

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2022-2027

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That the Cabinet endorse the New Forest National Park Partnership Plan.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the final draft version of the New Forest National Park Partnership Plan 2022-2027, attached at Appendix 1. The Cabinet at its meeting in September 2021 considered a report Consultation on the draft Partnership Plan 2021-2026. The Cabinet confirmed support for the revised vision, objections and actions set out in the draft Plan.

2.2 The Partnership Plan is an overarching strategic document for the National Park and sets the framework for more detailed plans and strategies prepared by the National Park Authority and partner organisations.

2.3 The National Park Authority approved the plan on 24th March 2022 and has invited the main partner organisation to endorse the Partnership Plan. The National Park Authority intend to adopt the final version of the Partnership Plan in July 2022.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 All national parks are required by statute to have a management plan / partnership plan for their area, to help guide the work of those with responsibilities or an interest in the national park. The plans reflect the two statutory purposes that are the main reasons for their designation and describe the overall focus for their management. The two purposes are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the national park; and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.

3.2 In this Partnership Plan, it sets out a refreshed Vision for the New Forest National Park's future in the context of the climate crisis and green recovery and in response to the experiences of the pandemic. It renews the collective commitments to deliver the purposes for which the National Park was designated. This has been articulated into five themes, which will be the focus for the next five years. These are:-

- Nature Recovery – helping habitats to be more resilient, restored, expanded and connected
- Net Zero with Nature – cut land-based carbon emissions through securing and restoring natural habitats and enabling carbon capture
- Thriving Forest – supporting a living, working and culturally rich heritage
- An inclusive National Park – helping people of all socio-economic backgrounds to understand and value the New Forest
- Team New Forest – communities, businesses and organisations working together to deliver the vision of the plan.

- 3.3 The Plan contains actions to deliver the Plan priorities linked to the five themes.
- 3.4 This Partnership Plan has been prepared with input and support from the main statutory organisations who share responsibility for delivering the aims and objectives of the Plan as well other key stakeholders and organisations. Its scope was set by a widely advertised call for views at the New Forest Show in 2019, followed by a public 'snapshot' survey in 2020 with over 2,700 responses. The resulting draft Partnership Plan received responses and feedback from over 380 individuals and organisations as part of the public consultation in 2021.
- 3.5 A number of amendments have been made to the draft Plan in response to the consultation. This includes a work programme which lists the relevant actions for each of the five themes, how these link with the Plan's priorities, with relevant target dates and key measures of success identified. The various partner organisations involved for each action are also listed, as well as national legislation and policy that has a bearing on each of the actions. The Council is identified as being a key partner in developing and delivering a number of the actions.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Given the statutory duty on the Council to have regard to national park purposes in exercising its functions, as it is a main partner organisation and given its role in contributing to the delivery of a number of the identified actions in the Partnership Plan it is considered that the Plan should be endorsed, as requested.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The financial costs associated with the preparation and publication of the Plan are funded by the National Park Authority. There are therefore no direct financial resource implications for the Council as a result of its endorsement. However, officers take part in meetings of the management plan leadership group which contributed towards its joint preparation. A number of initiatives in the action plan are already underway. The on-going impact on resources both financial and in officer time, will be carefully monitored and prioritised against Corporate priorities.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Significant beneficial impact associated with the environmental actions within the Plan.

7. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None arising directly from this report.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no equities or diversity issue raising from the content of the Plan.

9. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

9.1 There is no “i” in Team. It’s an age-old motto that’s both grammatically correct and very much relevant in team situations in sport and business – therefore we are most effective when we work in collaboration, understanding our place in the system and bringing together ‘unusual friends’ with different perspectives. The Partnering and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder very much welcomes working with the Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure Portfolio Holder and partners to deliver the partnership plan.

For further information contact:

Claire Upton-Brown
Executive Head for Planning, Regeneration, and Economy
claire.upton-brown@NFDC.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Cabinet Report
September 2021

Partnership Plan 2021-
2026