

Date: 25 June 2019

Report: PROGRESS ON AUTHORITY OBJECTIVES IN 2018/19

### **Purpose of the report**

1. To provide Members with an assessment of the Authority's performance in achieving our objectives in 2018/19.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

2. That Members note the progress made in 2018/19 towards achieving the Authority's objectives.

### **Strategic Planning Framework**

3. The information and recommendation contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and approved strategic planning framework:
  - **Corporate Plan objective**  
34. *Plan and manage the Authority's work so as to make the most effective use of its resources....*

### **Background**

4. Each year, the Authority produces a Corporate Plan setting out its objectives - the major things we want to achieve over the next few years. Most are taken directly from the National Park Management Plan, and all have specific, measurable targets attached to them.
5. Members are reminded that the objectives set out in last year's Corporate Plan were – in some cases – rather out of date. Members took a pragmatic decision (at the December 2017 NPA meeting) to roll forward the pre-existing objectives into 2018-19. This was on the basis that a full-scale updating of the objectives would happen in time for 2019-20 (to reflect the new National Park Management Plan, which was adopted in September 2018). This has now been done – but for 2018-19 it meant that the Authority was 'locked in' to:
  - a. 3 objectives that could not be achieved (relating to: restoring priority habitats; maintaining field barns; and maintaining Conservation Areas);
  - b. several objectives that related only to the former National Park area; and,

- c. objectives that took no account of key areas of new work (e.g. natural flood management).
6. Overall, therefore, performance measured strictly against the objectives is less meaningful than it normally would be.

### **Summary of overall performance**

7. Twenty-three of the Authority's 28 objectives were achieved or remained on-course.

### **Achievements during 2018/19**

8. Key objectives that have been achieved include:
- We carried out works to make a further 10km of rights of way suitable for users of all abilities (6);
  - Almost 6,800 volunteer days were provided by the Authority (9);
  - We continued to expand our learning and engagement programme, providing 'session places' for over 500 local disadvantaged people – double the original objective(11)
  - A further 90 ha of new woodland is being funded through the partners in the Dales Woodland Restoration programme, taking the total to over 570 ha since 2013 (16)
  - 81% of minor and 91% of 'other' planning applications were determined within Government target times (21);
  - With funding support from the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, we took on a further 4 apprentices, taking the total to 12 in the last 3 years - meaning we have doubled our original objective (22);
  - Through the Sustainable Development Fund, we provided £150,000 of grants to help support 27 local projects that are worth over £900,000 to the local area.
  - We secured some £7.8 million of income, exceeding the objective by £1 million, and helping to fund an array of new projects and initiatives (24)
  - We retained the 'Customer Service Excellence' Award for the 9th consecutive year (25)
  - A new National Park Management Plan was adopted, following 18 months of work by a partnership of 15 local organisations and business representatives (27).
9. Two objectives for priority programmes were narrowly missed:
- The annual average proportion of **rights of way** that were 'easy to use' in the former National Park area has dropped to 87%, below the objective of 90% (5);
  - 84% of **priority habitats** are in good condition, below the objective of 85% (14).
10. The two objectives that are clearly not on course relate to:

- Swaledale/Arkengarthdale Barns and Walls Conservation Area – the new Local Plan policies, and the return of some limited national funding for barn restoration works, are having positive impacts but the Conservation Area remains ‘at risk’ (3);
- affordable and ‘local market’ housing completions are still running well below the annual average needed to meet the former objective (19)

## **Conclusion**

11. The three objectives that have not been achieved will come as no surprise to Members – it having been clear for several years that two of the three (nationally-important heritage and field barns) were unachievable within the current time-frame and resources.
12. Overall, though, good progress has been made on almost all of the objectives from 2018-19, with several significantly ‘over-achieving’ – notably in relation to the securing of external funding. However, this really fails to tell the full story of what was achieved last year. The very positive performance on income generation also helped the Authority to carry out a range of new and enhanced activity – a bid for ‘Dark Sky Reserve’ status; an expanded programme of engagement with schools and young people; the Catchment Sensitive Farming programme; the extension to the national ‘payment by results’ pilot scheme in Wensleydale; and, a series of natural flood management projects. All of these work areas are covered by the new set of objectives in the 2019-20 Corporate Plan.

**Gary Smith**  
**Deputy Chief Executive**

7 June 2019

***A distinctive living, working cultural landscape that tells the story of generations of people interacting with their environment***

Objective	Expected Progress by Mar 2019	Actual Progress	Status
1. Support projects that enhance and promote the distinctive landscape, geology and cultural heritage, including the 'Ingleborough Dales Landscape Partnership' (by 2019) and 'Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership' (by 2021).	IDLP year 3 programme complete	Helped YDMT deliver year 3 of IDLP Programme (providing £640,000 funding for local projects). The Westmorland Dales LP 'Stage 2 bid' to HLF for £2.5m was successful.	✓
2. Help people to conserve, enhance and bring back into use important historic sites, buildings and structures, so that no more than 70 listed buildings, 15 scheduled monuments and no conservation areas are 'at risk' by 2020.	70 LBs 11 SMs 3 CAs	77 Listed buildings at risk (down 1 from last year). 10 Scheduled Monuments at risk (down 1) 3 Conservation Areas are at Risk (no change).	≈
3. Secure the contribution of traditional field barns and drystone walls, including identifying and implementing measures so that by 2019 the Swaledale-Arkengarthdale Conservation Area is no longer considered 'at risk'.	4 barns restored	6 barns restored through the Ingleborough Dales Landscape Partnership, and 17 earmarked for funding through Defra's traditional farm buildings pilot. But SACA still at risk.	X
4. Use the Historic Environment Record to research, record and promote the stories of the National Park area, and carry out and co-ordinate regular surveys of important historic structures and landscapes.	All surveys up to date	Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments surveys are up-to date/on target. Backlog data is at a minimal level. New landscape and building surveys have been undertaken in Wensleydale.	☑

***A friendly open and welcoming place with outstanding opportunities to enjoy its special qualities***

Objective	Expected Progress by Mar 2019	Actual Progress	Status
5. Maintain and promote the network of public rights of way – including the Pennine Way, Pennine Bridleway, and other recognised regional routes and trails – so that, on average, 90% are 'easy to use' each year.	90%	Average figure for the former National Park area over the last six years is now 87%. Including the new area of the National Park, the figure for 2018-19 was 84%.	≈



achieved



on course



near miss



not achieved

6. Carry out works to improve access on appropriate routes so that 170km (8%) is suitable for users of all ages and abilities by 2018, and introduce five short, waymarked walks from Aysgarth, Grassington, Hawes, Malham and Reeth.	170km	A further 10km of routes were made suitable for users of all ages and abilities. This takes the total to 180km. The five short waymarked walks have all been completed.	
7. Maintain and keep under review appropriate measures to manage the use of recreational motor vehicles on sensitive green lanes, including Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), and continue to work with enforcing agencies as required.	90% compliance with TROs	97% compliance with TROs.	
8. Develop a range of new opportunities for people to explore the National Park by bicycle, including creating 3 new routes for family-friendly cycling by 2018.	3 new routes	3 new routes completed - at Greenfield Forest, Malham Tarn, and the Swale Trail.	
9. Give people from all backgrounds an opportunity to enjoy and make a difference to the National Park by providing at least 5,000 volunteer days per year, with 10% coming from under-represented groups by 2018.	6,000 volunteer days	6,785 volunteer days have been provided, with 23% coming from under-represented groups.	
10. Work with organisers of large-scale events to ensure they are well run, and provide benefits for local communities and businesses, and establish a fund to cover the full cost of maintaining the Yorkshire Three Peaks route.	Raise £20,000	The Three Peaks Code of Conduct has been produced and the notification scheme launched. Over £26,000 has been raised.	
11. Make the Yorkshire Dales National Park accessible and relevant to a diverse range of groups, including providing 200 session places a year for local disadvantaged people.	200 session places	We provided 532 session places for local disadvantaged people.	
12. Provide accessible, high quality information services so that at least 70% of users of National Park Centres are satisfied with the service and have increased their understanding of the special qualities of the National Park.	70%	88% of visitors to the NPCs were satisfied with the service.	
13. Increase the proportion of visitors to the free National Park Centre who opt to enter the paid museum attraction at Dales Countryside Museum from 11% in 2012 to 19% in 2018.	19%	19% increase in the proportion of visitors who opt to pay to enter the museum sections of DCM.	



achieved



on course



near miss



not achieved

## Home to the finest variety of wildlife in England

Objective	Expected Progress by Mar 2019	Actual Progress	Status
14. Support farmers and landowners to get 85% of the area covered by priority habitats into 'good condition' by 2016, and then maintain at least that level.	84%	At the end of 2016, 84% of priority habitats were in 'good condition'. Next survey is not until 2020.	≈
15. Work with parish councils, local communities and landowners to increase from 20 to 45 the number of sites being managed for nature by local community or volunteer groups by 2018.	45 sites	50 sites/projects are being managed through the Parish Wildlife project.	☑

## Resilient and responsive to the impacts of climate change, storing more carbon each year than it produces

Objective	Expected Progress by Mar 2019	Actual Progress	Status
16. Support farmers and landowners to create at least 400 hectares of new native woodland by 2020, to strengthen habitat networks, increase carbon storage and help to reduce flooding.	500 ha	A further 90 ha of new native woodland has been funded in 2018-19. Cumulative total area of new native woodland planting in last five years is 572 ha.	☑
17. Ensure that at least 66% of all woodland is in active management by 2018.	66%	Awaiting latest figure from Forestry Commission. The 2017/18 figure was 67%	☑
18. Make semi-natural habitats more resilient and adaptable to climate change and the risks from new pests and diseases by helping farmers and landowners to 'buffer' or link together key gaps between priority sites by 2018.	Complete habitat opportunities map	Habitat opportunities map completed. Tees-Swale Project now in development phase, prior to £8.5m bid to HLF for habitat network restoration programme.	☑



achieved



on course



near miss



not achieved

***Providing an outstanding range of benefits for the nation based on its natural resources, landscape and cultural heritage, which underpin a flourishing local economy***

Objective	Expected Progress by Mar 2019	Actual Progress	Status
19. Support construction of at least 75 affordable dwellings and 75 'local market' dwellings by 2018.	150 dwellings	Since 2013, planning permissions have been granted for 235 new affordable or 'local market' dwellings. However, the number completed over the same time period is only 115.	X
20. Use the Sustainable Development Fund, New Homes Bonus and other funding sources to support at least 20 new projects each year that bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the National Park.	20 local projects funded	SDF funding has allocated over £150,000 to 27 local projects through the year.	☑

***Home to strong, self-reliant and balanced communities with good access to the services they need***

Objective	Expected Progress by Mar 2019	Actual Progress	Status
21. Provide an efficient development management service, including ensuring that 65% of minor and 80% of 'other' planning applications are being determined within eight weeks and at least 80% of applicants are satisfied with the service.	65%/80% 80% of applicants	81% of minor applications and 91% of 'other' planning applications have been determined within time limits. Satisfaction survey carried every other year – n/a for this year end. Latest figure was 88%.	☑
22. Take on at least 6 apprentices in countryside management and heritage skills by 2019.	8 apprentices	A total of 12 apprentices have now been taken on (including a further 4 this year through YDMT's Green Futures programme and the Ingleborough Dales Landscape Partnership.	☑



achieved



on course



near miss



not achieved

23. Improve the quality, variety and marketing of the tourism 'offer' based on the local distinctiveness within the National Park to increase the number of overnight visitors and increase the value of tourism by 20% in real terms by 2020.	17% increase	Awaiting data for 2018/19. The 2017-18 figures showed an 18% increase in the value of tourism in real terms compared to 2020.	
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### ***An effective organisation, providing high quality services***

Objective	Expected progress by Mar 2019	Actual Progress	Status
24. Plan and manage all aspects of the National Park Authority's business to make the most effective use of our resources, and develop our capacity for income generation to maintain annual income at £6.8 million.	£7 million	The estimated (i.e. unaudited) income for 2018-19 is £7.8 million.	
25. Provide high quality, efficient and effective services and communications to the public and in doing so maintain the 'Customer Service Excellence' (CSE) standard every year.	CSE standard retained	CSE re-accreditation was achieved in September 2018.	
26. Operate corporate governance and financial arrangements that are fit for purpose, as evidenced through the Annual Governance Statement, the Annual Governance Report and an unqualified audit opinion.	Unqualified audit opinion	External Auditor issued an unqualified audit opinion on the annual accounts for 2017/18. Internal Auditor's annual report concluded that our systems of internal control offer a high level of assurance.	
27. In partnership with key organisations, and in consultation with local communities, update the National Park Management Plan by 2018 to take into account the needs and opportunities of the extended National Park.	New NPMP adopted	A new set of objectives was adopted formally by the Authority in September, and the final Plan was launched at the NPMP Annual Forum in December.	
28. Ensure a robust and transparent Performance Management Framework is in place and is driving improvement, so that at least 75% of the National Park Authority's objectives are achieved or remain 'on course' each year.	75%	82% of the objectives have been achieved or are 'on-course' to be achieved.	



achieved



on course



near miss



not achieved