

**EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY****23 APRIL 2002****PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIVE SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS AND PATRONAGE****Report of the Best Value Officer****Purpose of Report:**

To consider a response to a House of Commons Select Committee Inquiry into Public Appointments.

**Legal Implications including Human Rights Act 1998:**

s.63 and Schedule 7

No Human Rights Act 1998 Implications.

**Financial Implications:**

None

**National Park Purposes:**

The Secretary of State directly appoints some of the members of the Authority.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Members are asked to consider whether they wish to respond to any of the questions raised by the Select Committee.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee is carrying out an inquiry into appointments to public bodies. The National Park Authority is regarded as a Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) in this context. The Select Committee has posed a series of questions which indicate the main areas of discussion, and has set a deadline of 3 May to receive responses.

**2. THE ISSUES**

- \* 2.1 A copy of the letter, together with details of the main issues and the full list of 25 questions is attached at Appendix A.
- 2.2 The Secretary of State directly appoints 7 members of the National Park Authority so that the 'National Interest' is represented on the Authority. The Secretary of State also appoints 5 Parish Members, although in practice these parish appointments reflect the results of ballots organised by local parish council associations.

- 2.3 Some of the questions are more relevant to Exmoor National Park Authority than others. A change based on Question 15 - on more consistent use of remuneration for members - could lend to 2 different scales of remuneration for members.
- 2.4 Otherwise, it is pleasing to note that over the last few years the appointment process for appointed members to the Authority has become far more transparent. Despite this, it is not always obvious why members are or are not offered a subsequent term of appointment.

**John Dunscombe**  
**Best Value Officer**  
**16 April 2002**