

# ITEM 14

## EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

6 JUNE 2006

### MEMBERS' REPORTS

**Purpose of Report:**

To receive updates and reports on meetings and events attended by Members as representatives of the National Park Authority.

#### COUNCIL FOR NATIONAL PARKS MEETING 16 MAY 2006 – Report From Arabella Amory

**A brief summary highlighting points of interest:**

1. Yorkshire Dales NPA is reducing its Planning Committee (a recommendation from the NPAPA report) from 26 to 15 Members. This was not only to streamline the process of DC and reduce costs but as a way of giving some Members more time to devote to other NPA matters. The decision was made after much debate which included discussions on how it could be achieved, how it will operate and crucially what the role of Members not on the Committee could be. They are looking at 'lead interest Members' who will work more closely with officers on certain topics and perhaps taking on more central roles with some partners.
2. The Broads Authority is promoting a Private Bill in Parliament, the main purpose of which is to give the Authority powers to improve safety for boating on the Broads and also to change the name of the area and the Authority to recognise its National Park status. Clause 4 of the Bill will have the affect of changing the name of the area to The Broads National Park. The Broads Authority already has status equivalent to a NP and is considered part of the National Park family. However, the Bill does not propose adopting the Sandford Principle, which, in the case of all National Parks in England, is that the first Purpose should prevail in cases of irreconcilable conflict. The feeling of CNP Council Members was that the National Park name should not be taken just as a marketing tool and that having the advantage of being a fully fledged member of the National Parks should include adopting the same responsibilities and principles for the environment. There were dangers it could devalue the high designation of NP status.
3. New Forest NPA are asking the public to identify unsightly power lines they would like to see removed. The Authority is working with Scottish Energy and Southern Energy to see which of the lines should have priority for being taken down and put underground, in a £1million four-year scheme. Friends of the Lake District reminded Council Members that each energy company has been given £5 million for undergrounding.
4. The CNP Strategic Review and Work Plan was considered very cautious. The financial challenges the organisation has faced for the last few years made this a necessity. Over the last 6 to 8 months staff and Trustees have taken the opportunity of the strategic plan review to take stock of CNP's position and to explore how the organisation might become more financially sustainable in the future. This involved a 'prioritising' exercise similar to that used by ENPA recently.
5. CNP gave an update on their Tackling Traffic research project. This is mainly to do with sustainable leisure transport within the National Parks. ENPA has been helping

with providing information. One of the recommendations in the final report is likely to include each NPA having a regularly updated and monitored Green Travel Plan for its own staff and Members. Another recommendation is for the establishment of a new annual, ring-fenced, Sustainable Transport Fund of £111,000 for each NPA which would be tied in part (but not subsumed by) the Sustainable Development Fund already operating. Feedback from NPAs has been favourable to this proposal and CNP intends to approach Defra and DfT.

*If anyone would like any further information on the above report, please contact Arabella Amory, Deputy Chairman of Exmoor National Park Authority.*

**ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE 15 MAY 2006 COUNTY HALL  
TAUNTON – Report from Alan Collins**

**1. Local Transport Plan 1 (01-06) Delivery Report**

- 1.1 The Somerset County Council has had to submit an LTP Annual Progress Report setting out its performance in delivering its LTP each financial year for the past five years.
- 1.2 This is now not required, instead a performance report covering the whole of the LTP period 01-06 is wanted.
- 1.3 Funding is affected by the assessment of this report. The adjustment to capital borrowing approval for 07/08-10/11 for an excellent report is + 12.5%. For an unsatisfactory report – 12.5%. Lose or gain £4.7m

**2. 2004-05 Performance Report**

- 2.1 Did not make good reading. Best Value performance indicators for the Environment Directorate fell below the 13 position when compared against the group of 16 ‘family’ members.

**3. Tourism Signing**

- 3.1 There was a view that it was easier to obtain tourism signs (white on brown signs) in Devon than in Somerset.
- 3.2 Proposed that a revised signing policy for Somerset be developed and taken to the Executive Board for approval.
- 3.3 As yet no consultations have taken place. Somerset County Council has relied on and adopted the D&T national consultation exercise in 2001.

*If anyone would like any further information on the above report, please contact Alan Collins, Chairman of the Resources Committee, Exmoor National Park Authority.*