

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	12 October 2021
Title:	New Forest National Park Authority Management Plan
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

Contact name: James Potter

Tel: 03707790212

Email: james.potter@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this paper is to endorse the New Forest National Park Partnership Management Plan 2021-2026.

Recommendation

2. That the New Forest National Park Partnership Management Plan 2021-2026 be endorsed.

Executive Summary

3. This paper seeks to set out the background to the New Forest National Park Authority Partnership plan and the revised Partnership plan that the Park Authority is now seeking an endorsement of.

Contextual information

4. The New Forest National Park was established in 2005. The National Park Authority, as the planning authority and governing body for the National Park, has a statutory duty to publish three key documents:
 - A Management Plan - [New Forest National Park Authority Partnership Plan 2015-2020](#);
 - A Local Plan – [New Forest National Park Authority Local plan 2016 -2036](#);
 - A Minerals and Waste Plan [New Forest National Park Authority Minerals and Waste Plan](#) (prepared jointly with the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan and currently being reviewed.)
5. The first New Forest National Park Management Plan was published by the National Park Authority in 2010, reviewed and revised in 2015. Following extensive consultation, the National Park Authority has reviewed the 2015 document and proposes the [New Forest National Park Authority Partnership Plan 2021-2026](#) which it is now seeking endorsement from its partners.

6. The New Forest National Park Management Plan is an important document for the National Park Authority and its partners. It is referred to as a 'Partnership Management Plan', as although it is a statutory document of the National Park Authority, it is a plan for all the partners with an interest in the National Park. There is no requirement for the County Council to formally adopt the plan. The Management Plan will influence and direct all the policies that the National Park Authority and the Local Authorities have for the area of Hampshire covered by the National Park. For the County Council this will include its statutory responsibilities for Minerals and Waste planning (the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan is a joint document with the National Park Authority), planning for its own estate, and its highways and rights of way duties. It will also have a strong influence on the policy framework of the National Park Authority Local Plan and on District Local Plans outside the boundary of the National Park. The Management Plan is a material planning consideration in the land use planning system.
7. The revised Partnership Plan refreshes the Vision for the Forest's future and renews the commitment to the delivery of the National Park's two purposes and statutory duty, as follows:
 - **Purpose 1:** To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Parks;
 - **Purpose 2:** To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Parks.
 - **Duty:** In pursuing National Park purposes, the National Park Authorities must seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park.
8. The Partnership Plan is a call to action for individuals, communities, businesses, public bodies, voluntary sector and other organisations to work together to deliver the agreed.
9. The Partnership Plan sets out a Vision to secure the future of the National Park; outlines the key drivers and challenges facing the National Park and sets out how these should be addressed collectively. This will guide and align the resources and priorities of the National Park Authority and those of partner organisations, businesses and communities who are key to its delivery. It will also influence wider decisions and investment of all those who have a part to play in protecting this special landscape and will enable the support of communities in and around the New Forest.
10. The new Partnership Plan sets out five theme-based "agendas for Action" that have been identified to deliver the proposed Vision. Whilst these themes do not cover all the work of the National Park, they highlight the areas where collaborative work can achieve transformative change. These are intentionally ambitious and challenging and are intended to drive action and to target efforts to secure the funding and resources required. These themes are:
 - **Nature Recovery** – habitats are restored, expanded and maintained to enable wildlife to thrive, both within and around the National Park
 - **Net Zero with Nature** – significant cuts in land-based carbon emissions are secured through restoring natural habitats and carbon capture

- **Thriving Forest** – a living, working Forest is sustained through support for commoning, local produce, sustainable tourism, access to affordable homes and helping to attract high-value businesses and employees
 - **An inclusive National Park** – people within reach of the New Forest, of all backgrounds, abilities and socio-economic groups, value the National Park as an important part of their lives and seek to care for it
 - **Team New Forest** – communities, businesses and organisations work together as a team to deliver the vision of the Partnership Plan, sharing knowledge, ideas and resources to deliver the best for the Forest
11. The National Park Authority supported by the multi-agency Management Plan 'Leadership Group' on which the County Council is represented by the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment Department. The National Park Authority has liaised with key County Council officers during the drafting of the new Partnership Plan.
12. It is therefore suggested that the County Council should welcome the Management Plan and support the principles it seeks to establish. It is recognised that the challenge for the Management Plan has been to integrate the many different interests across the National Park into a single document and this has generally been achieved successfully.

Finance

13. There are no financial implications for the County Council. All activities relating to the delivery of the Partnership Management Plan will be as part of normal County Council planned and agreed business.

Performance

14. Measurement of performance in the delivery of the Management Plan will be the responsibility of the New Forest National Park Authority. The County Council may be asked to provide information on its activities to enable the National Park Authority to monitor performance of Management Plan delivery.
15. Supporting and enabling the delivery of this plan is in line with the four strategic outcomes, and will facilitate the delivery, of the County Council's own *Serving Hampshire Strategic Plan 2021-2025* as approved by Cabinet on 13 July 2021.

Consultation and Equalities

16. The New Forest National Park Authority has been conducting its own consultation on these proposals.

Climate Change Impact Assessments

17. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by

2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.

18. The carbon mitigation tool and/or climate change adaptation tool were not applicable because they cannot be applied to the Partnership plan. However, the aims and aspirations of the Plan are in line with the Council's Climate Change targets with one of the stated plan objectives being:

- **Net Zero with Nature Outcome: Significant cuts in land-based emissions through restoration of natural habitats and carbon sequestration to achieve net zero by 2050.**

Conclusions

19. Endorsing this Partnership Management plan and working with the New Forest National Park in its implementation is in line with, and will assist in the delivery of, the County Council's own Strategic objectives.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u> Serving Hampshire Strategic Plan 2021-2025	<u>Date</u> 13/07/2021
New Forest National Park Management Plan 2015 - 2020	15/09/2015
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u> The statutory duties are provided for in Section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (National Parks), Section 17A of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 (The Broads) and Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (AONBs). Specifically, they state that, “in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land” in these areas, relevant authorities “shall have regard” to their purposes.	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

[Management Plan 2010 - 2015 - New Forest National Park Authority](#)
(newforestnpa.gov.uk)

[About the Partnership Plan - New Forest National Park Authority](#)
(newforestnpa.gov.uk)

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

This is an external Partnership Plan to be adopted by the New Forest National Park Authority with a vision for the National Park to be a national beacon for a sustainable future, where nature and people flourish.