

**Date:** 15 December 2020

**Report:** APPOINTMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO THE NATIONAL PARK  
MANAGEMENT PLAN (NPMP) STEERING GROUP

### **Purpose of the report**

1. To seek Members' approval to add two places to the National Park Management Plan Steering Group in order to represent the views of younger people who live, work and use the national park.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

2. That Members support the extension of the membership of the NPMP Steering Group with the addition of two people to represent those young people who live, work and use the national park. To authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair, to seek and appoint representatives.

### **Strategic Planning Framework**

3. The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework:
  - ***National Park Management Plan objectives***  
F2: Undertake a five-year programme of measures to promote the National Park as a place to live for younger working age households to help halt the decline in their number.

### **Background**

4. **Attached** is a report that was considered at a recent meeting of the National Park Management Plan [NPMP] Steering Group.
5. Members can see from the report that it attempts to address an issue which faces many organisations that often gets little traction either through a lack of political will or an inability to successfully demonstrate how younger members of the community can play a positive role in the development of the area and of their futures.
6. It follows on from the Authority's adoption of the Europarc Youth Manifesto in December 2018. Some Members may recall that one aspect of that Manifesto highlighted the lack of opportunities and under representation on decision making

boards and sought to create an active role for young people as future community leaders.

### **NPMP Steering Group consideration**

7. The paper was enthusiastically received by members of the Steering Group who highlighted the value that such a move might bring to their decision making.
8. There were questions on being clear about the role and purpose of these 'representatives' and an initial discussion about where such representatives might be sourced. Critically one aspect of this proposal is that any such appointees will have equal rights and status as any other appointee.
9. David Sharrod, the Director of the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust [YDMT] was elected as Chair of the Steering Group with Neil Heseltine as Deputy Chair. There is considerable experience already amongst these two and indeed other members of the group which should enable us to find appropriate individuals to take up these roles.
10. These are all relevant practical considerations but there is little point in addressing them unless the national park authority is supportive of this initiative.

### **Financial implications**

11. There is a small financial consideration in that any attendance, travel and subsistence costs incurred by the appointees will be met by the Authority.

### **Legal implications**

12. There are no legal implications. Unlike the membership of the national park authority, which is set out on statute and Government regulations, the membership of the Steering group is a matter for the Authority.

### **Equalities implications**

13. The extension of the Membership of the Steering Group aims to advance equality of opportunity for younger people who live, work and use the Park.

### **Conclusion**

14. The issue of greater representation from younger people on public bodies remains a difficult one. This initiative is an attempt to try to address that matter by appointments to a body that has been specifically established to develop and deliver the National Park Management Plan.

**David Butterworth**  
**Chief Executive**

26 November 2020

Background documents:  
Europarc Youth Manifesto

## **ITEM 8 – NPMP STEERING GROUP: YOUNGER VOICES**

### **Purpose of report**

1. To seek the views of the Steering Group and agree, in principle, to the creation of two places on the Group to 'represent' the views of younger people who live, work and use the National Park.

### **Background**

2. It cannot escape notice, and increasingly won't, that many public organisations, including this one, lack diversity in terms of membership. There is a strong public debate about diversity and we can and should try to play our own part in addressing this in a way that ultimately will enable us to make better, more inclusive decisions.
3. Being more inclusive is something that needs to be reflected in a variety of activities and ways – from the priorities we set, the images and messages we use to convey, and the policies we adopt. It is certainly not restricted to issues of governance but making sure we hear other voices as part of our decision-making processes is an important catalyst.
4. In order to ensure that we genuinely extend and strengthen the breadth of experience and skills available to the Steering Group, and to its wider work, we need to introduce some new, more diverse voices to our discussions. This would support good governance and broaden the perspectives involved in debates about key issues, thereby helping better, more inclusive decisions to be made.

### **Consideration**

5. This paper outlines an approach to address the issue but given that the Membership of the Steering Group is a matter for the National Park authority we need to establish if there is a willingness to introduce such new voices.
6. This is a long journey. The current opportunities for younger people in terms of being consulted and taking part in activities can provide a valid and valuable introduction for a first connection to the National Park, but longer-term sustainability through a sense of "making a difference" could be significantly enhanced by a real involvement in decision making that affects all our futures but particularly those of younger people.
7. The ambition behind this initiative would be for younger people (16-30) not only to significantly have an impact as well as a voice in shaping their community, but also to have a greater chance of retaining their enthusiasm and commitment for a sustainable future in which they feel pride of shared ownership.
8. If any move towards greater diversity is to be effective and is to avoid tokenism it may be helpful to set out some principles for how such an initiative might be framed.

## **Principles**

These could be:

- a) More than one new voice should be introduced and these people must have access to all of the support, information and meetings available to members of the Steering Group;
- b) These new individuals must be given real responsibility for particular areas of work or initiatives;
- c) They must have an equal voice to the others around the table and must participate in the full range of meetings and activities attended by the other members of the Steering Group.
- d) Any individuals undertaking such a role should be remunerated in the same way as other members of the Steering Group.

## **Representation**

9. There may be an issue with an initiative of this sort in finding the authentic voice that can truly 'represent' the voice of younger people. Indeed these kinds of issues are sometimes used as barriers to stop such ideas progressing. In the same way that many current members of the Steering Group could not always claim to represent or speak for the sector they represent, this shouldn't be seen as a barrier to progress. There are a range of youth Forums, youth groups, youth bodies that operate in and around the Park so there should be options to deal with the matter. It is always within the gift of the Steering Group to tweak these proposals if they feel adjustments are necessary.

## **Recommendation**

10. The Steering Group consider the proposal and if supportive, recommend to the National Park Authority that two additional places on the Steering Group are created to take forward this initiative.

**Neil Heseltine**