

Date: 25 March 2008

Report: CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES 2008-2011

Purpose of the report

1. To seek Member approval for a shortened set of objectives that will form the framework for driving and monitoring performance in 2008/09, and beyond.

Strategic Planning Framework

2. The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework:

- **Best Value Performance Plan objectives**

Plan and manage all aspects of the Authority's business so as to make the most effective use of our resources

Background

3. The Authority's objectives set out the *major* things we want to achieve over the next few years. Most are taken directly from the National Park Management Plan but others cover more prosaic areas of our work, such as corporate management.
4. As usual, as part of approving the budget for the coming year, Members approved a number of changes to the objectives. The main reasons were to:
 - a) incorporate some new objectives from the National Park Management Plan;
 - b) alter some targets to reflect changes (up or down) to our priorities;
 - c) refresh the objectives for the Authority's 'Corporate and Democratic' functions.
5. The objectives were approved by the Finance and Resources Committee meeting in December. Since then the Senior Management Team has been considering how to develop a more simple and straightforward performance management framework (to take advantage of the fact that many of the statutory requirements of the 'Best Value' regime will be removed from 1 April).
6. The effect of the changes made at the Finance and Resources Committee mean that since 2005/06 the number of Authority objectives has almost doubled (from 41 to 78). With the benefit of hindsight, the view of the Senior Management Team is that this (combined with 70 performance indicators) is now too many for an organisation of our size: one objective for every two staff!
7. As a result of the review, and following discussions with Kevin Lancaster (as Member Champion for Corporate and Democratic issues), a shorter set of objectives has been developed by:

- removing 32 objectives or parts of objectives;
 - adding two further objectives from the National Park Management Plan;
 - amalgamating some objectives;
 - re-ordering some objectives to make it easier to line them up to our various programmes (to create a clearer link between our budget and our objectives);
8. The proposed revised set of objectives is set out in **Annex 1**, with the substantive new text highlighted. Many of the changes are cosmetic, although with a purpose – to provide a more focused and streamlined framework for driving improvement and monitoring progress.
 9. All the objectives that have been removed are listed in **Annex 2**, together with the specific reasons for doing so. These fall into three broad categories:
 - objectives achieved or about to be;
 - objectives driven by national performance indicators that are no longer considered helpful;
 - objectives that will still be done but which will now appear instead as ‘actions’ in the Authority’s Action Plan (see separate item on this agenda).
 10. Members’ attention is specifically drawn to objective 9, where the target for the effectiveness rating of the National Park Centres has been changed from 90% to ‘at least 70%’. This reflects the fact that, from this year, a new (more stringent) methodology is being used by all NPAs (YDNPA score is 71% this year compared to 86% last year under the old methodology). In addition, this is an area of work where the Authority is not currently looking to make significant improvements.
 11. Subject to approval of the revised set of objectives, Audit and Review Committee will consider a new set of performance indicators at its meeting on 25 April.

Conclusion

12. The set of objectives approved by Finance and Resources Committee in December, together with the current set of over 70 performance indicators, has become too unwieldy to drive improvement effectively. The demise of many of the statutory requirements of the Best Value regime provides an appropriate opportunity to streamline the performance management framework in a way that will best drive improvement within the organisation.

RECOMMENDATION

13. That Members approve the revised set of objectives at Annex 1, as the framework for driving and monitoring the Authority’s performance in 2008/09.

Gary Smith
Head of Conservation and Policy

12 March 2008

REVISED OBJECTIVES

| CONSERVATION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Work with our partners and local communities to implement the Local Biodiversity and Geodiversity Action Plans: |
| | a) assess the condition of all ancient woodland in the Park by 2010. (NC6) |
| | b) work with local communities to identify a range of initiatives that, by 2011 would enable people to get actively involved in the implementation of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (NC8) |
| | c) ensure that the populations of all Local Biodiversity Action Plan species are stable or increasing by 2010 (NC5) |
| | d) develop a network of Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites by 2009 (L6) |
| 2 | Work with our partners to support good conservation management by farmers and landowners |
| | a) encourage and support widespread take-up of Environmental Stewardship and other agri-environment schemes so that 80% of the Park is covered by agreements by 2010. (L2) |
| | b) ensure that 70% of the area covered by Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats is in favourable condition by 2010 (NC3) |
| | c) increase the area of Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats by 7% by 2011, including restoring 140 hectares of hay meadow through the Hay Time project (NC4a) and creating 450 ha of upland ash woodland. (NC4d) |

| CONSERVATION OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE | |
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| 3 | <p>Work with our partners to ensure that we have up-to-date information on the condition of all the designated historic features within the National Park, and make that information widely available:</p> <p>a) carry out surveys of historic buildings, landscapes and monuments and ensure that information on the condition of those that are designated is never more than 5 years old. (HE3)</p> <p>b) develop a research strategy for the historic environment of the Yorkshire Dales by 2009 (HE1), and by 2012 develop and update the Historic Environment Record to incorporate the results of all publicly-funded research projects, and to make the information widely available (HE2)</p> |
| 4 | <p>Conserve and enhance the distinctive historic landscape of the Park, including:</p> <p>a) advise and assist in the restoration of 60 traditional field barns (L2) and take action to save 20 'at risk' listed buildings by 2010. (HE4)</p> <p>b) bring at least 15 Scheduled Monuments into appropriate management by March 2011 (HE5)</p> <p>c) produce updated character appraisals for 12 Conservation Areas and work with communities to produce and implement 8 management plans by 2010 (HE9)</p> |

| RECREATION MANAGEMENT | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 5 | <p>Manage and improve the network of public rights of way:</p> <p>a) 90% are 'easy to use' by 2010 (AR1)</p> <p>b) identify the most appropriate measures to manage the use of motorised recreational vehicles on each sensitive 'Green Lane', and put in place management plans for 75% of highly sensitive routes by 2008. (AR2)</p> <p>c) produce digital versions of the three 'Definitive Maps' of rights of way covering the Yorkshire Dales by 2011, and check and resolve at least 40 anomalies on the Definitive Map each year. (AR3)</p> |
| 6 | <p>Ensure that the National Park is accessible and provides a diverse range of recreational experiences for the public that are based on the special qualities of the area and encourage healthy lifestyles:</p> <p>a) by 2011 undertake 5 promotional campaigns aimed at specific recreational activities to raise awareness of the National Park Authority's recreation charter and codes of conduct (AR5)</p> <p>b) through the 'Go Dales' project, involve 1,900 people in recreational activities and get 380 of those to undertake regular physical activity (AR8)</p> |
| 7 | <p>Develop the scope, quality and co-ordination of recreational infrastructure to increase and promote the area's appeal to a wider range of people and groups and to increase the economic value to local tourism businesses (EE8):</p> <p>a) work with Natural England to complete and open the Pennine Bridleway through the Dales by 2009, and identify opportunities to develop additional recreational routes to and from it. (AR10)</p> <p>b) increase the accessibility of the Park to users of all abilities so that by 2010 at least 10 km (0.5%) of rights of way are fully accessible by wheelchair users and 105 km (5%) by those with limited mobility, and improve opportunities for those with sensory disabilities (AR7)</p> <p>c) maintain Authority car parks and toilets so that at least 80% of users rate them satisfactory or above</p> |
| 8 | <p>Provide people from all backgrounds with the opportunity to make a difference to the long-term conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the National Park and to contribute to personal health and well-being by providing at least 5,000 volunteer days per year by 2009 (UE7)</p> |

| PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 9 | Provide accessible, high-quality National Park Centre and museum services that positively influence people's enjoyment and understanding of the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales National Park so that the four National Park Centres have an average effectiveness rating of at least 70% each year . |
| 10 | Raise awareness of the National Park amongst visitors and the general public so that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) by 2013 at least 10% of people in England and Wales can name it as being a National Park (UE8) b) at least 50% of visitors and 70% of residents have an understanding of National Park purposes and/or the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales by 2010 (UE1) c) by 2011 at least 400,000 people use the Authority's websites each year |
| 11 | Make information about the Yorkshire Dales National Park easily accessible and relevant to a diverse range of groups and individuals, focusing on the urban areas of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Teesside that surround it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) increase the percentage of residents in Keighley and Bradford who are aware of the Park from 25% in 2005 to 30% by 2011, and increase awareness amongst their Asian communities from 8% in 2005 to 13% by 2010 b) increase the number of visitors from black and minority ethnic communities from 1% in 2005 to 2% in 2011 (UE3) c) each year develop and implement one new programme of formal or informal education or training to encourage schools and groups to get involved in conserving the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales National Park (UE5) d) develop an annual programme of National Park Authority events, walks and activities based on the special qualities of the Yorkshire Dales National Park to promote understanding and deliver wider benefits such as health and spiritual well-being (UE9) |
| 12 | Through the Tourism Partnership, strengthen and develop the image of the Yorkshire Dales National Park to incorporate sustainability, inclusion and conservation values, alongside outdoor recreation, excitement and enjoyment (UE4): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) increase the number of businesses that are accredited through a green tourism scheme from 0% to 25% by 2011 (UE10) b) use publications, events and other opportunities to encourage businesses, residents and visitors to buy and source local food and products that support national park purposes (EE9) |

| DEVELOPMENT CONTROL | |
|---------------------|--|
| 13 | <p>Provide a development control service that helps to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the National Park, while supporting appropriate opportunities for economic and community development:</p> <p>a) minimise environmental harm by regularising 60% of enforcement cases within 16 weeks.</p> <p>b) improve the quality of development in 70% of applications through officer advice and negotiation.</p> <p>c) avoid the loss of existing employment land and premises and ensure that, by 2011, at least 9 hectares of employment land have been made available for sustainable, high-quality economic development; (EE6)</p> <p>d) prevent the introduction of significant new development 'detractors' from the landscape (L4)</p> |
| 14 | <p>Maintain a responsive and efficient development control service, so that:</p> <p>a) 65% of 'minor' and 80% of 'other' planning applications are being determined within eight weeks</p> <p>b) at least 88% of applicants are satisfied with the service provided.</p> |

| FORWARD PLANNING | |
|------------------|--|
| 15 | Work with our partners to provide a clear, up-to-date framework for the management of the National Park, including local development framework documents that properly reflect National Park purposes and provide a clear and consistent framework for planning decisions. |
| 16 | Fund at least 15 sustainable development initiatives each year that bring economic, social and environmental benefits (CC10), including small-scale renewable energy developments (L10) |
| 17 | By 2009 use the Local Development Framework to set targets for increasing the amount of affordable and local needs housing, and then work through partnerships to meet those targets, including through social housing for rent, subsidised ownership, and shared ownership. (CC1) |

| CORPORATE AND DEMOCRATIC CORE FUNCTIONS | |
|--|---|
| 18 | <p>Plan and manage all aspects of the Authority's business so as to make the most effective use of our resources and consistently reduce the environmental impact of the Authority's own projects and operations:</p> <p>a) retain the 'Investors in People' (IIP) standard by December 2010</p> <p>b) work towards the Authority becoming 'Carbon Neutral' by 2012, including reducing CO₂ emissions by 15% by 2009 (compared to 2005/06 levels)</p> |
| 19 | <p>Provide high quality, efficient and effective services to the public in a way that responds to the needs of users and ensures that they are widely accessible to those who live, visit, or work in the National Park, including carrying out surveys of our different audiences and ensure that information on customer satisfaction with our services is never more than 5 years old</p> |
| 20 | <p>Ensure the Authority has developed its corporate governance and financial arrangements to ensure the highest public standards are in place, as evidenced through the Annual Governance Statement and an unqualified audit opinion each year</p> |
| 21 | <p>Ensure a robust and accountable Performance Management Framework is in place and is driving improvement, so that:</p> <p>a) at least 75% of the Authority's objectives are achieved or remain 'on course' each year;</p> <p>b) the Authority is in the top quartile of National Park Authorities, who are assessed under the National Park performance assessment process (NPAPA) by 2011.</p> |
| 22 | <p>Seek to secure levels of external funding that would enable the Authority to keep its own total 'programme' expenditure and the expenditure for major YDNPA-supported projects in the Park to at least the same level in real terms as in 2006/07</p> |

OBJECTIVES THAT HAVE BEEN DELETED

1. Ensure that we have up-to-date (i.e. less than 10 years old) information on the condition and extent of all the important habitats and species in the National Park, and make that information widely available¹;
2. Produce a map that shows the distribution and status of all Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats and species (excluding rare and vulnerable species) and make it widely available through the National Biodiversity Network by 2008. (NC7)²
3. Respond to 90% of nature conservation consultations within the agreed period by 2008.³
4. Introduce measures to conserve and enhance at least 90 important roadside verges by the end of 2010⁴
5. By 2010 98% are of PROWs are signposted where they leave a road⁵
6. 91% of public rights of way infrastructure (stiles, gates etc) is maintained in condition 1
7. Less than 1.1% of the [PROW] network requires major works due to concerns over surface condition
8. 72% of engineered routes are maintained in condition 1'
9. 88% of bridges and river crossings are maintained in 'condition 1'
10. Involve local communities and their representatives, the Yorkshire Dales Local Access Forum, landowners/managers and users in the development and implementation of 'Rights of Way Improvement Plans' (AR4)⁶
11. Ensure that no more than 5% of open access land is subject to long-term restrictions⁷
12. Through sustainable travel partnerships increase the integration and use of sustainable transport modes for leisure and everyday life within and to the Park (AR6)⁸
13. Assist in implementing the Dales elements of the sub-regional cycle tourism strategy⁹

¹ Park-wide programme of habitat assessment largely complete. Will continue to collect up-to-date information as part of achieving our objectives on habitats (2b) and species (1c)

² Will be achieved by end of March.

³ Ends March 2008.

⁴ Too detailed – already covered within objectives on LBAP habitats (2b) and community engagement (1b)

⁵ All subsets of overall objective on rights of way 'easy to use' (5a). The more detailed information will still be included as part of the annual rights of way maintenance plan report.

⁶ Achieved

⁷ Has become irrelevant as no new long term restrictions have been applied for.

⁸ Relatively minor area of work now incorporated in the 2008/09 Action Plan

⁹ Specific projects now incorporated in the 2008/09 Action Plan

14. Contribute to local and regional partnerships developing appropriate recreational events, including supporting the 2008 world championship fell race¹⁰
15. Optimise annual income generation from car parks and toilets¹¹
16. 80% of users are satisfied with the Authority's 'Promoting Understanding' services by 2010;¹²
17. By 2008 90% of visitors are aware that they are in a National Park (UE2)¹³
18. Increase the number of education service users to over 5,000 by December 2008¹⁴
19. Increase the number of businesses offering 'sustainable tourism products' from 25% in 2006 to 50% by 2010¹⁵
20. Determine 100% of applications in line with adopted Development Plan Policies¹⁶
21. Ensure that at least 60% of new homes are provided on previously developed land each year¹⁶
22. Ensure that no more than 35% of appeals are allowed following refusal of a planning application
23. Provide a helpful and responsive development control service, which meets 83% of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) 'Quality of Service Checklist' criteria by March 2010
24. Develop and publish landscape character guidelines by December 2008¹⁷;
25. Update and publish data on the state of the Park each year to monitor progress in implementing the National Park Management Plan.¹⁸
26. Achieve at least 80% of the actions in the BVPP each year¹⁹
27. Pay 100% of invoices within 28 days by 2008²⁰
28. Consider the CIPFA/SOLACE governance principles, and develop principles for the Authority by 2008²¹

¹⁰ Achieved

¹¹ Covered as part of overall objective on external funding (22)

¹² Satisfaction ratings for services (e.g. events) will continue to be monitored for management information.

¹³ Achieved - a survey conducted this year showed that 99% of visitors interviewed knew they were in a National Park.

¹⁴ Achieved – end of year figure likely to be close to 7,000.

¹⁵ Achieved – of the original baseline, 96% of the businesses are now signed up to the five environmental points.

¹⁶ Linked to former Best Value Performance Indicators that are no longer required

¹⁷ Guidelines will be a Supplementary Planning Document so covered by overall objective on plans (Objective 15)

¹⁸ Covered by overall objective on plans (15). Included in the 2008/09 Action Plan.

¹⁹ Superseded by more strategic objective on achieving our objectives (21a).

²⁰ Linked to former Best Value Performance Indicator that is no longer required. Remains an operational target that will be monitored by the Finance Section.

²¹ Superseded by higher level objective on governance (20). Will be included as actions each year instead.

29. Introduce an annual governance statement to replace the statement of internal control by 2008
30. Maintain a Local Code of Corporate Governance to assess the Authority's compliance with its governance principles throughout the period of this Corporate Plan
31. Carry out an annual assessment of the Authority's performance, and identify areas for improvement²²
32. Ensure the Authority is in the top quartile of National Park Authorities in the assessment of 'family' Performance Indicators.²³

²² Not sufficiently significant. Will be included as an action each year instead.

²³ Deleted pending agreement during 2008/09 on what the family PIs will be!