

RAPC 459/21

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

RESOURCES, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE – 7 JUNE 2021

STRATEGIC PLANNING REPORT

Report by: Steve Avery, Executive Director Strategy & Planning and Nigel Stone, Head of Resources

1 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Resources, Audit and Performance Committee members with brief updates on progress and the timings of further development on the following strategic plans:

- Partnership Plan
- Business Plan
- People Plan
- New Forest Voices – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

2 Partnership Plan

2.1 As discussed at the Authority meeting on 29 April, a draft 'Partnership Plan 2021-2026' document has been prepared for consultation following input and comments received from staff, members and partner organisations. The Plan will be flexible to changing circumstances and priorities and supported / monitored through an annual Work Programme.

2.2 The public consultation on the draft Plan is scheduled for the end of June and would run through July and August. Following careful consideration of all the comments received by officers and partners, it is anticipated a final draft will be reported to the Authority meeting in October. At the same time, we also expect to finalise the arrangements for the new Partnership Board.

2.3 A full evaluation report on the performance and outcomes of the 2015-2020 Partnership Plan is also currently being prepared for publication. Of the 90 actions within that document, some 80% will have either achieved or exceeded their original targets.

3 Business Plan

3.1 The Authority's Business Plan 2018-2021 is also coming to its conclusion and an updated version will be drafted in Autumn following the public feedback from the Partnership Plan consultation.

- 3.2 The Business Plan is likely to cover the three years from 2022-2025. Staff and members will be fully engaged throughout the drafting processes, with a final version expected to go for approval by members prior to the start of the 2022/23 financial year in April.
- 3.3 Alongside the new Business Plan, we will again create an evaluation report on the performance and outcomes of the current 2018-2021 Plan; although much of this information already exists in our Annual Reports which are published each summer following the end of a financial year.

4 People Plan

- 4.1 Our original People Plan was drafted with staff and member input throughout 2018 and was officially launched in early 2019. The focus areas for 2021/22 have been identified as:
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI, see New Forest Voices below)
 - Leadership of the Climate and Nature Emergency
 - Updated ways of working during/post-covid
- 4.2 The first key step this year was to undertake our biennial staff survey which has just been sent around to all staff in May. Once all responses are received (approx. mid-June), they will be collated and reviewed by the Strategic Leadership Team. An update will be provided to members through the bulletin and a full paper will be brought to the September Committee meeting.
- 4.3 The Strategic Leadership Team held an away-day on 14 May to map out the success factors, potential challenges and resources required in our leadership of the Climate and Nature Emergency. A 'Managers Network' has also been recently established amongst all the line managers within the organisation to provide close structure, direction, support and communication lines at all levels.
- 4.4 Throughout the next year, many of our HR/H&S policies and procedures will need to be formally reviewed in light of the changing ways of working – use of the office, home-working, safeguarding etc.
- 4.5 In early 2022 we will perform a full review of the Plan, at its third anniversary, and suggest any updates that may be required for its continued success.

5 New Forest Voices

- 5.1 'New Forest Voices' is the moniker of our programme for improved equality, diversity and inclusion both within our organisation and for the Forest more widely i.e. its resident communities and visitors.

The draft programme has been split over three main headings:

- **Understanding** - Increased levels of understanding, awareness, trust, enabling stronger working relationships
- **Experiences** - Enabling new experiences in and around the National Park for diverse audiences
- **Ways of Working** - hearing from a wide range of voices and embedding EDI into our culture.

- 5.2 During March-May a number of staff focus groups have been held, which were akin to the member session we did prior. These sessions were to introduce staff to the concepts within the draft Action Plan and to encourage their future participation within those actions – it was all very well received.

- 5.3 Work has already begun in many areas to identify new and existing networks with which we can connect, to consider the current experiences of under-represented groups and how our own policies/procedures/communications need to adapt to avoid any, even unintended, inequity. We will also need to undertake some formal EDI training with staff and members too – likely to be the latter part of 2021 or early 2022.

6 Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the report.

Papers:

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