

FUTURE FOREST RECREATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY PARTNERSHIP CONSULTATION

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Cabinet to note the content of the Findings Report and 'Next Steps' Report and confirm New Forest District Council's commitment to ongoing partnership working to help draft the new actions for the update to the Recreation Management Strategy 2010-2030.

2. CALL FOR VIEWS PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 2.1 In March 2017 the Forestry Commission, Verderers of the New Forest, Natural England, New Forest District Council and Hampshire County Council agreed that the National Park Authority (NPA) should lead a 'call for views' public consultation on a review of the New Forest National Park Recreation Management Strategy 2010-2030. These six organisations all have a remit for managing recreation in the National Park and have representatives on the Recreation Management Strategy Steering Group.
- 2.2 All the background information, consultation questions and publicity was prepared with the support of the RMS Steering Group organisations.
- 2.3 The online Future Forest consultation ran from 19 June to 13 August 2017 and attracted responses from 1,502 individuals and 52 organisations.
- 2.4 A new and updated suite of focused actions is needed so that, across the National Park and beyond, we can achieve a net gain for the working and natural landscape and for the recreational experience, by:
 - protecting the spectacular, yet fragile, wildlife-rich landscape that people come to see;
 - managing recreation for local people and our visitors.

We also need to use limited resources wisely.

- 2.5 All this can only be achieved by taking a wide geographical approach to recreation management, stretching from the central areas that have extensive public access and commoning, through the outer areas of the National Park where public access is more restricted (e.g. to rights of way and specific sites) and on into surrounding areas where many people live.

3 ANALYSIS OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 With advice from Hampshire County Council's Insight and Engagement Unit and in liaison with the RMS Steering Group, officers from all the partner organisations as

identified have analysed the responses and prepared two reports. These are a Findings Report (**Appendix 1**) and a 'Next Steps' Report (**Appendix 2**).

- 3.2 As the reports show, the consultation delivered a wealth of comments and suggestions, providing both a useful picture of the views about recreation management of those who participated and a useful first step in the engagement of the public and stakeholders in the development of the update to the 2010 strategy.
- 3.3 Both reports are for publication when the organisations on the Steering Group have noted their content and confirmed their commitment to ongoing partnership working.

4 DRAFTING THE UPDATE TO THE 2010 STRATEGY

- 4.1 The 'Next Steps' Report as identified in Appendix 2 summarises how the Steering Group believes the update to the 2010 Strategy could be progressed in partnership, and structured as a jointly owned plan. Drafting the new suite of actions will need careful liaison between key stakeholders.
- 4.2 It is anticipated that the proposed actions will be subject to public consultation during the summer of 2018.
- 4.3 When confirmed it is likely that, in the spirit of true partnership, there will be actions where the NPA should take the lead and others where it should assist.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no ongoing financial implications for the District Council at this stage.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The aim of the revised plan is to achieve a net gain for the working and natural landscape and for the recreational experience by:
 - protecting the spectacular, yet fragile, wildlife-rich landscape that people come to see;
 - managing recreation for local people and our visitors.

7. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None

9. PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS

- 9.1 I support the report and the recommendations contained within. We of course are prepared to be an active partner in this process and will consider our strategies for recreation once the Recreation Management Strategy update has been published.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That the Cabinet note the content of the Findings Report and 'Next Steps' Report and confirm New Forest District Council's commitment to ongoing partnership working to help draft the new actions for the update to the Recreation Management Strategy 2010-2030.

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Background Papers:

Attached