

BUSINESS PLAN 2015-2018

Draft 2016-17 Work Programme – Third Quarter

Achieving Excellence

We will provide quality services and effective use of resources in championing the purposes of the National Park.

Whilst high standards are maintained in all service areas, the 2016-17 work programme focuses on specific areas of work which will be developed and progressed during the year.

Achieving Excellence Priority 1: Providing the highest quality of service

We will provide efficient and effective support services for our work, by:

- recruiting high-calibre staff and providing opportunities for development within a flexible, healthy and safe work environment
- delivering high standards of customer service at all levels, internally and externally
- providing quality support to the planning service by ensuring the timely validation and processing of applications
- ensuring sound decision-making and accountability through high standards of corporate governance with clear, transparent and consistent policies and procedures.

Action/Outcome	Officer	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Consolidate and bed down the new records management system and review the Authority's retention schedule to suit the updated corporate file structure.	David Stone	Work is continuing on building a new intranet on SharePoint 2013. Once this is in place we will migrate documents from the old intranet and ultimately move all documents currently on team drives to SharePoint. Work has also commenced on a data audit which would include a review of the Authority's document retention schedule.		
Prepare medium-term strategic plans for key areas of work and identify how the Authority and its partnerships can work together to achieve them.	Alison Barnes/ELT	Key actions to progress the four agreed strategic themes (commercial activity, partnerships and engagement, evidence and data and organisational development) are being included in the 2017-18 work programme.		

Achieving Excellence Priority 2: Working with others in achieving maximum benefits for the National Park

We will maintain and develop links with partners, stakeholders, communities and parishes, by:

- regular engagement, joint working and effective communication with communities in promoting the National Park and our purposes
- supporting the New Forest Consultative Panel, New Forest Access Forum and other relevant New Forest forums
- engaging with parish councils by facilitating quarterly parish quadrant meetings
- promoting increased public engagement with and awareness of our work through our communication channels
- sustaining and developing shared service provision with other service providers.

Action/Outcome	Officer	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
<p>Provide expert specialist advice through shared services with New Forest District Council (building design and conservation, ecology and trees and archaeology) and the Forestry Commission (archaeology).</p>	<p>Ian Barker/Nik Gruber/ Warren Lever/ Frank Green</p>	<p><u>Archaeology:</u> The Archaeological advisory Service to the New Forest District Council is working well and on average involves about 3-4 hours office work a week and in additional site visits. The results from some recent archaeological excavations on the edge of Lymington and elsewhere will inform the development of new displays in St Barbe Museum during its current re-development program.</p> <p><u>Building Design and Conservation:</u> The Building Design & Conservation Team continues to deliver the shared service with New Forest District Council (NFDC) in accordance with the terms of the SLA. A six-monthly review meeting was held with NFDC in November 2016 which covered the volume of work undertaken by the team and the IT support services. This will be discussed in more detail at a further meeting in January 2016.</p> <p><u>Trees:</u> The team continues to provide expert advice and support on arboricultural matters meeting the requisite deadlines for consultations on planning applications and the determination of tree work applications. For the period between October to December 2016: One hundred and sixty Tree Work applications received with 100% decisions issued within 8 weeks Five Tree Preservation Orders were made where it was considered that premature removal or extensive pruning of the trees would result in the loss of an amenity to the local environment. Eighty six responses on Development Control consultations</p> <p><u>Ecology:</u> One day a week service continues to be provided through Ecologist post with requests occasionally requiring greater input in any one week due to the increasing scale of demands. Response times have been satisfactory throughout the period and nearly 60 requests for input were received. Review of the SLA with interested parties is anticipated in spring 2017 to check whether the SLA has been formally agreed and identify opportunities for future renewal as we are now halfway through the SLA period.</p>	<p></p>	<p></p>

Action/Outcome	Officer	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Help New Forest forums develop improved ways of working including supporting partners in the delivery of the Partnership Plan and Our Past, Our Future (OPOF) Landscape Partnership Scheme and assisting the New Forest Consultative Panel to enhance participation by Panel members and agree more streamlined and focused agenda setting.	ELT/David Stone	<p>The agenda setting group of the New Forest Consultative Panel, comprising the Chairman of the Panel, NPA Chief Executive and Deputy Surveyor met in December and agreed Panel agenda items for the year ahead which included the Defra 25 Year Plan, the Forest Design Plan, Recreation Management Strategy, the Green Halo, the Authority's Local Plan and Wetland Restoration.</p> <p>The OPOF Board met in November, agreeing the submission of the quarterly progress report to the Heritage Lottery Fund.</p> <p>Work continued with the New Forest Trust to examine ways of delivering the Love the Forest Visitor Giving Scheme.</p>		
Work with our partners to explore cost effective opportunities for joint training and development which would support partnership delivery.	ELT/HR	<p>Skills training continues to be provided through the OPOF programme – open to partners and relevant individuals. This included a course for Professionals on working with historic joinery and metal and a traditional building skills course for homeowners. Six Rural skills courses included Felling and Processing Small Trees, Sheep Breeding, Hedgerow Management, Woodland Management, Welding and Cross compliance regulations. In total 62 people attended these courses.</p> <p>The NFNPA also hosted the UK National Parks Trees, Woodlands and Landscape Officers Group annual training event.</p>		

Achieving Excellence Priority 3: Using available resources effectively and efficiently

We will regularly review and evaluate corporate support services and continually improve our ways of working, by:

- providing reliable, cost effective IT services and robust systems that enhance and support our work
- procuring cost-effective resources that are sourced sustainably and responsibly
- providing comprehensive high quality responses to requests for information and enquiries on our work.
- ensuring we maintain robust financial reporting and procurement processes.

Action/Outcome	Officer	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Explore and review options for procuring strategic ICT advice and support.	Steve Avery	Informal meetings have been held with the new ICT Manager at New Forest District Council. In the meantime, the in-house IT support has been performing very well.		
Work on consolidating and improving our ICT service and setting up mechanisms for approving and implementing non standard hardware and software to make the most effective use of new technology whilst ensuring the integrity of the Authority's IT systems. Finalise the review and approval of the ICT Acceptable Use Policy.	David Stone/Ann Wood	<p>The ICT audit report has now been received and was very favourable. The auditor felt that a great deal of progress had been achieved both with regards to the completion of recommendations from the previous audit and also regarding the evolution of the team itself.</p> <p>We are currently out to tender for replacement PCs and as part of this project are continuing extensive testing of Windows 10. Team members have been heavily involved in the development and preparation work for SharePoint 13, and we plan to see the new Warbler go live in February. A number of other team members are now involved in helping ensure this project meets the proposed deadline.</p> <p>Following consultation with both staff and the Unions the ICT policy has now been adopted. A main amendment was the introduction of a change management procedure which will aid the ICT team in ensuring the integrity of the Authority's IT systems when introducing new hardware and software.</p>		

Action/Outcome	Officer	Progress during the Quarter	RAG status	Risks and mitigation (if amber or red)
Deliver our Corporate Sustainability Plan, reducing the environmental impact of waste, energy use and transport related carbon emissions. CC4	Andy Brennan	New driving at work policy drafted merging previous pool car policy.		
Diversify our income streams by nurturing commercial acumen amongst staff, seeking external funding and developing new income generation projects.	Mark Holroyd	Agreement reached with New Forest Trust around the future development of the visitor giving scheme. A small-scale pilot approach to National Park merchandise being developed with retail partners (e.g. New Forest Centre, Cycle Hire centres, Beaulieu, Travel Concierge). National Parks Partnerships is close to securing its first UK-level sponsorship deal.		
Demonstrate how the Authority will use the new Functionally Specific Power of Competence to generate entrepreneurial and other opportunities which promote and support our purposes and duty.	Alison Barnes/ ELT	The functional power of competence has effectively been used in the creation of National Parks Partnerships LLP of which the Authority owns 1/15th . We're working with colleagues in other NPAs across England to determine which legal structure is the best way to take forward commercial activities in the future. We intend to prepare a briefing for members and managers with options in the coming quarters.		