix 1**. These minutes include brief details of activities undertaken since the previous meeting.

3. Member Champions have agreed to report individually to Members in more detail, on a rota basis throughout the year. The report from the Member Champion for Corporate Management is **attached at Appendix 2**.

4. Other Champions' activities since the November Authority meeting, not outlined in the minutes of the Champions Meeting, are as follows: *(Please note several meetings were cancelled due to poor weather)*

Chris Armitage (Corporate Management):

See Appendix 2.

Will Weston (Climate Change):

Nothing further to report.

Stuart Parsons (Cultural Heritage):

Nothing further to report.

Malcolm Petyt (Recreation Management):

- Day with Ranger Upper Wensleydale).
- Attended Rangers Team meeting.

Wilf Fenten (Promoting Understanding):

Nothing further to report.

Andrew Colley (Natural Environment):

Nothing further to report.

John Blackie (Planning):

- Attended two meetings of the working group looking at a review of major planning applications (commissioned by the Audit & Review Committee).
- Attended meetings at Langthwaite / Thornton Rust / Hawes in relation to planning enquiries.
- Along with the Senior Planning Officer, attended a meeting at the premises of a local business in the south of the National Park in relation to a long standing potential enforcement enquiry.
- Initiated discussions with the Chief Executive and the Head of Planning regarding the detailed review of the passage of a planning application as it passed through the planning process.

Yvonne Peacock (Forward Planning):

- Attended a meeting of the NPMP Steering Group at Yoredale.
- Attended meeting of Local Government North Yorkshire and York Housing Board, at Thirsk.
- Attended meeting in December of the Second Home Funding Grant Panel, at Northallerton and will have attended the January meeting of the Panel, also at Northallerton.

**Lesley Knevitt**  
**Secretariat Administrator**

13 January 2010

**CHAMPIONS MEETING:**  
**Tuesday 15 December 2009 @ Yoredale**

Present: Carl Lis (Chairman)  
Andrew Colley  
Stuart Parsons  
Malcolm Petyt  
Yvonne Peacock  
Chris Armitage  
Will Weston  
Wilf Fenten  
John Blackie

1. The chairman welcomed Champions and opened the meeting by highlighting the need to “raise the profile” of the NPA, stressing value for money. He told Champions that the Chief Executive would be producing an A4 “script” of headline activities being undertaken by the Authority which might be of interest to audiences asking what the NPA was up to, in an attempt to respond to some of the unsubstantiated criticism displayed by residents/parishes etc. It was suggested that a communication plan was needed for the media in terms of getting the broad message across on progress; AC felt he should individually as a Champion be communicating with parishes more and will liaise with WF on getting a “news-sheet” note out to their Craven parishes in the new year.

2. Individual Updates

WW:

- General briefing from Gary Smith;
- Chaired Hydro seminar in November. Agreed could have invited more people; **ACTION: WW to discuss broadening the invitation for next seminar planned for March 2010 with Moya Turrell;**
- Keen to start raising profile of green tourism – currently not well promoted and little economic incentive. AC raised issue of poor public transport co-ordination, and need for discussions with rail providers on issues like bike carriage etc.

AC:

- Attended 2 x departmental meetings; Upland ELS and Catchment-Sensitive Farming. Felt disproportionate amount of funding money was directed at agencies/implementers rather than the farmers themselves;
- Involved in two press releases; tree-planting, and portable weather stations placed in primary schools (YDS leading on this initiative); primary school children important target audience for promoting NPAs;

SP:

- Had spent day with officer team, including familiarisation with conservation plans;
- Involved in projects in Richmond linking schools with NP; identifying examples of “living culture” specific to Dales (possible feed into current DCM relaunch project?).

CA:

- Had attended SMT on 28<sup>th</sup> October; prompting subsequent discussion with chief exec on role of Member Champions in terms of being involved with strategy, rather than minutiae;
- Induction day with DB, GS, RTD and RB including NPAPA, boundary review;
- Teleconference on website content management system;
- Had attended second of four York & North Yorkshire Climate Change Leadership Programme workshops; felt useful in some ways but doubt as to whether any more than a talking shop; appeared to be local government paying lip service to climate change measures little input from business. Queried whether there would be any outcome and/or any funding.  
**ACTION: LK to arrange with Jon Avison and CA to produce brief feedback on value of attendance to CL;**
- Had been included in discussions with GS on proposal to make performance targets/progress available publicly (online);
- Along with other members had attended diversity training.

YP:

- Had attended Management Plan Steering Group meeting as observer; useful to listen to level of debate but felt that attending the summer partnership meeting would be more appropriate;
- Had attended Sub-Regional Housing Board meeting where draft consultation was raised; concerned at suggestion that NP voting should be piecemeal, relating only to things affecting NP. CL agreed that this needed to be clarified at higher level, as had been agreed at recent Leaders Board meeting that NP would have equal voting rights;
- Chaired meeting to make recommendations on allocations for bids (£2.5m from second-home discount funding);
- Draft Housing Development Plan – 16 sites to be discussed at full day meetings 4 and 5 January ready for January NPA meeting.

JB:

- Reported that new “customer care approach” within the department was slowly being taken on board;
- Would delay implementing discussions on the analysis of applications (as discussed at previous meeting), as Tom Harland had large amount of work at present with the new HDP;
- Had attended a meeting on large applications/target times (CA also present) and a draft review was to go to Audit & Review Committee. Commented that these required more “project management”;

AC asked about progress on enforcement against A-boards in Grassington –  
**ACTION: JB to follow up.**

JB and YP to discuss who will represent (and sub) on Regional Spatial Strategy Board and confirm to CL.

WF:

- Had attended a meeting at Craven District Council where Aviva Pearson, Chief Executive of Yorkshire Dales & Harrogate Tourism Partnership, presented the new tourism strategy; was concerned at seeming lack of understanding of Dales by Aviva Pearson who was keen to promote “urban edginess” in the Dales.
- Mention of the North Yorkshire Cultural Strategy which he saw as too top-heavy and too much focused on festivals. More grassroots involvement needed.
- In connection with WF mentioning a greater need for sustainable tourism, JB thought that the Authority’s draft Integrated Access Strategy “Special Qualities, Special Experiences” was seen as too large and in need of an executive summary, although several parish councils had reportedly read in its entirety. Since this is the Authority’s full access policy and strategy WF felt that all the details were needed and could not be shortened. Consultees would need to see the full document although a summary for other stakeholders may be useful.

MP:

- Had attended various team meetings, plus Departmental “awayday” to Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB
- Day out with Ranger in Swaledale – sharp reminder that this area had suffered from flooding, as well as the widely-reported Cumbria.
- Impressed by Dales Volunteers Autumn meeting, which was inspirational. Other Champions expressed an interest in attending the March meeting **ACTION:: LK to speak to Rae Lonsdale**(√ done). It was agreed that Volunteers were a tremendous “advert” for the Dales, and were of huge economic value – should look closely at all ways to ensure issues of travel, insurance etc did not hinder in any way.
- Had attended several special project group meetings: Pennine Bridleway (now only needs to cross Ribblesdale); Go Dales (meeting with outdoor providers); Three Peaks Project (WF raised issue of better co-ordination of walks and urged NP to promote good practice); and chaired Green Lanes Advisory Group – pleased that no “triumphalism” from vehicle groups on quashing of TROs; now a constructive relationship.

### 3. Boundary Review

MP pointed out the potential for the “balance” of the NPA to change if all possible areas were included, giving rise to implications both for Membership (will take in representation from Eden and Cumbria, as well as prompting parish and SoS changes), and operations on the ground, in particular the Ranger system. JB

voiced concerns similar to those raised by previous reduction in Member numbers which had impacted on NYCC and Richmondshire.

It was felt by all, however, that this Authority should adopt a positive attitude towards “bureaucracy” issues, and there should be a balance between representational and territorial concerns. Funding would be an important consideration, as existing budgets wouldn’t support additional area management.

#### 4. Any other Business

Prior to the PDF meeting on the following day, concern was raised over transport issues in the draft Circular.

AC was concerned that particular topics had “slipped past” him as Member Champion. CL confirmed view that it should be the responsibility of the Member Champion to ‘jump in sooner’ and remind officers of the need to keep informed. It was agreed that each MC had different priorities and specialisms, and each should set their own agenda to some degree.

There was no further business and the meeting closed just before 1 o’clock

**Ed:**

***Please note that, at the January NPA, an individual report-back is due from Chris Armitage on Corporate Management***

***The next Champions meeting is at 10 am on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2010, at Yoredale.***

LK

16 December 2009

### **Report from the Corporate Management Member Champion – Jan 2010**

This short report covers the period since my appointment as Member Champion at the September Authority meeting. Members are aware of the different Champion roles and the range of interests within those roles. Members will know that the Corporate Management Champion role involves oversight of the Authority's corporate governance and performance management arrangements, and provision of effective support services to the Authority, including personnel, premises, legal, finance and IT. I welcome the opportunity to get involved in Corporate matters and I will fulfil the role to the best of my ability.

#### **Induction**

To give me some general and current background and in order to get me "up to speed", I attended the SMT meeting at the end of October before my full day of Member Champion induction in November. The induction day comprised meetings with among others the CEO, Gary Smith, Richard Daly and Richard Burnett. These set the scene for my involvement going forward and highlighted several areas of future concern for example, the Draft National Park Circular, budget allocations and the appointment process for Parish Members. We also considered the Authority's performance management and the upcoming National Park Authority Performance Assessment (NPAPA) review later this year.

#### **Meetings**

In December, I attended the North Yorkshire and York Leadership Programme workshop on Climate Change in York. The meeting was intended essentially to equip participants with an understanding of key climate change impacts, the timescales involved and the tools available to manage risk. The presentations (from Yorkshire Forward, the NFU, the Environment Agency and Government Office) were interesting enough but there was not much new information. It would have been more useful as a networking opportunity had the organisers provided details of all attendees to enable contacts after the event. It would also have benefitted in having some business representatives (Business Link, Business in the Community regional CBI or similar if we are to avoid the danger of business thinking this is all a "local authority issue". Further workshops are planned on 29 January and 8 February.

Also in December I attended a tele-conference meeting of the E-Government Group to consider options for web support contracts for the Parks. The decision was to terminate our current contract and seek an improved level of service and better value for money elsewhere.

#### **Reviews and Working groups**

Along with the Member Champion for Planning I attended a meeting to review our performance against targets on Major Planning applications and to report recommendations to the planning committee. I have been active on the Member

Development Working Group which has produced a Member Development Questionnaire for Members to consider at a PDF. In addition I have considered and commented on several internal documents.

**Chris Armitage**

January 2010