

RAPC 461/21

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

RESOURCES, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING – 6 SEPTEMBER 2021

FIRST QUARTER PROGRESS REPORT 2021/22

Report by: David Stone, Corporate Services Manager and Nigel Stone, Head of Resources

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present first quarter (Apr-June) progress against the 2021/22 objectives from the 2018-2021 Business Plan.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Authority has produced a Business Plan for the period 2018-2021 which details the main activity of the Authority during that time and, more specifically, further detail on outcomes for the current year. The Business Plan sets out how we will deliver the Authority's two purposes and duty during these timeframes.
- 2.2 The Authority's Business Plan objectives/outcomes are derived from the Partnership Plan for the New Forest, the current version of which was approved by the Authority in June 2015 and ratified by all the other partner organisations involved; a consultation is currently underway for the updated Partnership Plan for the period 2021-26.
- 2.3 This report comprises the first quarter update on progress against the actions in 2021/22 Work Programme, that being this year's annual programme of work under the current Business Plan.
- 2.4 Members will recall the format whereby 'business as usual' items have been removed from the tables, leaving a smaller number of clearly defined and concise actions to be monitored during the year. Progress against these actions is measured by referring to the RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status under the quarterly column. A further column of RAG status' confirms whether the complete objectives are still expected to be achieved by the end of the financial year. An amber or red status for the quarter or year has been addressed through an 'action to regain' column aimed at mitigation or corrective action to bring the status back to green.

- 2.5 The Authority also highlighted key areas of the Authority's work under the seven strategic themes set out in the Business Plan:

Data and evidence
The future of land management
Working beyond our boundaries
People and the National Park
Developing partnerships
Future generations
People Plan

For the current year these themes have been incorporated into the actions and objectives within the programme and are therefore not reported on separately.

3. Progress Reporting

- 3.1 Under the format agreed by the Authority in 2019/20, the Work Programme does not include a column for officers to provide a progress narrative against each of the actions shown as 'green'; however, these narratives will still be available through the Chief Executive's reports which provide a more flexible, detailed and up-to-date account of what been done.
- 3.2 Members of the Committee can of course question officers in first instance at the meeting, however should they wish to receive further detailed information or clarifications on a specific issue(s) whilst at the meeting, please contact David Stone or an appropriate member of the Executive Leadership Team beforehand and they will endeavour to bring such responses along with them.

4. Performance Indicators

- 4.1 This report also contains the performance indicators for the current year:
- 4.1.1 All national parks in England provide annual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) under the joint 'Monitoring Environmental Outcomes in Protected Landscapes' (MEOPL) programme which is coordinated by the Yorkshire Dales National Park. This consists of a standardised list of KPIs for conservation, cultural heritage, recreation management, promoting understanding and development management. These are shown on pages 7-9.

4.1.2 In additional to this standardised set of 'national' statistics, individual National Park Authorities are encouraged to set/monitor further indicators which are derived according to local needs and preferences. Some such indicators appear in our 'State of the Park' and Budgetary reports, with the remainder defined as 'local' indicators as set out on pages 10–11 of this reporting.

4.2 Members recently requested that officers review the local indicators to ensure the existing coverage is still appropriate and consider any potential additional indicators using available data. Furthermore, for both the national and local indicators, to ensure that all the data is presented in the most suitable/useful format(s) e.g. to allow clear identification of context and trends.

4.2.1 Officers, led by Holger Schiller, have begun these reviews and have already refined some indicators/data for the coverage in this Q1 report. The changes to date have largely focussed on presentation and context, further consideration will be given to additional coverage following a comprehensive review of available data and alongside the development of the new Business Plan later this year.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the contents of the report and following discussion, agree any necessary management action.

Papers:

RAPC 461/21	Cover paper
RAPC 461/21 Annex 1:	Q1 Work Programme Progress Report 2021/22

Contact:

David Stone
Corporate Services Manager
Tel: 01590 646645
Email: david.stone@newforestnpa.gov.uk

Equality and Diversity Implications:

A number of the work programmes and indicators are directly focussed around improving equality and diversity, for example, our work with the New Forest Voices project, all-ability cycling and by monitoring attendance of under-represented groups at our events.



Q1 Progress Report 2021/22

OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The National Park Authority was established in April 2005 and took on its full statutory powers and responsibilities in April 2006. The Authority will champion the New Forest National Park, working in partnership through co-ordinated and innovative policies and actions, focusing on achieving the two National Park purposes to:

- conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park;
- promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

National Park Authorities also have a duty, in taking the purposes forward, to:

- seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.

2021/22 Objectives

We will work towards achieving the Vision for the Park through our strategic themes and four main programmes of work that reflect the National Park purposes and duty. These programmes and their outcomes, set out below, will provide the focus for all our future work and will ensure that there are clear and common goals across the organisation.

- **Protect**

We will help to improve the large-scale landscapes and habitats that are characteristic of the New Forest.

- **Enjoy**

We will work to champion the National Park as a place of inspiration, where everyone is able to enjoy, understand and value its special qualities.

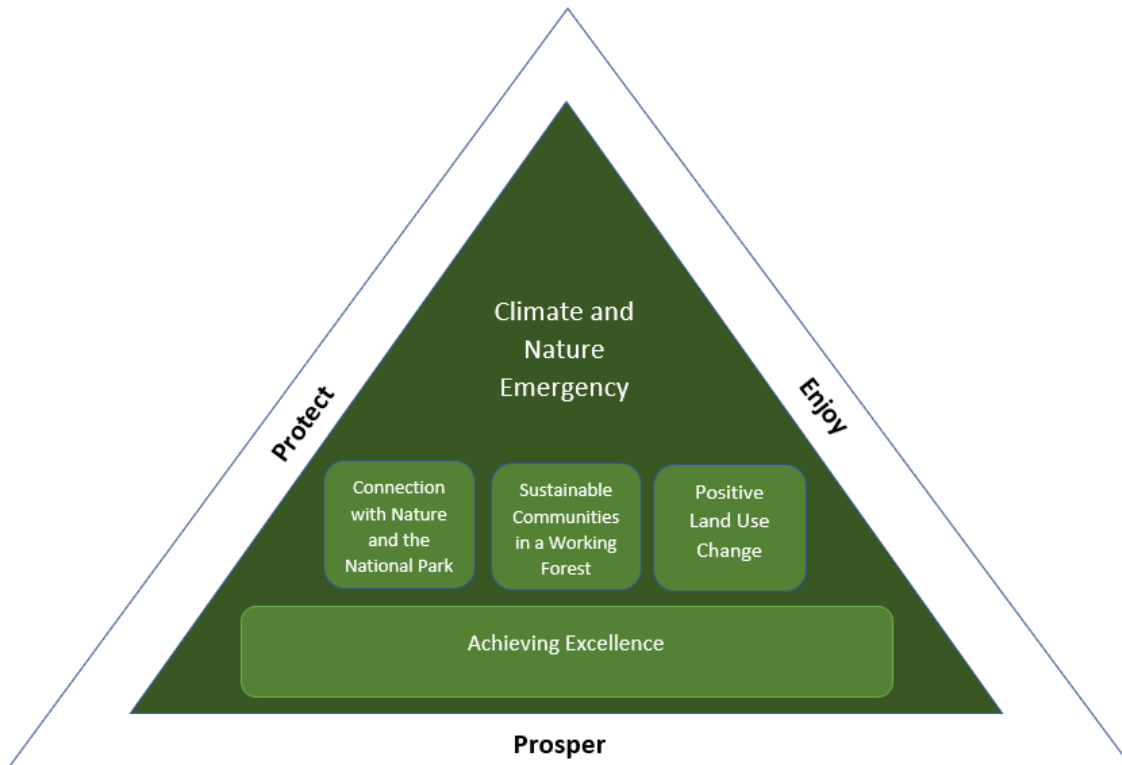
- **Prosper**

We will work to support a way of life in the National Park that continues to centre around strong and distinctive communities with a clear cultural identity and a vibrant local economy.

- **Achieving Excellence**

We will work to champion the highest quality of service for local people and visitors and work closely with organisations and communities in championing the National Park.

Following a full review of priorities for this final year of our current Business Plan, the structure of the 2021/22 Work Programme was changed as shown in the diagram below:



The core headings, within the green part of the diagram, more closely align our objectives/actions with the Strategic Themes and to the section headings from the Glover Review.

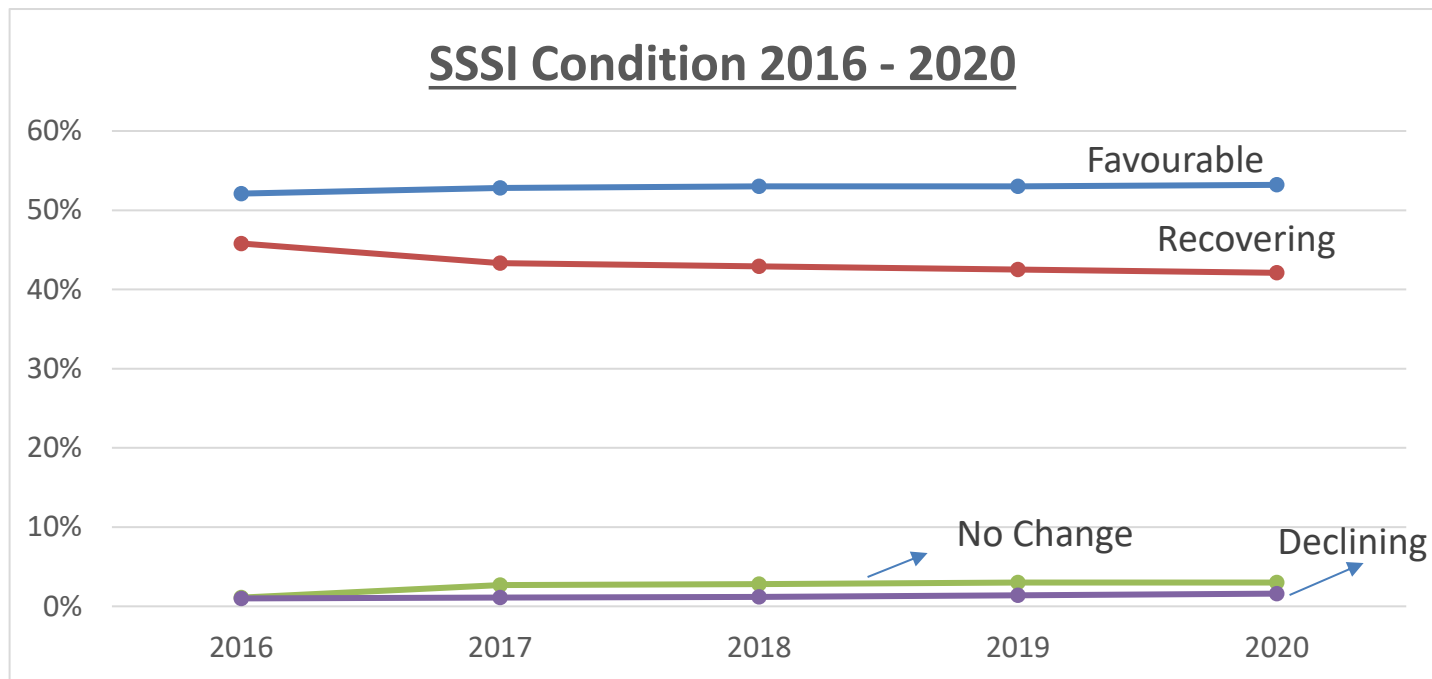
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

National Indicators

YE Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	YE	DoT	Comment
-----------	----	----	----	----	-----	---------

Conservation of the Natural Environment

Area of SSSI land in the National Park	32,190ha	Context Data
Area of SSSI land in NPA Management	None	Context Data



National Indicators

YE Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	YE	DoT	Comment
-----------	----	----	----	----	-----	---------

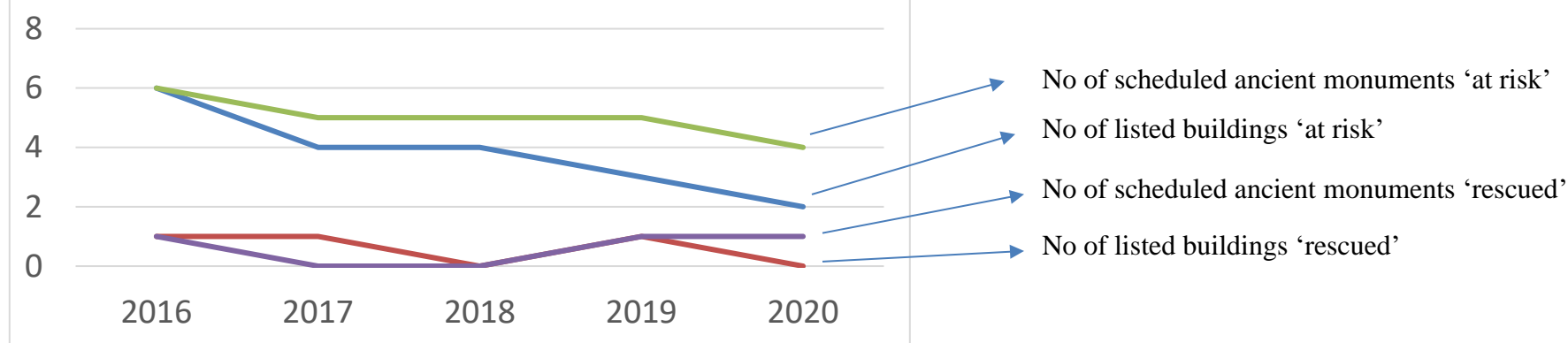
Conservation of the Natural Environment (cont)

Total length of regularly monitored water courses	271km					Context Data
% length of regularly monitored water courses with 'high' or 'good' ecological status	22%	n/a				Collected annually – unchanged since 2016
% length of regularly monitored water courses with 'moderate' ecological status	78%	n/a				Collected annually – unchanged since 2016

Conservation of the Cultural Heritage

No. of Conservation Areas	20					Context Data
No. of Listed Buildings	626					Context Data
No. of Scheduled Ancient Monuments	186					Context Data

Number of Heritage Assets at Risk and Number Rescued



National Indicators

YE Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	YE	DoT	Comment
-----------	----	----	----	----	-----	---------

Recreation Management

Total length of footpaths and other rights of way	326km				Context Data
% of total length of footpaths and other rights of way, that were easy to use by members of the public	>75%	n/a			Collected annually. Last 5 years = risen from 60% to 75%.
Estimated total number of visitors to the National Park (STEAM survey data)	4.3m (2019)				Risen by c4% in last 5 years
Total No. of volunteer days organised or supported by the NPA	100	n/a			Collected annually
% of those days attended by under-represented groups (under 25's, minority ethnic groups and those with a long-term limiting illness or disability)	2%	n/a			Collected annually

Promoting Understanding

One paragraph (150 words) at year-end on what has been achieved within promoting understanding and with the under-represented groups
--

Development Management

No. of planning applications received to date	249					30% higher than last 2 years
% of planning applications by type dealt with in a timely manner:						
Major applications determined within 13 weeks	60%	100%				↑ Target aligned nationally
Minor applications determined within 8 weeks	65%	88%				↑ Target aligned nationally
Other applications determined within 8 weeks	80%	91%				↑ Target aligned nationally
% of planning applications approved	85%	90%				↑ Target aligned nationally
Additional time for those missing deadlines	28 days	69 days				↓ Skewed by 2 difficult cases

Local Indicators	YE Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	YE	DoT	Comment
Protect							
Number of planning decisions delegated to officers as a % of all decisions	90%	88%				↔	Target set locally
Appeals allowed against refusal of planning permission by the Authority (% of appeals)	35%	22%				↑	2 of 9 appeals allowed - 1 against officer recommendation
% of enforcement cases dealt with in a timely manner:							
acknowledge complaints within 3 working days	90%	96%				↑	Target aligned nationally
carry out initial investigation within 15 working days	90%	90%				↑	Target aligned nationally
check compliance with enforcement notices within 5 working days of the expiry of the compliance period	100%	100%				↑	Target aligned nationally
initiate action for non-compliance with an enforcement notice within 15 working days	100%	100%				↑	Target aligned nationally
Enjoy							
Combined social media audience	115,000	111,386				↑	Local target of 6% increase
Average weekly total of New Forest Tour passengers	75% of 2019	Currently c88% of 2019 figures				↑	Target set locally
Number of promoting understanding face-to-face contacts (education, events, rangers, talks, training)	8,000	1,858				↔	Target still lower this year due to C19 impacts
Prosper							
External / Partner funding committed to projects supported by the Authority	£1.0m	£0.88m				↑	Target doubled from 2020/21

Local Indicators	YE Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	YE	DoT	Comment
Achieving Excellence							
Information requests processed within statutory deadline	100%	100%				↑	24 out of 24 (total of 74 in 2020/21)
Complaints processed within 20 working days	100%	100%				↑	2 out of 2 (total of 21 in 2020/21)
Member participation in attending Authority & Committees	82%	88%				↑	
Undisputed invoices paid within 30 days	98%	97%				↔	191 out of 196
No of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE	9	n/a					Collected annually – target is public sector average
No of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE, not including long-term sickness absence	6	n/a					Collected annually – target is public sector average
% CO ₂ reduction from National Park Authority operations per FTE	-3%	n/a					Collected annually. Further sustainability targets will be established in Authority's Carbon Reduction Plan due in November.