

CABINET MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING, PROPERTY, WASTE AND STRATEGIC HOUSING – COUNCILLOR TOBY STURGIS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

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NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Purpose of Report

1. To consider and, subject to approval, endorse the updated New Forest National Park Management Plan.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The following key actions and outcomes in the Council's Business Plan are relevant to this report:

Outcome 1 Creating stronger and more resilient communities.

Outcome 2 People in Wiltshire work together to solve problems locally and participate in decisions that affect them.

Outcome 3 Everyone in Wiltshire lives in a high quality environment.

Key action 2 - Stimulate economic growth in areas such as tourism, and create additional jobs in partnership with the Local Enterprise Partnership

Main Considerations for the Council

3. Wiltshire Council is responsible for delivering key services in its segment of the New Forest National Park (around Redlynch and Landford), including roads, public rights of way and waste collection and disposal. The council is also involved at senior level in the partnership group which has produced the Management Plan update, made up of all nine statutory organisations in the National Park.
4. This Management Plan update (**Appendix 2**) is designed to be a supplement to the existing plan and focuses primarily on bringing the actions up-to-date, looking forward over the next five years. It also includes short chapters illustrating some of the projects completed over the last few years and the major changes or issues that have arisen since 2010.
5. The updated management plan has been consulted on widely, both informally (October – December 2014) and formally (May- June 2015). A brief presentation on the plan was made at the Southern Area Board meeting on 28 May 2015. This final text version of the document takes into account the consultation feedback.
6. The plan was approved by the New Forest National Park Authority on 16 July 2015 and it is hoped will be formally endorsed by all the main partner organisations between July and September, according to meeting cycles. Final design and publication will occur once the plan has been agreed by all parties, with a launch in the autumn.

Background

7. The New Forest National Park Management Plan was published in 2010 and contains the vision and objectives designed to guide the long-term management of the National Park. It also includes information about the New Forest and the main issues it faces, described under 10 different topics. These range from enhancing landscapes and habitats and conserving local distinctiveness, to supporting local communities and improving traffic and transport.
8. The Plan was agreed following extensive public consultation and the direct involvement of many New Forest organisations, communities and individuals, including Wiltshire Council. The majority of the Plan is still relevant and will not be changed; however, the priority actions covered the period 2010-15, so have now been updated to cover the period 2015-2020.
9. The update has been produced jointly by all the main statutory organisations involved in the National Park. They have suggested ideas for the text and proposed a number of actions which they are able to take forward during the period 2015-2020. This is a partnership document, showing how the collective work of all these organisations and interests can bring about benefits for the New Forest.
10. Wiltshire Council has been involved in the partnership group which has steered the production of the plan at a senior level from the outset. The council has also contributed many of the actions and advised on consultation.
11. In addition, the council has provided technical comments from officers at various stages and agreed the wording of actions on which it is leading. All councillors were notified of the consultations and invited to make comments.

Safeguarding Implications

12. Any safeguarding issues will be managed through the normal safeguarding policy and procedures.

Public Health Implications

13. The strategic objective 'Enjoying the National Park' and its associated actions EP 1 to EP 8 aims to encourage access and enjoyment of the New Forest National Park which will enhance health and wellbeing. Actions LC8 to LC10 encourage more healthy and sustainable lifestyles.

Corporate Procurement Implications

14. There are no corporate procurement implications arising from this report.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

15. More than half the New Forest National Park area is designated for its internationally important wildlife habitats, which include many rare or vulnerable species. The actions in the revised plan have therefore been assessed for impacts on sustainability (Sustainability Appraisal Report) and on the integrity of the protected sites of European importance for nature conservation (Habitats Regulations Screening Report). These reports are available on the New Forest National Park Authority [website](#).
16. Actions CC1 to CC6 of the Management Plan relate to planning for the likely impacts of a changing climate.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

17. A number of actions in the report seek to address access to services for those disadvantaged by their rural location (e.g. LC3 to LC5), and encourage younger people, older people and those with disabilities to become more involved.

Risk Assessment

18. The table below captures the risks, together with impacts and probability assessments and mitigation suggestions.

| Risk | Mitigation |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Failure to deliver proposed actions | Monitoring and reporting will ensure that actions remain on track. Should monitoring highlight that actions will not be delivered, strong partnership working and good communication will mitigate adverse effects. |
| Breakdown of partnership working | Regular communication, partners' experience of collaborative working and the utilisation of existing relationships will mitigate the breakdown of partnership working |
| Failure to leverage external funding | Wiltshire Council and partners have extensive experience of making funding applications to external organisations. |

19. As a key partner in the New Forest National Park, Wiltshire Council is expected to deliver on its commitments and there is therefore a reputational risk to the council should it not adopt this Management Plan.
20. The council has been fully involved in shaping the Management Plan and has only committed to actions which it can definitely deliver. However, there is a potential risk of additional resource being requested by partners and of the council failing to deliver actions due to budget pressures.

Financial Implications

21. There are no financial implications arising from this report as the cost of delivering actions can be covered through current budgets.

Legal Implications

22. There are no legal implications arising from this report. Relevant changes to national policy and legislation are highlighted in sections 4.1 to 4.9 of the Plan.

Options Considered

23. Cabinet could either endorse or not endorse the Management Plan. However, as a key partner, who has been involved in its development, the latter course of action carries reputational risks.

Reason for Proposal

24. The aims of the New Forest National Park Management Plan update align with the council's Business Plan. The document is designed to be a supplement to the existing plan and focuses primarily on bringing actions up-to-date, looking forward over the next five years. Wiltshire Council has contributed to this update as one of the main statutory organisations involved in the National Park and will be leading on the delivery of a number of actions.

Proposal

25. That Cabinet endorses the New Forest National Park management plan update as set out at **Appendix 2**.

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:

None