

RAPC 471/22

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

RESOURCES, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE – 7 FEBRUARY 2022

NEW FOREST TRUST MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Report by: Hilary Makin, Communications Manager

Summary:

The New Forest National Park Authority (NPA) has been running the Love the Forest Visitor Giving Scheme (the scheme) in partnership with the New Forest Trust (the Trust) since October 2017. A Memorandum of Understanding provides a framework for delivery of the scheme. It is proposed to extend this agreement for a further four years and expand the scheme to deliver substantial benefits across the New Forest National Park.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The NPA took over the running of the Love the Forest visitor giving scheme in October 2017 and has since worked closely with the Trust to develop and promote the scheme. The scheme raises funds from visitors to support the protection and improvement of the New Forest's unique landscape, flora and fauna and traditional way of life, and in so doing helps deliver the aims of the Trust and purposes of the NPA.
- 1.2. Over the term of this MoU the Parties will work together to fundraise to support the New Forest National Park's Partnership Plan projects and statutory purposes, in line with and to the extent that this furthers the Trust's charitable objects. Funds raised through the Scheme may also be used to provide grants to individuals or organisations where these further the NFNPA's statutory purposes and the Trust's charitable aims.
- 1.3. An existing MOU provides a framework for delivery of the scheme. This agreement was extended for two years in 2019 and is now due for renewal.
- 1.4. The existing MOU will be revised to expand the existing scheme to deliver substantial benefits across the New Forest National Park. Expanding the scheme will provide opportunities for the NPA and the Trust to work in partnership on other aspects of charitable giving. This may include grants, corporate sponsorship, crowdfunding, community fundraising, major donors, legacies, and fundraising events. Funds will be used to support the New Forest National Park's Partnership Plan projects and in line with the Trust's charitable objects.
- 1.5. Any fundraising campaigns or joint grant applications would be resourced by the NPA in addition to any resources provided for the visitor giving scheme.
- 1.6. The current MOU provides for 25% of the total Love The Forest Scheme donations to be drawn down by the NFNPA as payment towards the costs and resources of administering the scheme.

1.7. The revised MOU will continue until 31 March 2026.

2. Risks

2.1 Members may need to be aware that there could on occasion be a reputational risk from working with the New Forest Trust and there may be a possibility of a conflict of interest with some of the Trust's activities which could require planning permission, for example. Reviewing the MOU will provide an opportunity to consider and set out more clearly how we mitigate these risks, such as joint approval of media releases and officers being excluded from any discussions on New Forest Trust planning and related issues.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members approve the principle of continuing to work with the New Forest Trust on the Love the Forest Visitor Giving Scheme and expanding the relationship, and that authority be delegated to officers to negotiate and enter into a memorandum of understanding with the New Forest Trust and to take all other action as necessary to give effect to this arrangement.

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Previous papers: **NFNPA RAPC 409-19 Love the Forest Visitor Giving Scheme – two year review**