

Date: 29 September 2009

Report: REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ENGAGEMENTS

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

Media

- Provided a short article for the Darlington & Stockton Times on the recent ministerial visit.
- Carried out an interview for radio 4's 'Costing the Earth' on renewable energy; specifically wind farm development.

Events

- Along with the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Lake District NPA, attended a dinner hosted by the Minister for National Parks – Huw Irranca-Davies.
- Along with the Chairman, attended the launch of the Mosaic III initiative, a project designed to encourage a wider range of visitors from BME groups to National Parks.
- The member induction event for Messrs Bingham, Parsons and Welsh
- Along with the Chairman, the Europarc Federation annual conference where I presented a paper on 'Performance Management in English National Park Authorities'.
- The signing of the Joint Statement on the Historic Environment in the National Parks of England and Wales.

Meetings

- The Richmondshire LSP where the following were discussed: LAA disaggregate targets and monitoring; Scrutiny Role within RLSP; Risedale School update; SCS further consultation; Prevent NI35; Economic Down Turn LSP Sign up to the "economic pledge"; Community Engagement Strategy; North Yorkshire Welcome pack – Nepalese Translation; LSP Improvement Planning; Improvement Plan/Work Programme 2009 – 2010; Neighbourhood Working Group update; CAA Briefing Paper; Task group Chairs highlight reports - Green Living; Healthy Lives; Prosperous Communities; Safe Places; Strong Neighbourhoods & LSP Budget Update.

- Yorkshire Forward and Craven District Council to discuss progress on the Craven Limeworks project.
- The annual meeting of the Authority's statutory officers [myself – as head of paid service; Richard Daly as monitoring officer and John Moore as Treasurer] to discuss: Pension Fund investment policy; Internal Audit: status of Veritau; Likely political direction / initiatives of NYCC; Wide Area Network; Financial Services SLA; Dales Countryside Museum; Regional structures and Probity in Planning.
- The English National Park Officers' teleconference to discuss; ENPAA Vision Statement, forthcoming Policy Seminar, Climate Change reporting requirements, NE Protected Landscapes Policy, recent Ministerial visits, feedback from Working Groups and recent consultations.
- The Chairman and Mr Blackie to discuss the developing regional arrangements in Yorkshire and Humberside. [Agenda item today]
- A meeting of the Senior Management Team at which a presentation was given by the liP assessor – prior to her formal assessment visit to the Authority in November.
- Along with the Chairman, the Craven LSP One Planet Living Working Group at which the following were discussed: Sustainable Tourism, Further Give and Take Days, Eco Team, Update from Climate Change Officer, Energy Savings Trust "Energy Week, and round up of community group projects.
- Along with the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman – Messrs: Armitage; Charlesworth; Parsons and Roberts, attendance at the ANPA Conference. This will be subject to a separate report from members at the November meeting.

ISSUES FOR MEMBERS' CONSIDERATION

Drafting a protocol on Member / Officer Relations

2. At its meeting on 13 August 2009, the Standards Committee decided to recommend to the Authority that the current documentation on Member / Officer relations should be reviewed; and that a member / officer working group drawn from the Standards Committee and the Finance and Resources Committee and including the Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer be established to undertake such a review, and report back to the two Committees with its recommendations. In hindsight it is felt it might be more practical for a report to simply be considered by the Standards Committee with a recommendation being considered by the full Authority.

3. The background to this is that a protocol on Member / Officer relations is generally considered to be a necessary component of ethical governance arrangements. Although this Authority has a number of documents which address the issue, it does not have a single protocol, and the documents which do exist have not been reviewed since 2005. Since that time, there have been a number of significant developments, including:

- The adoption of a new code of conduct for members in 2007;
- Changes to the roles of Authority members, in particular by the introduction of the role of Member Champions, and the promulgation by Defra of a Job Description for Authority members

which would imply that it would be timely to revisit these issues, and develop up-to-date guidance which will assist both members and officers to work effectively together.

4. In the hope that the Authority would agree to its recommendation, the Standards Committee decided that it would wish to appoint Atiq Hassan (Independent Chairman of

the Standards Committee) and Roger Harrison-Topham as its representatives on the working group. Following discussions with the Chairman of the Authority and the Chairman of the Finance and Resources Committee, they have both indicated a desire to join the group.

Recommendation:

5. That the Authority decides whether it agrees to the establishment of this Working Group, and if so:

(a) agrees the membership as two members of the Standards Committee, two members of the Finance and Resources Committee and the Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer; and

(b) appoints two members of the Finance & Resources Committee. These to be the Chairman of the Authority, Mr Lis, and the Chairman of the Finance and Resources Committee, Mr Blackie. (NB: The Finance and Resources Committee is not due to meet until 4 December 2009, and it is felt that, if the working group is to be established, it should commence its task soon, rather than have to wait until the new year).

Craven District Council Affordable Housing Needs Assessment 2010

7. We have recently received a letter from Craven District Council (DC) asking for financial support to assist with a housing needs assessment survey. The support requested is for £10,000.

8. Members may recall that in the past, we made a contribution towards the Rural Housing Enabler post. This post is now permanently attached to the District Council.

9. As a Housing Authority, Craven DC are required by the housing act to survey their district and maintain information on housing needs. The last survey was published in 2005 and is now somewhat out of date. As a Planning Authority for a part of their area, we occasionally make use of the survey to inform planning decisions. Our main use however is to inform our investigation of possible sites for allocation in the housing development plan.

10. While the Authority has good information on the overall affordable housing need, we do not have reliable evidence of the shortfall of 'local need/local market' housing. This could undermine our new review of housing policy.

11. It is suggested that we contribute towards the next Craven DC survey if we can ensure it collects information about the market for 'local occupancy housing'. It is further suggested that the Authority contribution is £2,000, recognising that 18% of Craven households live in the Park. This would appear to be a reasonable contribution, bearing in mind that we have no legal requirement of our own to collect housing needs information.

Recommendation

12. That further discussions take place with Craven DC to ensure that the survey provides information useful to the National Park Authority and, if these negotiations are

successful, that £2,000 be offered to Craven DC as a partnership contribution to the housing survey.

Representation on Eden & South Lakeland Delivery Board

13. The National Park Authority has recently received an invitation to appoint a member to the Eden & South Lakeland Delivery Board.

14. This Delivery Board has been formed to drive forward a programme of regeneration projects across the Eden and South Lakeland areas of Cumbria. The board operates under the strategic umbrella of the Economic Development Agency 'Cumbria Vision'. Its creation is part of a wide ranging re-structure of Cumbria's capacity to deliver regeneration based around four new delivery boards of which Eden and South Lakeland are one.

15. The board has five private sector members with a variety of skills and expertise who will serve alongside representatives from local authorities and public bodies.

16. The board will meet approximately six times a year and the Chairman of the Authority attended the first meeting on the 3rd September. He will be able to provide further detail at the meeting.

17. It is recommended that the National Park Authority appoint a member to represent the Authority's interests.

Recommendation

18. That a member is appointed to join the Eden & South Lakeland Delivery Board.

David Butterworth
Chief Executive

Background documents: None
15 September 2009