

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

URGENT BUSINESS: Defra Consultation on the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

10 March 2016

Report of the Democratic Services Manager

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider responding to a Defra consultation on the future composition of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority in light of the extensions taking effect on 1 August 2016.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) That the Committee considers whether to make a response to the Defra consultation (details attached).

1.0 Background

- 1.1 On 23 October 2015, the Secretary of State confirmed Orders extending the boundary of the Yorkshire Dales National Park to include part of Lancaster District (Leck).
- 1.2 In view of this, Defra has invited the City Council to comment on proposals to increase the size of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority from 22 to 25 members to accommodate one new member from each of the newly constituent local authorities; Lancaster City Council, Eden District Council and Lancashire County Council.
- 1.3 The letter seeking views was received after publication of the agenda for this meeting and responses must be received by midnight on 24 March 2016, hence this item has been brought to the Committee as urgent business.

2.0 Draft Comments

- 2.1 Officer observations are that:

- On 2 March 2016 Council resolved that the basis of appointment to the Authority, if a place was granted, would be a Cabinet appointment. The Cabinet Member for Rural Areas is in agreement that the City Council should have a seat and understands that it means a serving member will have to address business throughout the park not just in the area of the district subsumed into it.

- A seat on the board is good in reputational terms for the City Council as it affirms its strong rural role in managing protected landscapes (the Council manages the Arnside Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) unit and is a partner in the Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership)
- It is understood that parks officers may have an issue about the size of the board but that's a matter for them to respond to if they wish. Officers have no opinion on that.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to determine whether it wishes to make a response to Defra and, if so, to decide the content at this meeting.

<p>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)</p>
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<p>None arising from this report.</p>

<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</p>

<p>It should be noted that the National Parks Authorities have the power to levy under the National Park Authorities (Levies) (England) Regulations 1996. As the levy is apportioned on the basis of membership of the Authority, potentially this appointment could have had implications for the Council's budget. However, officers have been informed that the Authority has no plans to use the power to levy.</p>

<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p>

<p>The legal framework for National Park Authority Membership is set out on the back of the letter.</p>

<p>SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS</p>
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<p>The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.</p>
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<p>MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS</p>

<p>The Monitoring Officer has prepared this report in her role as Democratic Services Manager.</p>
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<p>BACKGROUND PAPERS</p>	<p>Contact Officer: Debbie Chambers Telephone: 01524 582057 E-mail: dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk</p>
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<p>None</p>
