Item: 12  DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES REVIEW

1. Purpose of Report
   a) To inform Members of the recently announced designated landscapes review.

2. Recommendations

   The Authority is recommended to:
   a) Note the details of the recently launched Designated Landscapes (national parks and AONBs): 2018 Review as set out at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.
   b) Note the request from the Chairman of the Review, Julian Glover, to visit Northumberland Park Authority before the end of September 2018; and
   c) Hold a member workshop to inform how the Authority wishes to engage with the Review.

3. Implications

   Financial: None at the time.

   Equalities: None at this time.

4. Background

   a) On 27 May 2018 Defra launched a Designated Landscapes (national parks and AONBs) Review.
      In announcing the review Defra set out that the review would be led by Julian Glover, a journalist and former special advisor to No. 10 under David Cameron. He will be supported by an advisory panel of five, including former Chief Executive of the Peak District National Park, Jim Dixon.
   b) The Terms of Reference for the Review are attached at Appendix 1, and the details of the panel are attached at Appendix 2. The Review will also be supported by a Secretariat within Defra which is currently being staffed.
      It is important to note that the terms of reference make it clear that the review will NOT propose reductions in either the geographic extent or the protection given to England’s designated landscapes, nor diminish the character or independence or impose new burdens.
   c) Against this positive backdrop, it is worth noting that the terms of the review are very broad, covering everything from statutory purposes, extensions and new designations, individual and collective governance, interaction with other national assets, financing, natural environment, public engagement for health and wellbeing and support communities.

5. Engaging with the Review

   a) The Terms of Reference state that the review will report in 2019, the year of the 70th Anniversary of National Parks. At the time of writing no programme or timetable had been published. Engagement with the Review is therefore at its early stages.
   b) National Parks England (NPE)
      NPE has held a teleconference to discuss the review and a small group of representatives (including Tony Gates) will hold a first meeting with Review
Chairman, Julian Glover in London on 5th July and a verbal update on this will be provided to Members at the meeting.

c) Northumberland National Park Authority

Julian Glover has requested a visit to each national park before the end of September, 2018. Dates for a visit to Northumberland are currently being considered and will be confirmed in due course as it is likely Mr Glover will visit to meet with some members of the Authority.

Ahead of this visit it would be useful for members and key officers to meet to discuss how the Authority wishes to engage with the Review and what outcomes it may wish to achieve.

6. Conclusion

a) The Designated Landscape Review is still in its early stages and it is therefore timely for the Authority to reflect on how it wishes to engage with the Review.

b) The Review has within its Terms of Reference some important safeguards, however, as with any review there will be challenges and opportunities which emerge.

c) The Authority should work both directly and collectively through NPE to help guide and inform the Review.

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Background papers:
DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES REVIEW: TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Introduction
In January 2018 the government published a 25-Year Plan for the Environment. It set out an approach to protect landscapes and habitats in England and committed to undertaking a review National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).

The publication of these terms of reference to guide that review is the next step.

At the outset, it is important to state one thing the review will not do: propose reductions in either the geographic extent or the protections given to England’s designated landscapes.

The review aims not to diminish the character or independence of our designated landscapes, or to impose new burdens on them and the people who live and work in the areas they cover. Instead, its purpose is to ask what might be done better, what changes could assist them, and whether definitions and systems - which in many cases date back to their original creation - are still sufficient.

2. Scope
The review will consider National Parks and AONBs in England, including the role of these areas in relation to other places designated for environmental purposes. Landscapes in Wales and Scotland are under devolved administrations and therefore do not fall under the scope of this review.

The review will respect the cultural and visual heritage of people, farms and businesses in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

3. Objectives
In the context of meeting both local and national priorities and wider environmental governance, the review will examine and make recommendations on:

- the existing statutory purposes for National Parks and AONBs and how effectively they are being met
- the alignment of these purposes with the goals set out in the 25-Year Plan for the Environment
- the case for extension or creation of new designated areas
- how to improve individual and collective governance of National Parks and AONBs, and how that governance interacts with other national assets
- the financing of National Parks and AONBs
- how to enhance the environment and biodiversity in existing designations
- how to build on the existing eight-point plan for National Parks and to connect more people with the natural environment from all sections of society and improve health and wellbeing
- how well National Parks and AONBs support communities

Expanding on work already underway, the review will also take advice from Natural England on the process of designating National Parks and AONBs and extending boundary areas, with a view to improving and expediting the process.

4. Roles and responsibilities
The review will be led by Julian Glover and supported by an experienced advisory group. The members of the group have been announced as Nicola Blackwood, Lord Cameron of Dillington, Jim Dixon, Sarah Mukherjee and Dame Fiona Reynolds.

The review will draw on existing evidence and that submitted by interested groups and individuals during the course of the review. The review team will also visit people and places in a range of designated landscapes.

This is a cross-government review, with Defra providing the secretariat and appointing a lead to undertake the review.

Recommendations will be made to the government. Implementation will be led by the Defra Secretary of State.

5. Timing
The review will report in 2019 (the 70th Anniversary of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act).

A more detailed timetable will be developed following commencement of the review.

6. Background
Our National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are a great success. England is a more beautiful and more diverse place because previous generations took the care to campaign for their creation.

In 1945, the government set up a committee under Sir Arthur Hobhouse, who recommended that Britain establish national parks to preserve and enhance their natural beauty and provide recreational opportunities for all members of the public. In 1949, the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act established these national parks, which the minister of the day described as "the most exciting Act of the post-war Parliament." That legislation created a statutory framework for National Parks and AONBs. In brief, National Parks’ purposes are to conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks. For AONBs, the primary purpose is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area.

Now, as the oldest National Park approaches its 70th anniversary, comes a chance to renew this mission.

That is the context in which this review takes place.

DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES REVIEW 2018 – PANEL

Julian Glover

Associate editor at the London Evening Standard and author of the biography Man of Iron: Thomas Telford and the Building of Britain. He has worked as leader writer and columnist at the Guardian and as a Special Adviser in Number 10 and the Department for Transport.

He will be supported by an advisory panel bringing a vast breadth of experience in landscape, biodiversity, heritage, farming and rural issues.

The panel will be comprised of:

Nicola Blackwood

Former Conservative MP for Oxford West and Abingdon. She was Chair of the Science and Technology Committee from July 2015 to May 2016 and Minister for Public Health and Innovation from 2016 to 2017.

Lord Cameron of Dillington

Cross-bench peer, farmer and landowner. As the former Chair of the Countryside Agency, he is a strong advocate for rural affairs. He is currently the chair of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 Committee and the Advisory Council for the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. He is also on the Steering Board of the Government’s Global Food Security Programme.

Jim Dixon

Chief Executive of the Peak District National Park Authority for 12 years, before stepping down in 2014. He is currently a writer on countryside issues, including for the Times, and a trustee of the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Sarah Mukherjee

Former BBC environment and rural affairs correspondent and previous Director of Environment at Water UK. She is currently Chief Executive of the Crop Protection Association. She is a trustee and advisory group member for several charities, supporting both environmental stewardship and education in farming.

Dame Fiona Reynolds

Formerly the Director-General of the National Trust and current Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge and Chair of the Green Alliance. She is the author of The Fight for Beauty (2016), a history of thought and public policy on landscapes and environment in Britain.