



Northumberland National Park Authority

Corporate Plan

2008 - 2009

March 2008

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FOREWORD

This Corporate Plan sets out the key objectives, priorities, and actions of Northumberland National Park Authority in delivering our vision for Northumberland National Park from 1st April 2008 – 31st March 2009 and explains how the Authority will employ its financial and other resources. The Authority continues to revise both the approach to the development of the Corporate Plan and the structure and content of the Plan to achieve a better alignment with the Authority's strategic objectives, priorities, staff, and governance structures. Your views on how well this Plan delivers its objectives are welcomed.

The Corporate Plan is aimed at those who want to obtain an overview of what the Authority has achieved in the past year and understand what the Authority is aiming to achieve in the year ahead. It also provides guidance for the organisation's strategic and middle managers and Members of the National Park Authority, along with Defra and other partners, all of who help to deliver the Authority's objectives. It therefore provides the foundation for Directorate Service Plans and individual forward work plans which explain in more detail what we will do to deliver our priorities.

During the coming year the National Park Authority will work towards the development of its first three-year rolling business plan which will provide an essential link between the National Park Management Plan and the annual Corporate Plan. This linkage is a key to the Authority's approach of continuous improvement of its strategic and corporate planning. A significant review of the Northumberland National Park Management Plan is currently underway and is due to be completed in March 2009.

The Corporate Plan includes the Authority's Risk Management Framework. The Framework is set by the Authority and is reviewed by the Authority's Chief Financial Officer on an annual basis. The document identifies the key risks to the delivery of our strategic objectives which are closely managed and updated throughout the year.

This Plan also provides important information on the Authority's performance and therefore incorporates the Authority's statutory annual Best Value Performance Plan for 2008/2009. During the last year a number of new local indicators and targets have been developed for the Authority which clearly link with our strategic priorities, enabling the Authority to measure more effectively progress towards these priorities.

The Authority has delivered a number of key achievements throughout the year, not least being awarded best tourist information centre in England for the National Park Centre at Once Brewed. However, there are as always a number of challenges in the year ahead. The review of local Government in Northumberland will provide opportunities to forge a close relationship with the new Unitary Authority and will result in changes in the Authority's membership. The Authority will be delivering on key cross cutting priorities of equality and climate change and has adjusted its resource allocation to accommodate this.

In December 2007 the Authority received a three year funding settlement to March 2011 from Defra. This settlement, the first three year settlement, is set in line with inflation and will allow some modest growth. This has greatly enhanced the Authority's ability to undertake medium term budgeting and business planning.

This Corporate Plan was approved by the Northumberland National Park Authority on 26 March 2008.

Tony Gates
Chief Executive (National Park Officer)
March 2008

1. Introduction

Portrait of the National Park

1.1 Spread over the hills and valleys at the very top of England, but right in the centre of Britain, the landscape of Northumberland National Park has distinct characteristics. To the north there are the breathtaking rolling moors and grasslands of the Cheviot Hills, with their ancient hillforts and clean rivers. To the east is the Upper Coquet Valley with the landmark Simonside Hills and attractive villages. To the west are the valleys of the North Tyne and Redesdale, wild, inspiring, and once home of the Border Reivers. The landscape of the National Park also supports habitats suitable for rare species such as red squirrels. To the south is the iconic ridge of the Whin Sill with Hadrian's Wall striding along its crest.

1.2 The National Park lies wholly within the North East region of England, but borders Scotland and the North West region. It comprises of parts of three districts; Alnwick, Berwick upon Tweed and Tynedale, all of which are Local Planning Authorities for the parts of the districts outside the National Park. The three District Councils and the County Council deliver various local authority services in the area.

1.3 Covering over 400 square miles the tranquillity and spectacular scenery of the National Park are attracting an increasing number of visitors all year round. More people also want to live in the National Park and there is now an increased demand both for holiday homes and affordable housing.



1.4 Historically, the level of development in the National Park has been low. The National Park boundary excludes the larger settlements in the area, and settlements within the boundary comprise small villages, hamlets, and isolated farm dwellings. Significant land use change has resulted from the development of military training facilities and forestry plantations. Around 70% of the area is designated as Open Access land, which makes Northumberland one of the most accessible National Parks in England.

Northumberland National Park Authority

Statutory Purposes and Duty

1.5 Northumberland National Park was designated in 1956 and the Northumberland National Park Authority was established in 1997¹. The National Park Authority is a special purpose local authority, with two statutory purposes²:

- ***Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and***
- ***Promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of (the) areas by the public.***

1.6 In pursuing the purposes, the National Park Authority also has a duty to: ***“seek to foster the social and economic well-being of the local communities”***.

Authority Members

1.7 The Authority consists of twenty two Members who are appointed to represent local interests, communities, and national interests. Twelve Members are appointed from local authorities within whose boundaries the National Park is situated. Ten Members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs. Four of the Secretary of State appointees represent Parish Council interests and are nominated by Parish Councils. The remaining six represent the national interest and are individuals, usually local, with specialist knowledge or a particular interest in the National Park.

1.8 As a result of local Government review in Northumberland, the six District Councils in the county and Northumberland County Council will be replaced by a new single Unitary Authority from May 2009. This will require changes to how the Membership of the Authority is achieved. The Department of the Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) will consult on proposed changes to the Authority's membership in spring 2008.

¹ Previously the functions were undertaken by Northumberland County Council

² Section 61 of The Environment Act (1995) updated the purposes of designation of National Parks

2. Management Context – Strategy, Implementation and Review

Our Vision

2.1 The Authority has set out how it wants to see the National Park in 2020 and its role in the management of the Park in its Vision:

“Northumberland National Park Authority will be proactive, innovative and forward-looking, working towards a National Park with thriving communities and a sustainable local economy grounded in its special qualities, including a richness of cultural heritage and biodiversity, a true sense of tranquillity and a distinct character associated with a living, working landscape, in which everyone has an opportunity to understand, enjoy and contribute to those special qualities.”

2.2 As our Vision Statement emphasises, we believe that the future of the National Park lies in maintaining and enhancing its special qualities. That includes keeping it as a living, working landscape and so we are working towards:

- Sustainable land use – encouraging the people that live and work in the National Park make a good living from the land, while leaving it in good condition for future generations;
- A landscape rich in biodiversity and geodiversity – protecting and enhancing the whole range of distinctive habitats, and species across the National Park and conserving the geological heritage of the area;
- A rich cultural heritage³ – conserving, enhancing, and celebrating the historical legacy of the National Park, and developing it as a part of contemporary culture;
- A true sense of tranquillity – the peace and quiet which are increasingly rare and precious in the rest of the country;
- Opportunities for all to understand and enjoy and contribute to the special qualities – for the benefit of visitors and residents, and because well informed passionate people will help to support all our other aims;
- A thriving community and economy grounded in the special qualities – for the benefit of residents and visitors, and to underpin all our other aims.

Government Priorities

2.3 Defra is the Government department responsible for English National Park Authorities. It has set challenging objectives for the Authorities, which can be summarised as:

- Promote the principles of sustainable development;
- Implement the Countryside and Rights of Way Act;
- Promote understanding and greater use by all sections of society;
- Promote wildlife conservation and cultural heritage; and
- Improve performance through regional and national working.

2.4 Defra has prepared a draft ‘deal’ setting out priorities and working practices to 2011⁴. The deal is currently subject to discussion between Defra and the English National Park Authorities Association. One key priority is climate change. As the Government department co-ordinating action on climate change Defra are looking to National Parks to make a contribution towards this national priority. Discussions are

³ The cultural heritage includes both the physical remains and the living inheritance of the National Park

⁴ Further information is set out in appendix 5

currently underway with Defra and all National Parks and Northumberland National Parks Authority adopted climate change as a new strategic priority in 2007.

Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

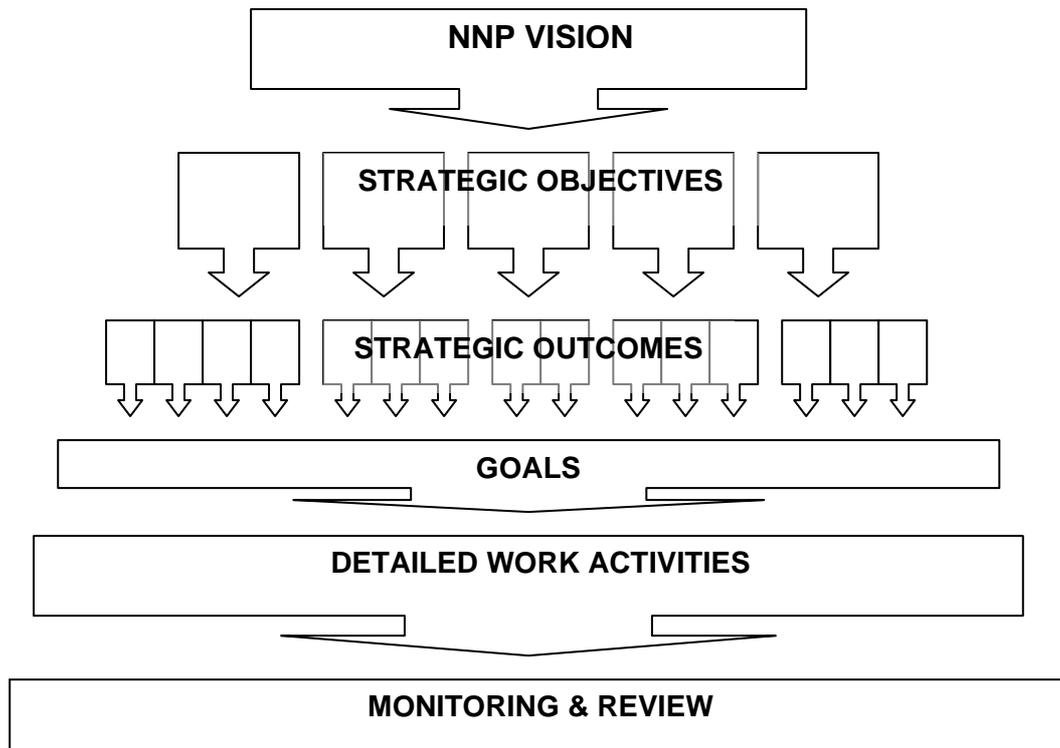
2.5 In order to translate the Government's priorities and the National Park Management Plan into a clear focus for the work of the Authority the Strategic Priority Setting Process⁵ established clear strategic objectives for the work of the Authority (table 1). The Authority is now entering the third year of the strategic priority programme and will therefore need to review and revisit this towards the end of 2008/09. Figure 1 illustrates how the Vision translates into activities on the ground.

Table 1: NNPA Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

Strategic Objectives	Strategic Outcomes
1. To have the special qualities of Northumberland National Park safeguarded and enhanced	1.1 Measurable improvement/ enhancement in natural and cultural capacity within Northumberland National Park 1.2 Delivery of a landscape and land management strategy for the National Park for 2020 and beyond 1.3 Northumberland National Park Authority actively leading locally on the delivery of the land management agenda 1.4 Clear and effective forward planning policies for the future of the National Park 1.5 Built development in the National Park protecting and enhancing the special qualities
2. To use the special qualities of the National Park to support sustainable community and economic development	2.1 Local communities and businesses actively engaging in, using and sustaining special qualities 2.2 Northumberland National Park Authority actively mentoring and supporting local community and business development 2.3 Increased economic activity, including new community and business enterprises using the special qualities
3. To have an increased awareness and understanding of the National Park and support for the Authority's aspirations	3.1 Enhanced awareness and support for the National Park locally regionally and nationally 3.2 Increased visitor numbers and visits 3.3 Increased visitor satisfaction 3.4 Increased diversity of visitors
4. The National Park Authority is an effective delivery partner for key regional and local agendas	4.1 Recognised role in delivered key aspects of the regional agenda 4.2 Regard for the National Park as an effective strategic player and partner
5. The National Park Authority is proactive, innovative & forward looking, achieving through partnerships	5.1 Be a trusted and effective enabler of local area delivery 5.2 Improved knowledge and understanding between the National Park Authority, local communities and businesses 5.3 Improved knowledge and understanding between the National Park Authority and other agency partners
6. The National Park Authority is efficient, effective and inclusive	6.1 Efficient and economic use of resources 6.2 Delivery of regulatory services 6.3 Practical access to and provision of services for all people in our diverse society 6.4 Practical management of operational and strategic risks

⁵ See section 3.9 for further information

Figure 1: Translating the Vision into Action



2.6 In order to deliver the Vision, and strategic objectives, detailed goals and activities and measures are set out in section 5.

Corporate Planning Process

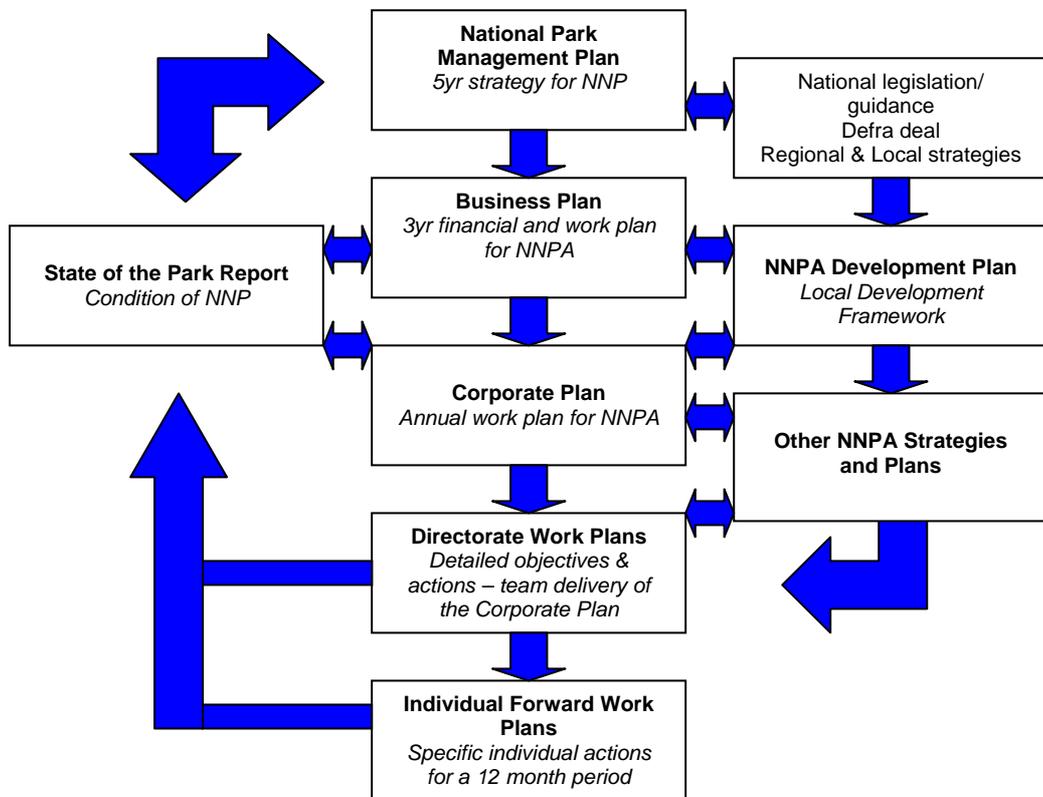
2.7 The process for preparing the 2008/09 Corporate Plan commenced in December 2007 following the receipt of a three year funding settlement from Defra. The Corporate Plan provides the strategic targets for the Authority for the coming year and provides the basis for: Directorate Service Plans, which explain in more detail what will be done to deliver these priorities; and individual Forward Work Plans which illustrate what every member of staff will do to work towards achieving the Vision.

2.8 This is a clear link between each member of staff's work and the objectives of the Authority. Figure 2 illustrates how the Corporate Plan, Directorate Plans, and individual Forward Work Plans fit within the hierarchy of strategies and plans prepared by the Authority.

2.9 As a result of the receipt of a three year funding settlement, the Authority will now roll forward the preparation of the Corporate Plan with a process in future years as set out in the table on the following page.

Timetable	Task
October - November	Preparation of Directorate Plans (in liaison with all staff and key delivery partners and based on feedback from the previous operations)
November - December	Begin consultation on budget options/ priorities
December	Corporate and SMT forward objectives set
January	Business Managers forward work plans set
March	Corporate Plan to Authority Remaining staff forward work plans set
April – May	Collate Performance information for previous financial year
June	Defra publication deadline

Figure 2: Hierarchy of Plans



3. Continuous Improvement and Efficient and Effective use of Resources

Background

3.1 In July 2005 the Authority was one of the first to be inspected as part of the newly agreed National Park Authority Performance Assessment (NPAPA). This Assessment was deliberately designed to be a supportive process to enable each National Park Authority to identify its strengths and weaknesses. In overall terms the review gave the Authority a favourable outcome similar to that of a "good" council and the Authority subsequently set a three year target to become "excellent".

3.2 The Authority therefore agreed an improvement plan in September 2005 which focussed attention on a number of key drivers for improvement:

- The development of a Strategic Priority Setting Process to enable resources to be focussed on the most effective means of delivering the Authority's Corporate Objectives;
- Staff restructuring, to align resources and work programmes to the Strategic Priorities, (effective from 1 August 2006⁶);
- Corporate Governance Review, to allow the Authority to operate more effectively in delivering the Vision, complementing the review of staff structures. The new governance structure was approved by the Authority in March 2007 and went live in July 2007⁷;
- Human Resource Strategy starting with an evidence based approach to human resource management the aim is to create personnel policies, practices and work plans aligned to the corporate objectives and the organisation's culture and values;
- Corporate Communications Strategy aims to ensure key messages are delivered in a timely and consistent manner to key audiences to enable internal and external audiences to be better able to understand the prioritised aims and objectives of the Authority;
- Strategic Partnership Review is being completed with effective member engagement to ensure that the Authority is better able to respond to and work with key national, regional, and sub-regional partners whose role is critical to the enhancement of Northumberland National Park.

Resources

Staff

3.3 The Authority employs 95 staff⁸ and has 133 active voluntary rangers. The staff and volunteers are the Authority's greatest resource and they account for 56.9% of the annual income.

3.4 The Authority staff structure is organised into three separate but inter-related directorates: Policy and Strategy; Area Operations; and Corporate Services. The key requirements of the structure are to:

- Have a pro-active Strategic Management, Policy and Planning function to focus and integrate the work of the Authority and its partners;
- Deliver the Authority's Vision, strategic objectives, outcomes and priorities;
- Create more integrated working and enhance capacity for local area operations; and
- Enhance capacity in middle management.

⁶ Appendix 2 details the organisational structure

⁷ Appendix 3 sets out the new Corporate Governance Structure

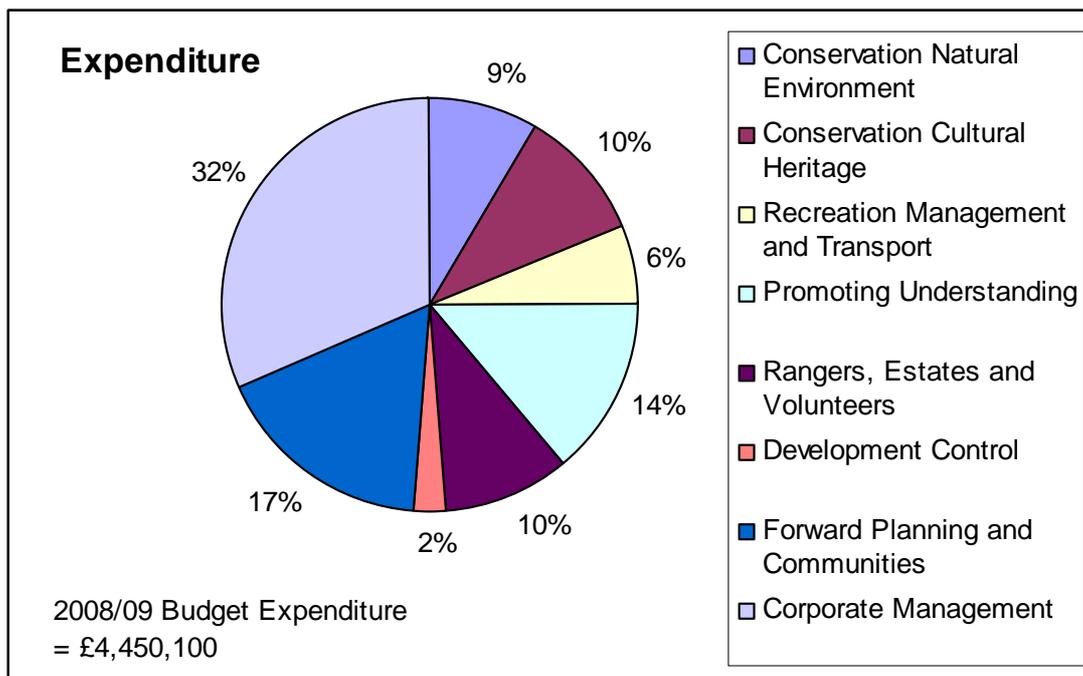
⁸ 81.1 full time equivalent

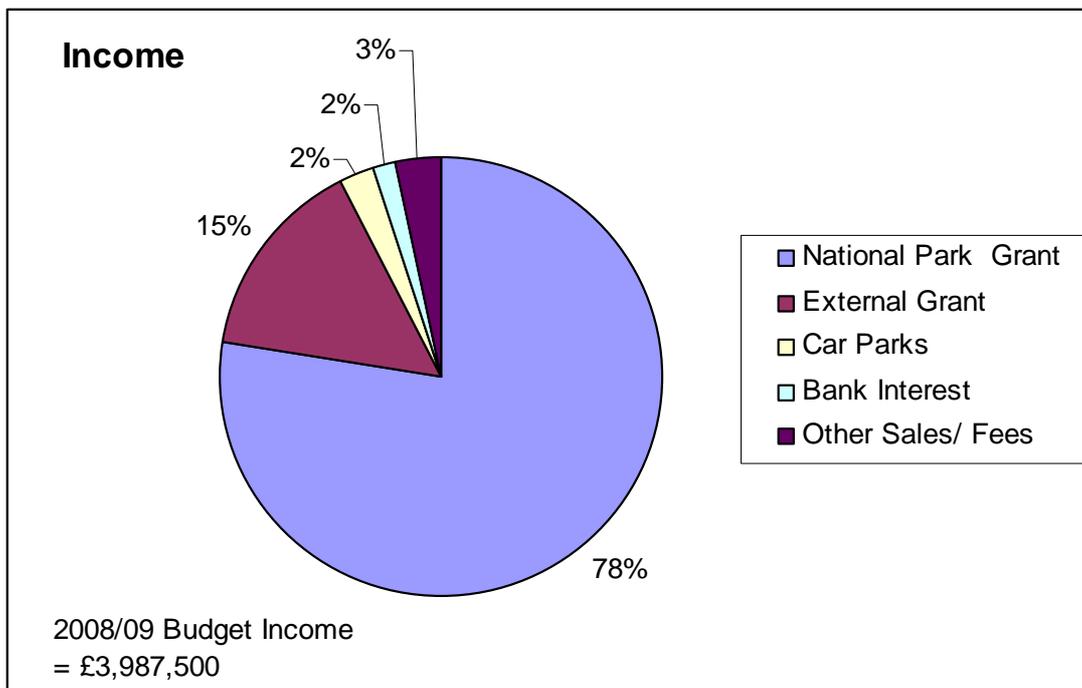
3.5 The Policy and Strategy Directorate sets and interprets the policy environment within which the Authority works; influencing national and regional policy in order to benefit the National Park and its communities.

3.6 Area Operations Directorate is the main implementation arm of the Authority; therefore, for many local communities and visitors, it is the visible part of the Authority, playing a key role in integrating at a local level all the operations of the National Park Authority. It is divided into two teams covering the northern and southern parts of the National Park.

3.7 Corporate Services Directorate provides the key supporting services and systems for the Authority, and regulates the work of the Authority within the context of financial and legal undertakings and sets policy direction for finance, information systems, human resources, communication, property, and corporate functions. It ensures that the Authority has the resources (sites, finance, staff, and information) and business systems appropriate to the style of operation and works to enable the Authority to achieve its wider corporate objectives including managing corporate communication and the Sustainable Development Fund.

Financial Planning





Partnership Working

3.8 The Northumberland National Park Authority is committed to achieving the management of the National Park through partnerships, as working together with partners is the only way to tackle many of the complex problems facing the National Park. In the coming year the Authority will complete a review of its partnerships in order to maximise the value from these and enhance delivery of our Vision.

Focusing Our Resources

Priority Work Areas

3.9 In 2006 the Authority established a Strategic Priority Setting Process to help prioritise its discretionary work areas (areas of work which the Authority undertakes in pursuance of its statutory purposes and duty, where the Authority has discretion on the way in which it delivers). With limited resources, it is important for the Authority to have a clear view on where it needs to focus most.

3.10 In parallel the Authority's "Core and Statutory Services" (those other areas of work which are required to allow the organisation to function effectively, such as: Development Control; Forward Planning; Open Access; operating the Sustainable Development Fund; Strategic Management and Corporate support) were subject to review assessing improvements in efficiency, economy, and effectiveness.

3.11 The Authority's discretionary areas of work were prioritised as follows:

Priority 1 Work Areas	Priority 2 Work Areas	Priority 3 Work Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Diversification • Skills and Training • Farming and Land Management • Website and e-communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Environment Conservation • Sustainable Tourism • Cultural Heritage • Rights of Way and Access • Marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Interpretation • Sustainable Transport • Archaeology and the Historic Environment • Visitor Centres • Recreational Sites and Facilities • Events

4. Review of Performance 2007/2008

Performance Indicators

4.1 Since April 2000 all local authorities in England and Wales have had a duty to plan the provision of their public services to clear standards of cost and quality, and by the most economic, efficient and effective ways available. The aim is to deliver continuous improvement of services to the public. The 2006 Local Government White Paper '*Strong and Prosperous Communities*', promised a new era of freedom for local Government to offer greater flexibility to set priorities and greater discretion how to meet them. At the national level the number of indicators for assessing performance would be reduced from 1,200 to 197.

4.2 In order to reflect these national changes, fully reflect the strategic priorities, new organisational structure, and to link clearly with the State of the National Park Report during 2007/08 the Authority developed a new suite of indicators and targets⁹. This will enable us effectively to measure progress towards achieving our priorities.

Key Achievements of 2007/2008 – Highlights from the Year

4.3 The Authority has had a number of successes during 2007/08; the following provides a summary of the key achievements:

Strategic Objective 1:

To have the special qualities of Northumberland National Park safeguarded and enhanced

Farming Higher Level Stewardship Schemes: The Authority's Farming and Rural Enterprise team have worked closely with Natural England to jointly identify and deliver a programme of Farm Environment Plans to enhance the special qualities of the Park, and so securing income for landowners/managers, 90% of the National Park land area and 70% of its farms have now adopted a Defra stewardship scheme which supports farmers for using sustainable farming practices.

Simonside: With funding from Northumberland Strategic Partnership and ONE NorthEast there has been 500 metres of path improvements on Simonside, involving 50 skills training days for volunteers and contractors to enable the restoration of eroded moorland. Simonside is designated as a Special Area of Conservation with internationally important heather moorland and blanket bog which will be restored through the project. A comprehensive interpretive plan together with 4 interpretive panels, 5 web based walks, 2 self guided walks were produced including a special interest walk for children in partnership with Forestry Commission and one which will be fully accessible.

Seeding Change: 2007/08 was the third season of work on this project which is contributing to the Upland Hay Meadow Habitat Action Plan. Targets on habitat creation and improvement are being met and the community engagement and involvement targets are being exceeded. The addition of bumblebee activities including a link with tourism providers has been particularly successful.

Traditional Boundaries Training Skills: The training scheme set up by the National Park Authority to regenerate heritage rural skills graduated its second intake of trainees in 2007. Ten people of varying backgrounds gained a national qualification

⁹ All performance Indicators and targets are set out in appendix 1

in dry stone walling and left equipped with a wide range of countryside management and business skills to start up their own micro-businesses, 84% of graduates are working in boundary maintenance in some capacity.

Local Development Framework: Work on the statutory planning documents have progressed with effective and well received public consultations playing an important part in the process. Supplementary Planning Documents for the Otterburn Camp and Historic Village Atlas have been adopted by the Authority.

Development Control Service: The Authority has continued to run an efficient and effective Development Control service with nearly 60 applications received and 83% of these determined within the statutory 8 week period. Protection of European and Nationally protected species has been successfully incorporated into the Development Control system, in particular bats and barn owls. There is now an effective system in place where these species are considered in pre-application discussions and applications are not validated if they are not accompanied by the relevant survey information. In 2007 there were 18 surveys submitted, 5 showing positive signs for bats.

Archaeological Research Framework: A key document on setting out the archaeological research needs has been published with support from English Heritage. This will inform future partnership working with archaeological and historical organisations and set the context for future funding bids.

Heather Survey: A survey of moorland vegetation cover and condition was commissioned covering areas on 23 farms. This has given us updated information about the habitat condition of land under agri-environment schemes and paves the way for future schemes and improvements, including the possibility of re-seeding areas of moorland. The survey may also help in planning habitat management in light of future climate change.

Strategic Objective 2:

To use the special qualities of the National Park to support sustainable community and economic development

Green Tourism Business Scheme: In April 2007, 11 tourism businesses sponsored by the National Park achieved the rigorous GTBS standards, with two businesses achieving Gold Awards – The Hytte and Whitelee Farm. Later in the year, the National Park’s own visitor centre at Rothbury was awarded a Silver standard.

Award-winning Visitor Centres: The National Park visitor centre at Once Brewed won the national Enjoy England Gold award for excellence in visitor service, and the Rothbury centre won the North East Tourism Gold. All three National Park visitor centres have now won awards in the past two years, with Ingram visitor centre winning Best National Park Visitor Experience in 2006.

Coquetdale Community Archaeology Group: National Park Authority leadership of this outstanding community project designed to help people discover and take ownership of their cultural heritage came to a successful end in November 2007 when the group became independent with the intention of carrying on the good work they had been trained for.

Cheviot Hills Heritage Project: Work began late in the year to establish this ‘pathfinder’ project with funding from The Heritage Lottery Fund and Scottish Natural Heritage. It aims to explore and encourage transnational activity with both Scottish and English partners. The process of engaging community groups throughout the

area in order to identify an outline programme of activity, ideally establishing local voluntary groups has begun with enthusiastic responses from a number of community groups on both sides of the border.

Strategic Objective 3:

To have an increased awareness and understanding of the National Park and support for the Authority's aspirations

'The Sill' Protected Landscape Centre: A Heritage Lottery Fund project planning grant has enabled an assessment of the opportunities and constraints of the Once Brewed site, including archaeology, ecology, traffic and land ownership to be completed.

Events: The United Nations World Environment Day, attended by an estimated 4,000 people was a new regional high profile event attended with stalls around the Monument in Newcastle. Culture 10's second 'Northern Lights festival' attended by 900 people was successfully delivered at Walltown on Hadrian's Wall and a similar event supported at Craggside. In addition a number of community events and 11 agricultural shows were supported. The Authority was the principle funder of a Countryside Marquee at the Glendale show hosting many local businesses and other community groups.

Strategic Objective 4:

The National Park Authority is an effective delivery partner for key regional and local agendas

New Leader: The Authority was chosen by ONE NorthEast to develop a local partnership and produce a rural development strategy for the Northumberland Uplands. This aims to focus public resources and partnership working to tackle environmental, economic and community issues in one of the Region's deepest rural areas. The Authority has helped facilitate the establishment of a Local Action Group to take the programme forward.

Strategic Objective 5:

The National Park Authority is proactive, innovative, and forward looking, achieving through partnerships

Community Enterprise Success: The Authority's new Community Enterprise teams backed many community business and social projects in 2007, reflecting the success of NNPA's new community-led approach. A wide range of projects were supported using the Sustainable Development Fund and the National Park Authority's own local delivery funds ranging in scope from a new renewable energy business to helping the WI plant 90 trees to celebrate its 90th year. Action Area teams supported 80 projects (a 50% increase on 06/07) and 36 SDF projects (a 12% increase on 06/07), in addition teams have supported 45 community projects through local delivery funding.

Joint Local Access Forum: The Authority continues to administer with Northumberland County Council a very successful access forum. The Forum has held a number of very successful meetings during the year, exploring a wide range of access issues and has established itself as one of the most effective such forums in England. The Forum's contribution to the development of the Northumberland County Public Rights of Way Action Plan was well received and had a significant impact on future work priorities.

Strategic Objective 6: The National Park Authority is efficient, effective, and inclusive

Website: Became a full member of the National Parks Web Portal, building a completely new website, changed URL, and moved to new content management software to run it.

University Partnerships: Two key partnership relationships were enhanced with regional universities. A tripartite shared learning partnership was formally agreed with the Universities of Newcastle and Northumbria who will work with the Authority to realise the benefits of cutting edge geographical software tools and knowledge. In addition, an ongoing programme of annual research was agreed with the Centre for the Rural Economy based at Newcastle University.

Authority Annual Savings: 2007/08 marked the final year of the Authority's programme to realign its ongoing expenditure with known income streams. The resulting Savings Action Plan required over £350,000 of annual savings to be realised, which is more than 10% of the operating budget. This plan has now been fully achieved.

Investors in People Award Maintained: The Authority succeeded in maintaining the Investors in People award even though the new standard is much more challenging. The Authority has maintained this award every year since it became the first English National Park Authority to be awarded Investor in People status.

Staff Development: Following staff restructuring the previous year the human resource activity turned to identifying management development needs and establishing baseline measures via staff surveys. In addition, the training programme focuses on the ICT skills for all staff and as a result 44% of staff have successfully gained the European Computer Driving Licence qualification with a further 38% part-way completing the qualification.

Performance 2007/08

4.4 Performance is assessed across 33 indicators; 22 of which are statutory Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) covering the corporate health and planning services of the National Park Authority, 5 indicators are Family Indicators (collected by all English National Park Authorities in addition to BVPI) and 6 are Local Indicators covering areas such as biodiversity, historic environment, and access. A full list of the indicators and performance data can be found in Appendix 1.

Number of Performance Indicators (by type)		Performance v's previous year				Performance v's previous 3 years average			
		Improved	No change	Declined	n/a	Improved	No change	Declined	n/a
Total No. PIs	33	15	12	4	2	14	11	2	6
BVPI	22	7	10	3	2	8	10	1	3
Family	5	3	1	1	0	1	1	1	2
Local	6	5	1	0	0	5	0	0	1

Benchmark to other NPA's (of 26 PI's)					
		Upper Quartile	2nd / 3rd Quartile	Lower Quartile	n/a
Total	26	12	4	4	6
BVPI	18	10	4	2	2
Family	8	2	0	2	4

4.5 Overall, 27 (82%) of the 33 indicators either stayed the same or improved on the previous year with 15 (45%) of indicators recording an improvement, 4 (12%) of the indicators recorded a decline on the previous year, and 2 (6%) could not be analysed against the previous year position as there were no occurrences in 2007/08.

Improved Performance

4.6 Improved performance on the previous year was recorded in 15 indicators (45%). Where applicable, all of these indicators also showed improvement over the previous 3 year average suggesting sustained improvement over time. Some of the highlights are:

Percentage area of SSSI's and NNR's in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition - The 2007/08 status is 86.64%, up from 80.69% in 2006/07 and from 68% in 2005/06. This suggests that the Government target of 95% by 2010 can be achieved within the National Park.

Number of passengers using the Hadrian's Wall Bus services - 2007/08 passenger numbers reached 33,355 which is a 29% increase on the previous year and up on the three year average. The increase can be partially explained by an extended timetable providing sustainable access for the public for a longer period last year.

Percentage of public rights of way signposted where they leave the road - Signage from the road was recorded at 94.4% representing an improvement on the previous year and is above the previous three years average. NNPA scores in the upper quartile on this indicator relative to other National Parks.

National Park Visitor Centre satisfaction/effectiveness - The Authority's three visitor centres gained an average score of 93% showing a year on year improvement for the last 3 years. The Authority's visitor centres are ranked in first place in the benchmark between the English National Parks.

The level of the equality Standard to which the Authority conforms - The Authority gained Level 1 of the standard in 2007/08 placing NNPA in the upper quartile of English National Park Authorities.

Unique users of the Authority's website - The Authority recorded 239,000 unique users of its website in 2007/08 which represents a 4% increase on the previous year and is significantly up from the 75,000 users four years earlier in 2004/05.

Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks - The Authority achieved 83.33% which is an improvement on the previous year and the 3 year average. Whilst the Authority continues to receive a small number of planning applications, this result demonstrates that since the Development Control function was brought in-house, the efficiency of the service has improved. This result also places NNPA in the upper quartile compared to the other English National Parks.

No Change

4.7 Of the 12 indicators showing no change: 2 are contextual indicators based on 2001 census returns so will not change until the next census in 2011; 3 are indicators related to Conservation Areas where there was no expected short term change; for 4 indicators 'no change' was the most positive result possible as any change would have represented deterioration for example meeting the milestones within the Local Development Scheme; for the remaining 3 indicators improvement would have been desirable but was not achieved.

Declined

4.8 A decline in performance from the previous year was recorded in 4 indicators. However, the performance of 2 of these was still above the previous three year average figures and is not considered to represent a poor result (i.e. the previous year was a particularly good result). The remaining 2 indicators are of more concern as they also performed badly against the previous three years average figure. These are: working days lost due to sickness, and; public rights of way (PRoW) easy to use by the public. Percentage of PRoW easy to use by the public is of particular concern as the performance has dropped year on year for the last 3 years with only 52.9% of PRoW within the National Park considered easy to use in 2007/08. This places Northumberland National Park in the lower quartile compared to other English National Parks and is in contrast to the signposted from the road indicator. In response the Authority has assigned one of the Northern rangers to work fulltime on PRoW for the first six months of 2008/09 to develop a maintenance programme. However it should be noted that less resources have been applied to this area of work in the last two years as the Authority has invested in other priority areas of its work.

Others

4.9 Of the indicators, 2 could not be compared against the previous year as the information they are seeking to monitor did not occur in 2007/08 (major planning applications and planning appeals). When looking at performance against the average figure for the previous three years there are an additional 4 indicators that can not be measured because data is unavailable for one or more of the years.

Summary

4.10 With the exception of the ease of use of PRoW, performance across the indicator set for 2007/08 is considered to be positive with the majority of indicators where improvement was possible recording better results over the previous year and against the three year average.

4.11 The current indicator set is dominated by BVPI indicators of the Authority's corporate health. With the repeal of the statutory obligation to report BVPI the Authority has been developing a new suite of indicators for 2008/09 which will reduce the emphasis on measuring the efficiency of the Authority itself and increase the emphasis on the outcome of the Authority's work within the National Park. Only 1 of the BVPIs has been taken forward to the new suite of corporate indicators, the level of the Equality Standard achieved, others have been amended to reflect the specific work of the Authority, such as the processing of planning applications. Of the local and family indicators 4 have been taken forward (listed buildings at risk, visitor centre satisfaction, condition of SSSIs and volunteer days). In addition, 8 of the BVPI, local and family indicators will continue to be monitored as part of the State of the National Park Report, such as ease of use of PRoW, number and length of cycle routes, and percentage of new homes built on previously developed land,

5. Delivering the Vision – The Year Ahead 2008/09

Background – The Key Strategic Challenges

5.1 Although the Authority prepared Strategic Objectives and identified priority work areas to deliver the Vision in 2006 there continue to be a number of changes proposed at both the national and regional level which the Authority must react to. Such changes will have an impact on the way we work with partners and local communities. The following have been identified as the key strategic challenges for the Authority in 2008/09:

Sub National Review

5.2 Governments 'Review of Sub National Economic Development and Regeneration' is likely to result in the abolition of the North East Regional Assembly and the combining of the roles of the Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy into a Single Integrated Regional Strategy, prepared by the Regional Development Agency. The focus of the new strategy will be to deliver economic and housing growth and to engage the private sector. It is important that the National Park Authority is appropriately engaged within the new regional structures and that the assets and opportunities of the Park's Special Qualities are fully reflected in the proposed Single Integrated Regional Strategy.

Local Government Review

5.3 As a result of local Government review in Northumberland, the six District Councils in the county and Northumberland County Council will be replaced by a new single Unitary Authority from May 2009. This will require changes to how the Membership of the National Park Authority is achieved and will provide opportunities to forge a close relationship with the new Unitary Authority. During the year the National Park Authority will be working closely with the Unitary Authority Joint Implementation Team to build appropriate links to take advantage of opportunities for collaborative working between the two Authorities.

Heritage Protection Bill

5.4 The Bill will unify the designation and consent regimes for heritage assets and under the reforms, local authorities will acquire new responsibilities for the historic environment such as implementing the new Heritage Asset Consent system, negotiating Heritage Partnership Agreements, compiling and administering a local section of the Register of Historic Buildings and Sites, and maintaining and improving a Historic Environment Record. All of the proposals will have implications in terms of officer time and financial commitments.

Climate Change

5.5 The effects of climate change on our environment are now universally accepted. Climate change represents a threat to Northumberland National Park's special qualities and yet the National Park offers significant opportunities to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. The National Park Authority has recently signed the Nottingham Declaration¹⁰ and is currently developing a Climate Change Action Plan as part of the review of the National Park Management Plan. This Corporate Plan, together with the three year budget plan has identified additional resource to focus on this new national and corporate priority.

5.6 The Government recognises that National Park Authorities have a significant role to play in addressing climate change, for example working with farmers and land owners to maintain healthy peat landscapes and soils – peat locks up huge reserves

¹⁰ When Local Authorities sign the Nottingham Declaration on climate change they pledge to actively tackle climate change in their area and work with others to reduce emissions country-wide.

of carbon. Preventing their degradation avoids this carbon being released to the atmosphere and adding to climate change. The Authority already has a number of initiatives underway and this year will be working to integrate its policies and operations to achieve key climate change objectives through the production of a corporate action plan linked to regional and sub regional actions. This approach is in line with the English National Park Authorities Association 'Position Statement on Climate Change' which makes it clear that the National Park Authorities in England are committed to addressing the issue and becoming carbon neutral (in keeping with the rest of the Government estate) by 2012.

Equality

5.7 As a public body the Authority is fully committed to achieving a fair and just society. Equality of access, opportunity, and participation are key targets for the Authority and the Authority has established our equality framework, the development, and delivery of effective equality will result from a fully integrated approach across all aspects of the Authority's work. The Authority is committed to achieving a high standard of equality. This means we will not just be conforming to the letter of the law but we will make a real positive impact on peoples' experience of the National Park. The Authority has achieved Level 1 of the Equality standard for Local Government and aims to achieve Level 2 by November 2008.

Goals and Priority Activities 2008/09

5.8 The process for preparing the Corporate Plan was explained in section 2.7-2.9. The following section sets out the priority activities for 2008/09 by directorate based on the Strategic Priorities and the key strategic challenges identified above.

Policy and Strategy Directorate – Priority Activities

5.9 The Policy and Strategy Directorate has four key roles to deliver for the National Park Authority. These are to:

1. Work with Members, partner organisations and local communities to develop and refine strategic direction for both the National Park and the National Park Authority
2. Develop policies to guide delivery of strategic objectives
3. Influence national and regional agenda
4. Provide specialist advice to Authority, and in participation its integrated area teams, partners and communities

5.10 The balance of activity between these roles will change from year to year depending on the priorities identified by Members and the need to respond to external influences. The following sections summarise the main work of the Directorate over the coming year. Further details are included in the following sections of this Plan.

Develop and Refine the Strategic Direction

5.11 This year the Directorate is leading and coordinating the production of the Authority's main strategic documents; the National Park Management Plan and the Local Development Framework, which sets out the approach to planning in the National Park. A key milestone for the Framework will be the approval of the Core Strategy following an examination in public. Similarly the publication of the State of the National Park Report will for the first time provide an objective information base on which to base decisions. A Climate Change Action Plan will be produced as part of the National Park Management Plan review.

5.12 Later this year work will start on the development of a Landscape Strategy for the National Park which will provide guidance on Management Plan objectives at an

area level. Since the National Park is a landscape designation this strategy will be vital in providing a clear context for local action on the ground.

Develop Policies to Guide Delivery

5.13 The key activity in terms of developing the Authority's policies will be the development of the Climate Change Action Plan, which integrates with regional proposals to mitigate the effects of climate change and provides direction on how the organisation can adapt to the changing circumstances. Alongside this the Directorate is actively developing proposals for The Sill Protected Landscape Centre at Once Brewed within the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site.

5.14 Internally work is ongoing to support the development and implementation of the Equality Standard; recognising the importance of fair and equal treatment of people by the National Park Authority.

5.15 This year the Directorate will work closely with the Authority's integrated area team to inform effective delivery on the ground and use the experience of our delivery teams to inform future policy direction.

Influence National and Regional Agenda

5.16 Changes to the regional agenda, the creation of the new Unitary Authorities and the Sub National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration will impact on the work of the Directorate. The Directorate is contributing actively to the development of the new Planning Service for the Northumberland Council and this will continue to be an important element of this year's work.

5.17 The development of Catchment Management Plans through the Water Framework Directive for all the watercourses arising in the National Park also provides a clear opportunity to influence both the national and regional agenda. Joint Action Plans will also be progressed with two of the Authority's key partners, Natural England and English Heritage.

Provide Specialist Advice

5.18 One of the Directorates key advisory roles for the Authority is the provision of the Development Control Service, which advises the Development Control Committee on planning applications. Substantial progress has been made over the past two years in meeting Government targets. The emphasis during this year will be on improving the service to customers and addressing issues relating to the monitoring and enforcement of previous planning decisions. The Planning Team will also forge closer integration with our integrated area teams.

5.19 Sustainable tourism increasingly forms an element of the planning applications that the Authority receives and the Directorate is active in developing the Sustainable Tourism agenda, with a particular emphasis this year on an audit of tourism businesses and facilities within the National Park.

5.20 The Directorate will also continue to support the Joint Local Access Forum and provides specialist advice on access issues as necessary, both to the Forum and the Authority as a whole.

Area Operations Directorate - Priority Activities

5.21 The Area Operations Directorate as delivery arm of the Authority, with three key roles:

1. Integrate delivery throughout the Park and across all areas of the Authority's work;
2. Actively facilitate local community engagement through both formal and informal partnerships; and

3. Share and embed the skills of the Authority and embed its work through local business opportunities.

The Directorate will contribute to the strategic challenges identified earlier through:

Integrated Area Delivery – Informing: the Sub National and Local Government Review and the Strategic Direction of our Communities

5.22 This year the Directorate will build on the foundation laid in 2006/07 and maximise the capacity of the Authority as a local partner, mentor, and advocate for the National Park and its communities. In particular, and in light of the changes at sub regional level and the local government review, we will ensure that we are fully engaged, and that our community engagement and visitor service activity is wholly integrated with, the new emerging governance structures in the region.

5.23 The Directorate will ensure that ‘grass roots’ knowledge and expertise, both our own and our communities both informs and influences our key policy documents such as the review of the National Park Management Plan and the emerging Local Development Framework. Area Operations will work to ensure that the knowledge and expertise held within our area teams is fully captured to inform both policy and the development control process and up skill as necessary.

Delivery for Partners

5.24 The Directorate will continue to work with Natural England in leading on and co-ordinating the local delivery of the land management agenda. Our long term objective is to protect and enhance both the special qualities of the National Park and the skills in the farming and land management sector which underpin the opportunities for sustainable social and economic development. Area Operations will continue to use our skills and resources to effectively target agri -environment funds which provide much needed additional income to farms in the National Park and work for local contractors.

5.25 Rights of way together with Open Access, are the key means by which local people and our visitors enjoy the National Park. Each year Area Operations with our partners, Northumberland County Council and Hadrian’s Wall Heritage Ltd, agrees and deliver for them a programme of investment in the National Trails and access generally. This year the Directorate will use all our expertise to make improvements to an environmentally sensitive location on Hadrian’s Wall National Trail.

5.26 The Directorate will also ensure that we maximise the take up of external funding including the new Rural Development for England and Leader funding when it becomes available, and the Authority’s Sustainable Development and Action Area funds. To take forward one of our key strategic challenges, Area Operations will ring fence some of this funding to deliver climate change projects identified by our local communities.

Delivering in Partnership with External Funding

5.27 *Traditional Boundaries Traditional Skills - developing skills and embedding equality:* This flagship project has pioneered the delivery of rural skills, providing a practical solution to a serious shortage locally and in the region. A mix of trainees from a variety of social backgrounds, of different genders and age mix continue to deliver on our equality priority. It will also continue to support a programme of educational and public events that are very successful in generating awareness, promoting traditional skills and giving members of the public genuine opportunities for a ‘hands-on’ experience of dry stone walling. This strong foundation will be used to actively seek additional external funding to continue the project in 2009 and beyond.

5.28 *Cheviot Hills Heritage Project:* This new two year ‘pathfinder’ cross border project has successfully begun to involve local communities in researching,

interpreting, and celebrating this fantastic landscape. It is one of the first initiatives to consider the Scottish and English Cheviots as one landscape. The creation of a 'Cheviot Atlas' will help local people and visitors to explore and get to know the rich heritage and inform future initiatives.

5.29 *Climate Change:* In addition to pump priming activity at a community level referred to above, the Directorate will also facilitate a series of high profile community events and celebrations that mark a major investment in 2006/07 in helping to restore blanket bog on Simonside damaged by walkers and runners, through major repair to the pathways. Additional external funding will also be sought to accelerate the exploration of how best our highly successful centre at Once Brewed within Hadrian's Wall World Heritage site (the Sill project) can help both visitors and local people to fully explore Climate Change and find answers that they can incorporate into their own lifestyles.

5.30 Finally the new Heritage Protection Bill provides a timely opportunity for us to revisit and develop our own 5 year management schedules for listed buildings in our protection and ensure that we are also effectively forward planning the resources we need to ensure that they together with rights of way network, the means by which the public can access and explore its rich heritage are revised and updated.

Corporate Services Directorate - Priority Activities

5.31 Corporate Services Directorate provides the key supporting services and systems for the Authority, and regulates the work of the Authority.

Become an Excellent Authority

5.32 The aim is to move the Authority from being good and effective to becoming excellent and an exemplar. To achieve this, a number of corporate improvements are required, a key role is supporting to the Authority's Equality Standard initiative. The Directorate will review key personnel policies to better align them with prioritised objectives and our culture and values, and develop leadership and management capabilities to meet the needs of the newly restructured organisation. This in turn will produce personal development plans and shared learning experiences. The Directorate aims to assist the Authority to achieve a good standard for staff skills in the use of information technology and develop member training based on specific roles and a skills audit. Whilst doing so it is essential to establish working practices for learning from experiences, projects and others.

Enablement to meet key objectives

5.33 Ensure that the Authority has the resources (sites, finance, staff, and information) and business systems appropriate to the style of operation and works to enable the Authority to achieve its wider corporate objectives. The Directorate will create and then embed an effective performance management framework and ensuring that evidence informs policy and decision making including resource allocation. This will require effective and timely reporting and management analysis. Corporate Services will set a balanced and robust medium-term financial plan which is focussed in achieving the Authority's top priorities yet providing flexibility for innovation and opportunism and provide supporting services and frameworks to enable all managers to deliver effective budget management.

5.34 The Directorate will build on the rationalised sites portfolio to ensure the Authority's sites continue to provide cost effective services to the quality expected for a National Park Authority. To ensure the Authority's services have a robust delivery platform Corporate Services will implement, post Implementing Electronic Government, Information Systems Plan. This will guide decision making and enable managers to use cutting-edge technological solutions to realise improvements in services be they reduced costs, increased quality or improved quality / accessibility

to services.

Enhanced Integrated Action Area Working

5.35 The Directorate will provide support for effective integrated action area working. The development of innovative solutions to issues of rural development including environmental enhancement and more vibrant rural communities through the development of a successful Local Development Strategy for Northumberland Uplands Leader bid. This will be prepared on behalf of a predominantly private and community based local action group, and requires the creation of the framework and supporting mechanisms to enable the Northumberland Uplands Leader Action Group to operate an effective bottom-up decision making process.

5.36 Corporate Services will focus resources to develop a reliable and effective Information Technology platform for the front-line offices. This is extremely challenging as Northumberland National Park's "front-line" is in the most remote and least well served areas of England for information technology infrastructure. The Directorate will also provide sound back-office support for the "Action Area" delivery and update the project management framework to sharpen its relevance to the medium-term financial plan and embed the dramatic improvements to Sustainable Development Fund across the whole of the Authority to ensure the learning lessons are used to realise corporate-scale improvements.

Step Change improvement to Communications

5.37 To ensure that the Authority's modest corporate communication resources are focussed on the areas of greatest corporate need and where greatest impact can be achieved. We believe this can be achieved via three key initiatives:

1. Creating a fit for purpose corporate communications strategy to define the key messages, focus on where the corporate resources should be applied, allocate duties and ensure effective performance management / reporting of the activities
2. Continually complying with Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts. Noting that the compliance with data protection is very high profile for public bodies and the legislative penalties for non-compliance are increasing significantly;
3. Developing of key partnership relationships building on a detailed strategic review by members of the Authority.

Support Climate Change initiatives

5.38 The Directorate will provide analytical support to measure carbon footprint, resilience and mitigation. This could include using our strategic alliance with the regional universities and / or in-house geographical information technology skills. In addition we will review personnel policies and practices to focus more on the achievement of reducing our working practice impact on climate change and develop different purchasing and procurement solutions to focus on areas where significant gains can be made towards the Authority's carbon footprint. The Directorate will also identify where sites policies and practices need to be changed; phased implementation and an publicly visible exemplars of good practice.

6. Detailed Delivery of Strategic Objectives

This section sets out the priority activities over the next year to deliver our Vision and Strategic Objectives and establishes when and how we will know we have achieved priority activities.

Strategic Objective 1: To have the special qualities of Northumberland National Park safeguarded and enhanced	
Key Performance Indicator: Habitats and species that are protected and enhanced and which have some resilience to climate change.	
Priority Activities	Measures
Core & Statutory Work Areas	
Deliver a review of the National Park Management Plan, ensuring stakeholders and local communities are fully engaged in the development of and signed up to the delivery of the Management Plan.	1) Prepare draft Management Plan ensuring full input from staff and Members between April 08 and August 08 2) Draft Management Plan consulted on October 08 3) Final Management Plan adopted by Authority March 09
Complete the delivery of the main elements of the Local Development Scheme, particularly the Submission Core Strategy, Area Action Plan for the Otterburn Training Area and a supplementary planning document of locally important buildings	1) Prepare Core Strategy ensuring full input from P&S Directorate and Action Area Teams - final document ready April 08; 2) Submit Core Strategy for public examination in June 08; 3) Core Strategy public examination hearing December; 4) OTA Issues and Options document to be consulted on in June 08 5) OTA Preferred Options to be consulted on by Jan 09; 6) Working with Community teams scope the preparation of a local list by March 09
Publish a 'State of the Park Report' to monitor the implementation of the National Park Management Plan and LDF	1) Final draft to Authority in June 08; 2) Submit to GONE in July 08 3) Summary document (combined with Corporate Plan summary) published by August 08
Ensure a role for the Authority in the transition process for the new Unitary Authority in respect of the planning service	Authority playing an active role in the transition process - planning service synchronised
Improve the effectiveness of the Development Control service, particularly by implementing the 1APP national standard application process and introducing the Development Control IT system	BVPI 109; Meet govt e-planning targets; 1APP to be in place by 6 April 2008 to meet statutory requirements; Conduct regular DC user satisfaction surveys
Priority 1 Work Areas	
Development of Landscape Strategy including prescriptions for landscape units through consultation with local community and partners	Scope preparation by March 2009, following Management Plan review
Work with Natural England to deliver a programme of Farm Environment Plans targeted at key habitats and areas to maximise the positive impact on the special qualities of the Park, and secure income for landowners/ managers	1) Complete 2 FEP's by end of June 2008 and 3 FEP's by end of November 2008. 2) Complete 6 Farm Bird Surveys by end of August 2008

Priority 2 Work Areas	
Following review of BAP take forward priority actions with Area Operations	BAP actions completed by March 2009
Priority 3 Work Areas	
Produce Strategy for care and maintenance of Historic buildings, monuments, and landscapes	Strategy in place by end of March 09.
Survey of historic buildings, monuments, and landscapes	100% of historic buildings to have up to date quinquennial survey by end of March 09.

Strategic Objective 2:	
To use the special qualities of the National Park to support sustainable community and economic development	
Key Performance Indicator:	
Increased economic value of Northumberland National Park to the North East region	
Priority Activities	Measures
Core & Statutory Work Areas	
Support the work of the Joint Local Access Forum	1) JLAF Annual Action Plan ratified at April meeting and implemented throughout the year; 2) Member attendance to meetings 75% or greater; 3) JLAF Annual Report presented to NNPA Annual meeting (June 08); 4) Annual Member feedback survey scoring >80% good or very good
Priority 1 Work Areas	
To further enhance action area working as the key operational means of delivering the Authority's strategic objectives	30 Community Groups, 16 Local Businesses & 16 Local Tourism Providers Supported/mentored by Area Operations by end of March 2009
Area Teams providing a focus for linking social, environment and economic interests, embracing community, business and agency/organisations	Based upon Aspect model use Focus Groups to inform Action Area working. Facilitate 11 Focus Groups by end of October 2008
Traditional Skills Project – deliver year 3 of the project and work with regional partners to develop and secure additional resources from RDPE	1) Targets for year 3: 8 trainees achieving Intermediate Level Dry-stone Walling Association Certification by Nov 08; Restoration of 1,000m of Dry Stone Wall by end of Nov 08; Restoration of 750m of other traditional boundaries by end of Nov 08; 2) Secure match funding for years 4/5 by the end of Nov 08.
Sustainable rural development through Leader and the Rural Development Programme on behalf of One North East	Create a high quality Local Development Strategy for the effective delivery of key aspects of the Rural Development Programme for England. Aim for approval in May 2008 and start of delivery in September 2008
Priority 2 Work Areas	
Green Tourism Business Scheme and 2nd phase of Passport to Northumberland initiative	Facilitator recruited by April 2008; 8 "Special Quality" events to be delivered between October 2008 and March 2009 for businesses in and around the NNP.

	NP Visitor Centres to be graded by March 2009.
Simonside Project – deliver a programme of activity focussed on Simonside informed by the outcomes of the earlier engagement activity/event and secure additional funding for further conservation work	1) Events: one community engagement events in Rothbury by end of May 2008, one arts event based at Lordenshaws in July 2008 and one activity day on Simonside in August 2008; 2) Complete 50 metres of additional path restoration on Simonside by end of March 2009.
Conclude final year of ‘Seeding Change’ project and embed learning lessons in core activity. Develop a successor project ‘Wild Flowers and Community’ to include work on heather moorland	1) Deliver Hay Meadow education week to 8 first schools in the North Tyne (Greenhaugh Meadows); 2) Talks to 6 first schools on bumblebees as part of the Year of Food & Farming; 3) Complete 2 nd year of the B&B’s for bumblebees award scheme; 4) Plant 3000 locally grown wildflowers into sites around the Park - bringing the total to 10,000; 5) Introduce harvested seed to 5 fields; 6) Undertake 6 voluntary Ranger Project training days; 7) Deliver 2 training days to TBTS trainees; 8) Survey 20 fields.
Priority 3 Work Areas	
Cheviot Hills Heritage Project - delivery of year 1; ensure input from Coquetdale archaeologists	1) Devise and test methodology for heritage asset & access audit by May 2008; 2) Deliver first 1/2 of heritage asset & access audit by August 2008; 3) Begin community research programme, including training and events by August 2008; 4) Complete half year reports to funders & partners and 2 Project newsletters published by August 2008,
Delivering project planning phase and engagement planning phase of The Sill Project	1) Audience Development Plan to be completed by September 2008 2) Enterprise Plan by September 2008 3) Training Plan by September 2008 4) Design Brief for OB by September 2008 5) Protected Landscapes Engagement Plan by June 2008.

Strategic Objective 3:	
To have an increased awareness and understanding of the National Park and support for the Authority’s aspirations	
Key Performance Indicator:	
Increased awareness of Northumberland National Park and the special qualities	
Priority Activities	Measures
Core & Statutory Work Areas	
Conduct Public Rights of Way condition surveys and agree an annual action plan with Northumberland County Council. Support the work of the Joint local Access Forum and agree a specification for upland paths with partners.	1) Annual Action Plan to be agreed with NCC by end of April 08; 2) 20% of network to be surveyed by March 09; 3) Length of PROW improved by March 09.
Communications Strategy – Develop and implement a strategy encompassing the	1) First meeting of NNP Consultative Forum in May 08 (to focus on Equality),

recommendations of the communications review. Develop a wider National Park Forum to act as an important communication link and sounding board for the Authority. Develop practical tools/opportunities to enhance communications between members and the wider staff team	2) October Forum to focus on Management Plan review. 3) Communications Task & Finish Group established June 2008; 4) Communications Strategy finished Dec. 2008; 5) Staff survey undertaken Jan. 2009
Priority 1 Work Areas	
Support and contribute to business and community events and develop volunteer opportunities and training.	1) Support 20 business/community events by the end of March 2009; 2) Support 6 Agricultural Shows by end of October 2008; 3) Support 22 Voluntary ranger events through July /August 2008.
Deliver enhancement to the website including improved search facilities and content development such as implementation of the cultural map and web cams	1) Web cams - 3 online by May 08, 2 additional by July 08, and 2 by December 08. 2) Historic video section added to the website by June 08. 3) Develop and test revised monitoring system by Jan 09
Priority 2 Work Areas	
Complete audit of tourism offer in National Park	Scope of audit to be completed by September 2008. Audit to be completed by end of March 2009.
Improve the accessibility and signage of the Public Rights of Way network within the National Park by developing a project proposal to improve physical access for restricted mobility users and a 3-5 year PROW maintenance schedule	1) PID agreed by SMT by August 08; 2) Working group to be set up by December 08; 3) Audit of available access for all to be completed and funding sources researched by end of March 09.
Priority 3 Work Areas	
Mosaic	1) Submit first expression of interest to Access to Nature by April 08; 2) Hear back if we made it through first round in May 08; 3) Submit second stage full application in June/July 08; 4) Hear back from Access to Nature during October/November 08; 5) Early 2009: start project if funding secured
Provide an efficient and effective Estate Management service for the Authority implementing the findings of the estate strategy	1) Customer feedback survey scoring >80% good or very good. 2) Car Park income increased by 3% (£95,000 by end of March 09); 3) Establish 2008/09 baseline for site visits

Strategic Objective 4:	
The National Park Authority is an effective delivery partner for key regional and local agendas	
Key Performance Indicator:	
Northumberland National Park Authority effectively delivering the land management agenda in the National Park	
Priority Activities	Measures
Priority 1 Work Areas	
New Leader + RDPE - delivery	Local Development Strategy agreed by June 2008. Aim for a fully representative and empowered local action group to be

	effective by August 2008.
Priority 2 Work Areas	
Coordinate the Authority's input to the Water Framework Directive, specifically the Catchment Management Plans for Northumbria and Tweed-Solway	National Park interests represented within the Water Framework Directive Publication of the draft Catchment Management Plans by March 2009.
Management of relationship with MoD	1) MOD fulfil their responsibility in relation to PROW on OTA, 2) Joint projects implemented to improve biodiversity 3) Joint projects implemented to protect/ enhance HE 4) Development of a Memorandum of understanding with MoD/ Defence Estates by December 08.
Update and take forward Natural England Joint Action Plan	1) Update Action Plan by September 08; 2) Take forward actions during September 08 – March 09

Strategic Objective 5:	
The National Park Authority is proactive, innovative and forward looking, achieving through partnerships	
Key Performance Indicator:	
Value of business and community engagement	
Priority Activities	Measures
Core & Statutory Work Areas	
Area teams engaged with development of NP Management Plan and LDF	1) Engage in preparation of submission Core Strategy and Issues and Options document for the OTA April – May 08. 2) Assist with/ raise awareness of Core Strategy consultation during June – July 08. 3) Engage in preparation of the draft Management Plan April – August 08. 4) Assist with/ raise awareness of Management Plan consultation during October – November 08. 5) Engage in the preparation of the final Management Plan November 08 – February 09
Priority 1 Work Areas	
Alignment: Maximise opportunities arising from Local Government Review to fully integrate Area Operations with the new community governance mechanisms.	In the north of the County 1) contribute to developing the reshaped/ new LSP with an 'appreciative enquiry framework'; 2) interview 5 partners by end July 08; 3) work with LSP Chair to agree key messages by end August 08; 4) conclude exercise by end September 08 and share conclusions with LSP Members.
Delivery of local partnerships – delivery through a series of informal community partnerships, maximising opportunities for local people working together through informal partnerships.	25 informal community partnerships assisted by March 08.
Priority 2 Work Areas	
National Trails - implementation; agree specification of upland paths with partners; contribute to HWH upland path conference	Complete 150 metres of Pitched Path on Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail by end of November 2008

Priority 3 Work Areas	
Secure and enhance services at Coquetdale Centre	Pilot the use of the Coquetdale Centre by the County registrar service. Review by the end of October 08 and identify the way forward.

Strategic Objective 6: The National Park Authority is efficient, effective and inclusive	
Key Performance Indicator: Northumberland National Park Authority is an inclusive Authority- achieve the equality standard	
Priority Activities	Measures
Core & Statutory Work Areas	
Preparation of Corporate Plan	1) Sections 1 & 2 of Plan to Authority March 08 2) Collate Performance Indicator information 3) Publish June 08 4) Commence preparation of 09/10 Corporate Plan Jan 09 5) Directorate Work Plans complete by mid Feb 09
Create a more effective performance management framework	Embed new performance Management Systems and new Performance Indicators within the Authority - commence April 08
Preparation of first 3 year Business Plan	Deliver the Authority's first 3 year Business Plan by March 09
Achieve ECDL targets	Completed by 5 new northern staff; 5 southern staff; 4 units completed by 10 new northern; 5 new southern staff by end of March 09.
CRM - ensure CRM becomes cornerstone data storage system	Monitors show increased consistent usage by 100% of area teams
Data Protection / Freedom of Information	1) First Data Protection Audit in June 08 and undertake any actions identified such as a Data Audit; 2) Complete paper file compliance and move to electronic systems by May 09; 3) 100% of FOI requests turned around on time
Human Resources Strategy - Further develop a new set of culture and values within the organisation. Implement a corporate leadership and management development programme within the context of individual and corporate training. Develop personal development plans to further enhance personal learning and development	HR strategy to Authority by October 08
Finance systems improvement	1) Upgrade Exchequer to Vista compatibility – commence late summer, to be completed by the end of September 08. 2) Review purchasing systems to enable electronic ordering/approval - Oct 2008
Prepare for 07/08 and future year's accounts close	Prepare background for IFRS by March 09

Manage overall budget to outturn target	1) Provide quarterly financial reporting to SMT and Authority (March/ June/ September/ December), including discussion of variances, corrective actions and progress towards meeting outturn. 2) Use and monitor monthly financial information systems to create timely and accurate management information, preparing monthly management accounts by the first week after month end and issuing quarterly project performance reports by first week after quarter end.
Ensure timely updates to financial systems	Regular and timely processing and reporting: year end accounts, VAT, payroll, budget changes, bank, fuel cards, car park analysis, purchase ledger, sundry cheques, petty cash, debtors, income holding, credit cards, lease cars (inc.P11Ds and Class 1A NIC), expense claims and e-commerce. Compile budgets (annually). Manage insurances (annually)
Provide financial officer input to projects.	Maintain accurate financial management of projects - measured by timeliness of grant claims submitted, acceptance by funders/auditors of amounts claimed and overall reconciliation to Enterprise
Provide an efficient and effective PA service to the Strategic Management Team	Annual SMT feedback survey scoring >80% good or very good
Provide an efficient and effective Committee Administration and support service for Authority members and the JLAF	1) Annual Member feedback survey scoring >80% good or very good; 2) Meeting papers on web five days prior to meeting taking place
Provision of ICT Services and Support including GIS to Eastburn & other sites (including hardware, software upgrades and Network Infrastructure Improvement program)	Keep system efficiently running (ICT Audit) and cost savings. All key services available between 10am-4pm 7days a week at greater than 95%. Upgrade Exchange to Exchange 2007 by end of August 08. Upgrade DHCP and DNS servers by end June 08.
ICT user training	Annual ICT Survey early Autumn 08. All staff have facilities for e-learning in office 2007 during 2008/09.
The development of suitable information systems to match our operational and performance management requirements	Annual ICT Survey, Autumn 08. All key services available between 10am-4pm 7days a week at greater than 95%. The planned upgrade of SharePoint during the course of 2008/09. Consultation for additional requirements during May 08. Recommendations for process to be complete June 08. Upgrade process following on from that.
ICT Business Continuity	Annual ICT Audit, Outcomes from BC testing. Annual Business Continuity test

	to be concluded by October 2008.
Manage and continually review health and safety procedures	1) 100% of staff work station risk assessments completed with 70% falling with green zone of scoring system; 2) 5% reduction in stress tool kit average score for staff
Ongoing development of an efficient and effective reception, administration and front of house service for staff based at and visitors to Eastburn	Customer feedback survey scoring >80% good or very good

Equality	
Key Performance Indicator:	
Priority Activities	Measures
Actively take forward the Authority's Equality duties to ensure the Authority is compliant with all relevant legislation	Equality Standard level 2 by Nov 2008.
Equalities - Ensure all policies and procedures comply	Undertake 7 Equality Impact Assessments by March 09
Implement actions arising from Equality Impact Assessments	To meet timetable identified in Equality Impact Assessments.

Climate Change	
Key Performance Indicator:	
Priority Activities	Measures
As part of Climate Change Action Plan develop proposals for 1) Research and long term monitoring 2) mitigation and 3) adaptation and resilience	1) Research agreed and started,2) targets for mitigation agreed 3) priority areas for adaptation and resilience work selected Research, targets and priority areas agreed by December 08.
Identify and implement key Climate Change Actions including researching and developing landscape scale initiatives	Climate Change actions identified and implemented First stage of Cheviot Climate Change Project underway.
Work jointly with Government, other National Park Authorities, key agencies and landowners to achieve landscape scale initiatives on climate change mitigation and adaptation	Number of joint initiatives developed. First stage of Cheviot Climate Change Project underway.
Through our own actions and policies, position the Authority as a local champion and resource for action on climate change. The Authority will review the impacts of its Human Resource, IT, and Purchasing policies and produce an action plan	Phased implementation. Include review of work patterns and possibility of supplying low-emission vehicles; review procurement action plan Action Plan agreed by December 2008
Climate Proofing the Cheviots – Work in partnership with the Environment Agency, land managers and other partners to deliver pilot actions to test adaptations to climate change.	1) Complete base line vegetation survey of Blanket Bog areas of Breamish Valley by March 2009; 2) Develop and implement interpretation on Climate change issues at Ingram Visitor Centre by end of March 2009.

<p>Ascertain carbon footprint for the estate and continue to implement projects and schemes to reduce this.</p>	<p>NI 185 % reduction in carbon footprint To be developed as part of Climate Change Action Plan</p>
<p>Provision of suitable IT to enable reduction in carbon footprint</p>	<p>Access to emails and SharePoint is available remotely to all users. Potential to enable up to 67% of all users with full remote functionality (if required). Currently, 15% of users set up to use this service.</p>

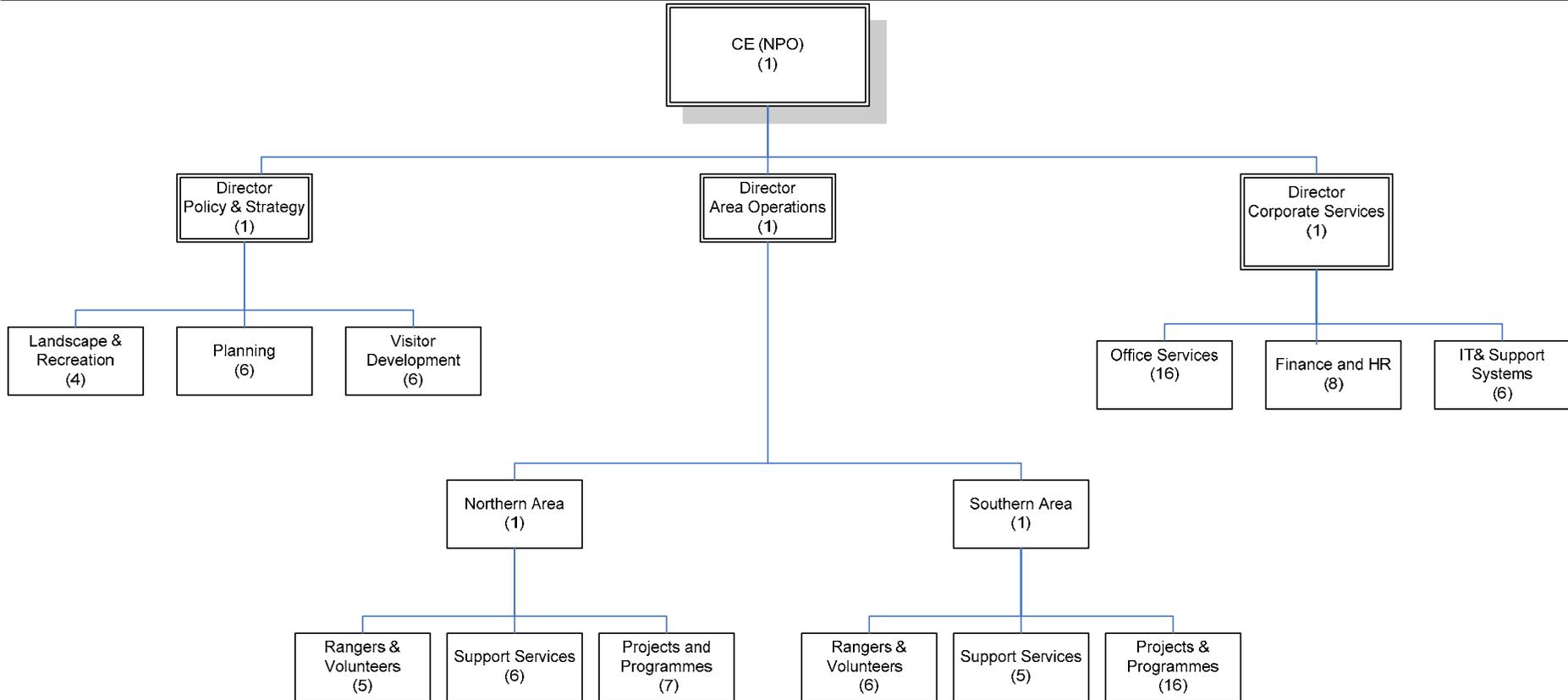
Appendix 1 – Performance Indicators

PI Type	PI Code	Detailed Description		2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	5 Year 2010/11
BVPI	BV2a	The level of the Equality Standard for local government to which the Authority conforms in respect of gender, race and disability.	Target Actual	Level 1 Level 0	Level 1 Level 0	Level 1 Level 0	Level 1 Level 1	Level 3
BVPI	BV8	Percentage of invoices for commercial goods & services paid by the Authority within 30 days of receipt or within the agreed payment terms.	Target Actual	100 98	98 94	98 94	95	98
BVPI	BV12	The number of working days/shifts lost to the Local Authority due to sickness absence.	Target Actual	7.00 8.85	6.50 4.42	5.50 6.48	6.83	5.50
BVPI	BV14	The percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill-health retirements) as a percentage of the total work force.	Target Actual	0.00 0.00	0.00 0.00	0.00 1.18	0.00	0.00
BVPI	BV15	The percentage of local authority employees retiring on grounds of ill health as a percentage of the total workforce.	Target Actual	0.00 0.00	0.00 0.00	0.00 0.00	0.00	0.00
BVPI	BV16a	The percentage of local authority employees with a disability.	Target Actual	2.00 1.14	2.00 0.95	2.00 1.18	2.10	2.00
BVPI	BV16b	The percentage of the economically active population in the local authority area who have a disability.	Target Actual	n/a 12.70	n/a 12.70	n/a 12.70	n/a 12.70	n/a
BVPI	BV17a	The percentage of local authority employees from ethnic minority communities.	Target Actual	2.0 1.2	2.0 2.1	2.0 0.0	2.1	2.0
BVPI	BV17b	The percentage of the economically active (persons aged 18-65) population from ethnic minority communities in the local authority area.	Target Actual	n/a 0.2	n/a 0.2	n/a 0.2	n/a 0.2	n/a
BVPI	BV106	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land.	Target Actual	0.00 0.00	50.00 0.00	50.00 66.67	60.00	60.00
BVPI	BV109a	Percentage of major applications determined within 13 weeks.	Target Actual	0.00 100.00	50.00 0.00	50.00 No App's	80.00 No App's	50.00
BVPI	BV109b	Percentage of minor applications determined within 8 weeks.	Target Actual	75.00 83.00	75.00 43.00	65.00 80.00	80.00 83.33	75.00
BVPI	BV109c	Percentage of 'other' applications determined within 8 weeks	Target Actual	80.00 89.00	80.00 68.00	80.00 90.91	80.00 84.38	80.00
BVPI	BV156	The percentage of the authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for; and accessible to, disabled people.	Target Actual	86.00 83.00	100.00 83.00	92.00 83.00	100.00	100.00
BVPI	BV200a	Did the local planning authority submit the Local Development Scheme (LDS) by 28th March 2005 and thereafter maintain a 3-year rolling programme?	Target Actual	Yes Yes	Yes Yes	Yes Yes	Yes Yes	Yes
BVPI	BV200b	Has the local planning authority met the milestones which the current Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out?	Target Actual	Yes Yes	Yes Yes	Yes Yes	Yes Yes	Yes
BVPI	BV200c	Did the Local Planning Authority publish an annual monitoring report by December of the last year?	Target Actual	New New	Not set Yes	Yes Yes	Yes Yes	Yes
BVPI	BV204	The number of planning appeal decisions allowed against the authority's decision to refuse on planning applications, as a percentage of the total number of planning	Target Actual	No appeals No appeals	No appeals No appeals	100 (1 app) No appeals	No appeals	Not set
BVPI	BV205	The local authority's score against a 'quality of planning services' checklist.	Target Actual	Not set 72.0	Not set 72.0	Not set 77.8	Not set 77.8	Not set
BVPI	BV219a	Total number of conservation areas in the local authority area.	Target Actual	New New	Not set 1	1 1	1 1	2
BVPI	BV219b	Percentage of conservation areas in the local authority area with an up-to-date character appraisal.	Target Actual	New New	Not set 100.00	100.00 100.00	100.00 100.00	100.00
BVPI	BV219c	Percentage of conservation areas with published management proposals.	Target Actual	New New	Not set 0.00	100.00 100.00	100.00	100.00

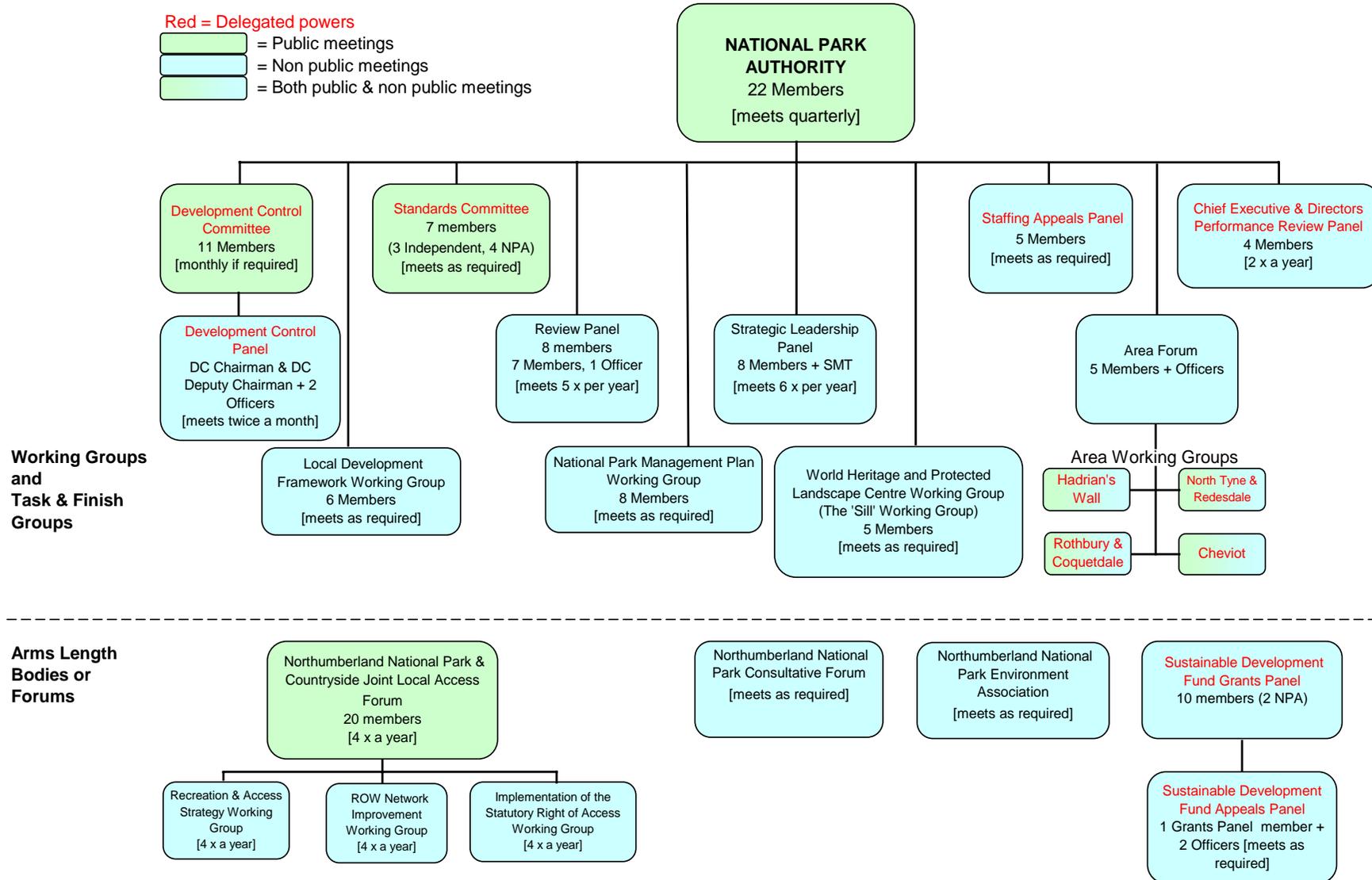
Appendix 1 (continued) – Performance Indicators

PI Type	PI Code	Detailed Description		2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	5 Year 2010/11
NPA	CH3b	Number of listed buildings at risk rescued through NPA action during the year as a percentage of the total number of listed buildings at risk in the National Park	Target			Not set	Not set	
			Actual			0.00	0.00	
NPA	RM1	Percentage of total length of footpaths and other rights of way which were easy to use by members of the public	Target	70.00	80.00	75.00		90.00
			Actual	67.00	79.00	64.10	52.90	
NPA	RM2	Percentage of public rights of way signposted where they leave the road	Target	90.00	95.00	100.00		100.00
			Actual	92.00	100.00	84.20	94.40	
NPA	PU1	Average percentage score - National Park visitor centre satisfaction/effectiveness survey	Target	70.00	75.00	86.00		86.00
			Actual	No survey	86.00	89.65	93.00	
NPA	DC2	The number of decisions delegated to officers as a percentage of all decisions	Target	New	New	60.00	70.00	70.00
			Actual	New	44.00	63.83	88.00	
IEG	n/a	Unique user to website (,000)	Target	New	110	125		150
			Actual	75	100	230	239	
IEG	n/a	Number of planning applications accepted via website	Target	New	Not set	15		25
			Actual	0	3	6	22	
Local		% area of SSSI and NNR's in favourable or unfavourable improving condition	Target	n/a	71.00	75.00		87.00
			Mid Year	n/a	65.00	70.00		
			End Year	n/a	68.00	80.69	86.64	
Local		Number of passengers using the Hadrian's Wall Bus services	Target	28,000	26,000	27,000		24,442
			Mid Year	no data	26,624	25,774		
			End Year	27,500	27,881	25,774	33,355	
Local		Total number of cycle routes promoted in/through the National Park	Target	n/a	8	10		12
			Mid Year	n/a	9	16		
			End Year	n/a	9	23	23	
Local		Number of volunteer days led by the Authority	Target	1,400	1,600	1,800		2,000
			Mid Year	no data	1,229	1,044		
			End Year	1,763	2,142	1,028	1,512	
Local		Average time to determine planning applications (weeks)	Target	8.50	8.50	8.50		7.00
			Mid Year	no data	13.26	11.06		
			End Year	9.92	13.50	9.57	8.79	

Appendix 2 – Staff Structure



Appendix 3 – Corporate Governance Structure



Appendix 4 – Financial Information

Northumberland NPA £000s	Actual 2006/07	Budget 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Budget 2008/09	Budget 2009/10	Budget 2010/11
Natural Environment	550	470	437	552	492	517
Cultural Heritage	721	795	720	693	457	423
Recreation Management	449	671	656	410	390	395
Promoting Understanding Ranger Services & Volunteers	1,095	1,150	1,123	958	969	989
Development Control	594	642	636	666	680	688
Forward Planning	218	146	261	164	165	168
Corporate & Democratic Core	249	767	428	826	441	427
	462	450	423	407	413	441
Total Gross Expenditure	4,338	5,091	4,684	4,676	4,007	4,048
Actual or Baseline NPG	2,879	2,956	2,956	3,092	3,181	3,274
Other External Funding	775	529	761	599	288	258
Sales, Fees and Charges	200	535	206	222	221	224
Interest	71	73	85	75	77	78
Capital Charges	252	633	633	197	197	197
Capital Balances Contributions	5	28	0	28	0	0
Income	4,182	4,754	4,641	4,213	3,964	4,031
Transfer (to) or from Revenue Balances	-156	-337	-43	-463	-43	-17

Natural Environment £000s	Actual 2006/07	Budget 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Budget 2008/09	Budget 2009/10	Budget 2010/11
Direct Revenue	187	51	26	114	82	98
Capital	0	0	0	0	0	0
Employee Costs	237	239	231	267	253	262
Overheads	1	1	1	1	0	0
Recharged Support Costs	125	154	154	169	156	156
Capital Charges	0	25	25	1	1	1
Gross Expenditure	550	470	437	552	492	517
Other External Funding	83	20	16	41	0	0
Sales, Fees and Charges	20	9	11	10	7	7
Income	103	29	27	51	7	7
Net Expenditure	447	441	410	501	485	510

Cultural Heritage £000s	Actual 2006/07	Budget 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Budget 2008/09	Budget 2009/10	Budget 2010/11
Direct Revenue	100	94	72	85	34	19
Capital	0	28	0	28	0	0
Employee Costs	385	424	405	348	168	151
Overheads	36	37	31	23	2	0
Recharged Support Costs	199	210	210	209	253	253
Capital Charges	1	2	2	0	0	0
Gross Expenditure	721	795	720	693	457	423
Other External Funding	334	346	316	225	84	14

Sales, Fees and Charges	3	0	4	0	0	0
Income	337	346	320	225	84	14
Net Expenditure	384	449	400	468	373	409

Recreation Management £000s	Actual 2006/07	Budget 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Budget 2008/09	Budget 2009/10	Budget 2010/11
Direct Revenue	122	187	174	83	57	57
Capital	0	0	0	0	0	0
Employee Costs	114	122	123	125	129	132
Overheads	69	65	62	67	69	71
Recharged Support Costs	64	76	76	81	81	81
Capital Charges	80	221	221	54	54	54
Gross Expenditure	449	671	656	410	390	395
Other External Funding	112	129	129	42	20	20
Sales, Fees and Charges	93	94	93	96	96	96
Income	205	223	222	138	116	116
Net Expenditure	244	448	434	272	274	279

Promoting Understanding £000s	Actual 2006/07	Budget 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Budget 2008/09	Budget 2009/10	Budget 2010/11
Direct Revenue	266	181	171	141	136	145
Capital	2	0	0	0	0	0
Employee Costs	432	381	369	400	413	423
Overheads	48	48	43	75	76	77
Recharged Support Costs	242	240	240	265	267	267
Capital Charges	105	300	300	77	77	77
Gross Expenditure	1,095	1,150	1,123	958	969	989
Other External Funding	129	0	0	10	0	0
Sales, Fees and Charges	81	84	81	94	97	98
Income	210	84	81	104	97	98
Net Expenditure	885	1,066	1,042	854	872	891

Rangers Services & Volunteers £000s	Actual 2006/07	Budget 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Budget 2008/09	Budget 2009/10	Budget 2010/11
Direct Revenue	43	40	39	40	40	40
Capital	0	0	0	0	0	0
Employee Costs	370	379	374	401	413	421
Overheads	1	0	0	0	0	0
Recharged Support Costs	176	199	199	221	223	223
Capital Charges	4	24	24	4	4	4
Gross Expenditure	594	642	636	666	680	688
Other External Funding	7	0	0	0	0	0
Sales, Fees and Charges	2	1	1	0	0	0
Income	9	1	1	0	0	0
Net Expenditure	585	641	635	666	680	688

Development Control £000s	Actual 2006/07	Budget 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Budget 2008/09	Budget 2009/10	Budget 2010/11
Direct Revenue	25	3	116	3	3	3
Capital	24	0	4	0	0	0
Employee Costs	104	83	83	93	93	95
Overheads	2	8	6	10	9	10
Recharged Support Costs	63	52	52	58	60	60

Capital Charges	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gross Expenditure	218	146	261	164	165	168
Other External Funding	52	34	34	0	9	9
Sales, Fees and Charges	0	12	16	12	12	12
Income	52	46	50	12	21	21
Net Expenditure	166	100	211	152	144	147

Forward Planning £000s	Actual 2006/07	Budget 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Budget 2008/09	Budget 2009/10	Budget 2010/11
Direct Revenue	55	616	282	668	275	263
Capital	0	0	0	0	0	0
Employee Costs	117	92	87	93	100	98
Overheads	18	2	2	0	0	0
Recharged Support Costs	59	57	57	65	66	66
Capital Charges	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gross Expenditure	249	767	428	826	441	427
Other External Funding	53	0	258	276	170	210
Sales, Fees and Charges	0	330	0	0	0	0
Income	53	330	258	276	170	210
Net Expenditure	196	437	170	550	271	217

Corporate & Democratic Core £000s	Actual 2006/07	Budget 2007/08	Actual 2007/08	Budget 2008/09	Budget 2009/10	Budget 2010/11
Direct Revenue	23	22	20	26	45	35
Capital	10	0	5	0	0	0
Employee Costs	881	902	903	935	959	986
Overheads	414	453	422	453	454	465
Recharged Support Costs	(928)	(988)	(988)	(1,068)	(1,106)	(1,106)
Capital Charges	62	61	61	61	61	61
Gross Expenditure	462	450	423	407	413	441
Other External Funding	5	0	8	5	5	5
Sales, Fees and Charges	1	5	0	10	9	11
Income	6	5	8	15	14	16
Net Expenditure	456	445	415	392	399	425

Appendix 5 – Defra Expectations – the draft ‘Defra Deal’ (subject to discussion)

In December 2007, Defra announced an above-inflation grant settlement for the next three years for the National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority.

This provides the context for Defra, Natural England, and National Park Authorities to now agree “a Deal”, setting out some agreed priorities and working practices for the financial years 2008/09 – 2010/11. The following text sets out the current draft of the ‘deal’, which is an elaboration of the approach adopted in previous years.

“The Draft Deal” for the National Park and Broads Authorities, incorporating the financial grant memorandum and the spending expectations for the CSR07 years.

Introduction

The National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority (“the NPAs”) are well established and well-respected bodies, delivering statutory purposes whose basic concept has stood the test of time since they were first formulated in 1949.

The NPAs have a unique constitution, reflecting their distinctive mix of national, regional, and local responsibilities.

The Government recognises the particular role which NPAs play, and that their mix of skills and knowledge makes them especially well-fitted to discharging that mix of responsibilities. Government ‘sponsorship’ of the NPAs is therefore aimed at enhancing their capacity to fulfil their role and does not seek to intrude on their areas of expertise nor to second-guess decisions which are best taken by the NPAs themselves.

Nevertheless the Government does have a significant interest in what the NPAs do as it provides the bulk of NPA funding, appoints some members, and cannot fully achieve its own objectives without the contribution which NPAs make.

This document sets out the roles which both the Government and the NPAs need to play if they are, together, to maximise the benefit of the National Parks and ensure that the taxpayers get maximum value for their investment.

The Government’s Strategic Priorities

The 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review (“CSR07”) was the occasion for the Government to review its priorities for the coming period, in particular through a streamlined set of Public Service Agreements. Defra leads on two PSAs :

- to lead the global effort to avoid dangerous climate change, and
- to secure a healthy natural environment for today and for the future

The NPAs will contribute to both of these (and indeed to other PSAs led by other departments) but the natural environment PSA is particularly relevant and they have been written into the action plans for delivering that PSA.

Beneath the PSA are two further tiers of objectives - the Departmental Strategic Objectives and the supporting Intermediate Outcomes, of which the following are especially relevant to the NPAs :

Departmental Strategic Objective	Related Intermediate Outcome(s)
Climate change tackled internationally; and through domestic action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions	Reduced UK energy consumption.
A healthy, resilient, productive and diverse natural environment	<p>Biodiversity valued, safeguarded and enhanced</p> <p>Land and soils managed sustainably</p> <p>People enjoy, understand and care for the natural environment</p> <p>Sustainable living landscapes with best features conserved</p>
Sustainable development championed across government, across the UK, and internationally	
Strong rural communities	<p>Economic growth is supported in rural areas with the lowest levels of performance</p> <p>The evidenced needs of rural people and communities are addressed through mainstream public policy and delivery</p>

Shared Aims

There is a close correlation between what the Government is seeking to achieve and the statutory purposes of National Parks which (with amendments) go back to 1949 and have always set the National Parks the twin role of conserving or enhancing their areas and facilitating the enjoyment and understanding of those areas' special qualities by the public.

A landscape designation is, by definition, long term. The core duty of the NPAs is therefore to ensure that their areas are conserved (or enhanced where possible) for future generations. But alongside that the Government also expects them to answer the (sometimes transient) needs of the current generation and also to remain liveable areas for the people whose homes or jobs lie within their boundaries. This was made explicit by the insertion of the socio-economic duty into the legislation.

A fuller description of the Government's aims for the National Parks is set out in DoE Circular number 12 of 1996.

Shared principles

This Deal is based around a shared set of principles that each organisation will apply in operating this relationship. Each party will:

- focus on outcomes and delivery to customers against public service standards that set out the quality of service that customers should expect;
- in particular, work together to implement a further round of NPAPA (National Park Authority Performance Assessments);
- share data, information and analyses across the network;
- involve each other early on in the development of policy and delivery options;
- respect partners' differing roles and responsibilities;
- ensure that there are no surprises, especially on matters that may interest the media;

- invest in building good working relationships – being open and honest with views and information; investing senior time in developing relationships; take responsibility for promoting good relations at all times; take action where there are problems;
- if a dispute arises it will be referred initially to the relevant NPO (or the ENPOG Chair if it is a general point) and the Senior Responsible Officer for the Defra ‘People and Landscapes’ Programme – if necessary it will then go to Ministers and NPA Chairs;
- encourage better understanding (eg secondments where appropriate, seminars, site visits. In particular the sponsorship team will meet and/or visit each NPA each year and the NP Minister will maintain a cycle of meetings/visits with individual NPAs
- share successes and problems;
- support periodic independent review of how the Deal is working.

Defra’s role

Defra will:

1. Set an appropriate legislative and policy framework for the NPAs to operate within. This covers both legislation (for example open access) and also policy development outside of legislation (for example the diversity review and its subsequent action plan). Where these policies are being developed by Defra the NPAs will be directly involved whenever appropriate. Where the lead lies with another Government department Defra will where necessary either facilitate direct contact with that Department or else ensure that it is aware of NPA views before making its own contribution to the inter-departmental discussion.

Defra will follow the same principles on matters affecting the governance of the NPAs themselves, where the lead will most often lie with DCLG (for example on member and officer codes of conduct or on audit arrangements or on requirements for disclosure etc). Where the special circumstances of the NPAs require some adaptation of the general approach (as happened, for example, on CPA) Defra will pursue this with DCLG and the NPAs.

When appropriate Defra will also liaise with the Welsh Assembly Government (whose National Parks share the same primary legislation) or with the Scottish Executive or the Northern Ireland Executive

2. Provide adequate funding. Overall funding will be decided in each spending review and the NPAs will be given a full opportunity to set out their case. The level of funding for local government will be one factor but there will be no automatic link to the local government settlement given the different and narrower range of functions which the NPAs have.

3. Appoint ‘national’ members who will add a national perspective whilst still working in the interest of the National Park and its Authority

4. Provide a degree of challenge as a “critical friend” of the NPAs

The NPAs’ role

The NPAs will:

1. Ensure that they derive maximum benefit from funding, including by efficiency savings and shared services. They will also seek to maximise other sources of income – though Defra recognises that it will continue to be the primary funder

2. Make the contribution to Defra’s natural environment PSA target which is described in the action plans and contribute as fully as they can to the delivery of other PSAs. To that end ENPAA will write to Defra at the end of each financial year,

setting out the collective contribution which the NPAs have made to the PSA targets

3. Look to cooperate with other public and voluntary bodies, such as NE, LAs, RDAs, so as to maximise their impact

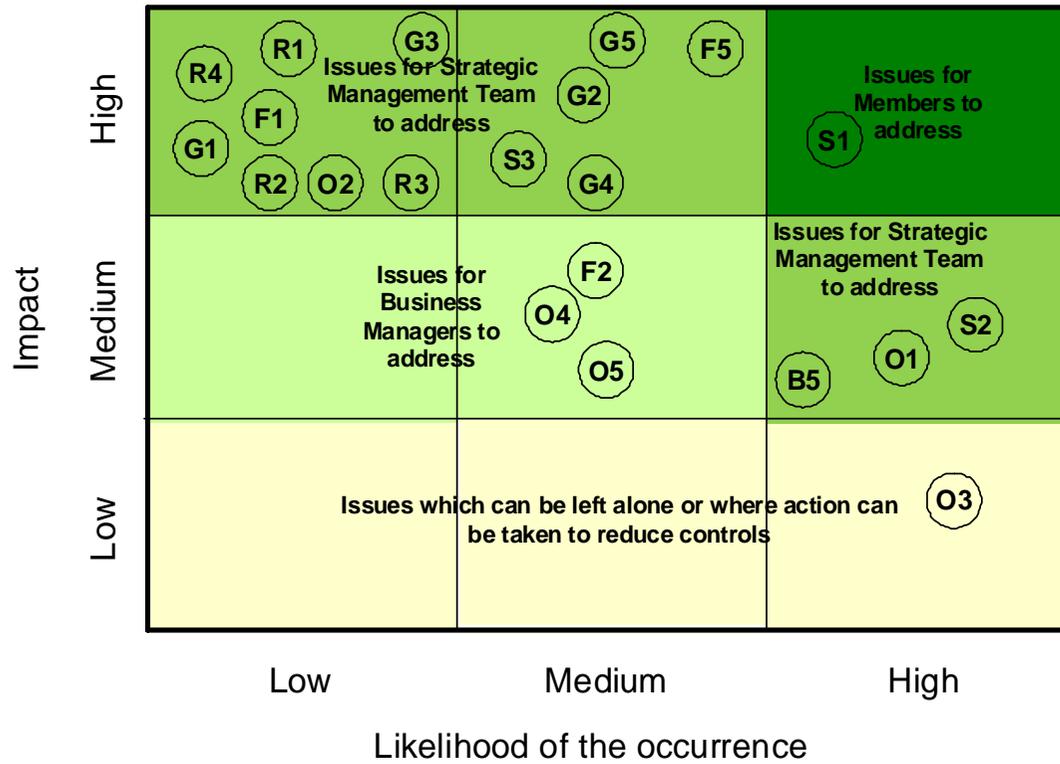
4. Apply the principle of sustainable development to their work so that environmental, social, and economic needs are all met

Both Defra and the NPAs will agree a set of priorities for delivery in each funding period. For the CSR07 period (2008-11) these are documented separately.

Review

This Deal will be reviewed as necessary at the request of any of the signatories or their successors.

Appendix 6 – Risk Management Plan 2008/09



Ref	Risk	High 2.1 to 3.0		Score	Current Controls	Early Warning Mechanism	Additional Action Required	Responsible	Timescale
		Impact	Likelihood						
Governance Risks									
G1	Ineffective service delivery due to poor decision making as a result of membership turnover / changed roles including direct elections	2.5	0.2	0.5	Appointment process; member job descriptions; terms of reference for all committees / panels / working groups; member skills audit; member briefing; member training and induction including development control and code of conduct; joint national working with Association of National Park Authorities	Chair's involvement in Secretary of State appointments. Completion rates of skills audit. Training and activity levels. Feedback on quality of induction. Responses to public consultation on changes to NPA membership	Member briefings, planned and implemented member induction and training. Make use of member skills audit to set training plan. Job roles for lead members.	Strategic Management Team	June 2008 to October 2008
G2	Ineffective service delivery due to unrealistic decision making resulting in reduced level of service and/or dissatisfied customers, partners and staff stress	2.7	1.5	4.05	Member/staff training; job descriptions; training development plans; collaborative work planning; realistic work plans linked to available time; prioritising - balance between empowering communities to deliver and NPA led delivery of external funded projects.	Corporate Plan targets not met; staff stress; loss of reputation.	Planned assessment of available time against targets selected. Ensuring realistic work programmes. Learning from existing activity/projects.	Strategic Management Team	Sept 2008 to March 2009

G3	Failure to deliver the desired ways of working resulting from the new structure due to ineffective management (also see S1)	2.7	1	2.7	Regular meetings between directors and business managers; planned meetings of Wider Management Team covering strategic issues; management development training and follow-up; embed newly set culture and values; robust appraisals and SMART forward job plans linked to prioritised Corporate Plan.	Inconsistent local area delivery through Action Area and SDF analysis. Development of policy in a silo i.e. not linked to delivery and not based on performance / evidence data. Level of staff grievances. Inability of the number 1 priority areas to make demonstrable progress.	Monthly away days for Strategic Management Team; engage directors in quarterly programme monitoring; set and implement information system to report on effectiveness of Corporate Plan; set team indicators and review quarterly with business managers and directors; ensure the management development training is continually put into practice and built upon.	Wider Management Team	All year
G4	Urban focused regional agenda which is not linked to work of National Park Authority or National Park objectives	2.1	1.2	2.52	Work closely with ONE and other key strategic partners such as Natural England to ensure that rural agenda is taken into consideration in the development of policy and strategic objectives	Urban focussed activities predominating both decision making and delivery affecting initiatives in the National Park	Clearly scope emerging policy opportunities and ensure Members are engaged in the process as well as officers. Make use of all available opportunities	Strategic Management Team	All year

G5	Corporate Effectiveness is reduced by Local Government Review	3	1.5	4.5	Ministerial support for maintaining NPA independence. Defra have an agreed plan of action for consultation and implementation. Senior Team and the County Council are aware of the issues.	New Unitary Authority communicates a different position; Ministerial statements change; advice from Government departments change.	Early engagement with new Unitary Authority leadership and new senior team; maintain good dialogue with Defra; continue to receive effective support from English National Park Authorities Association.	Chief Executive and Chair.	July 2008 to March 2009
Strategic Risks									
S1	Implementation of unsuitable (in quality and quantity) rural development and land management solutions arising from the sub-national review (also see G3)	2.5	2.5	6.25	ENPAA joint lobbying for NPA's to be recognised as strategic planning authorities; submit an effective Local Development Strategy for Leader (RDPE Axis 4); dedicated farming support officers; partnership working especially with Natural England and other members of Defra network	Lack of engagement at the regional level in strategic planning structures decision making; dilution of the principles of Northumberland Uplands Leader initiative; lack of projects developed / succeed in gaining RDPE (Axis 1 to 3) funding where NPA supported.	Work with ENPAA to lobby for NPA seat at decision making table on par with other strategic planning authorities; enable Local Action Group to effectively deliver Northumberland Upwards; ensure operations staff are effective in brokering the RDPE.	Strategic Management Team and Operations Business Managers	All Year

S2	Reduced external income leading to lower level of delivery of the Corporate Objectives	1.8	2.5	4.5	Maintain contact with Heritage Lottery Advisors to avoid problems arising from Olympic funding and ensure priority projects are accepted by funders before end of 2008. Familiarise staff with external funding opportunities.	Funder rejection of large scale initiatives. Levels of external funding in the annual accounts.	Attract alternative sources of external funding for large initiatives and for local businesses and communities.	Director of Operations, Operations Business Managers and Funding Officer	Next three years
S3	Serious disruption to business effectiveness from unforeseen event	2.5	1.3	3.25	Development of 'own business continuity plan'; first test; implement actions to address known high risk issues; learn from near miss experiences.	Results of testing the business continuity plan. Experience of near misses.	Annually update the business continuity plan; test the business plan each year; implement actions swiftly from near misses.	Strategic Management Team	Ongoing
Operational & Business Risks									
O1	Weak and inconsistent ICT infrastructure is a barrier to improvement	1.8	2.2	3.96	National Partnership supplier options and national web portal; migrate systems to avoid risks from local government restructuring; invest in infrastructure to local operations offices; raise overall staff skills through ECDL.	Feedback from users; levels of systems downtime; web user levels.	Focus on individual training and development plans for staff; look to implement cutting edge market solutions; ensure effective back-up and alternative systems	Wider management Team	Ongoing

O2	Weak Information management fails to secure confidentiality of information; maintain its accuracy and ensure that it is accessible for authorised disclosure	2.2	0.8	1.76	Data protection training for staff and action planning.	Feedback from key staff and audit reports.	Annual assessment of data protection system. Implement actions swiftly from near misses.	Wider Management Team	Ongoing
O3	Increasing fuel and other service costs reduce ability of staff to access the National Park or work effectively	0.5	2.5	1.25	Effective use of work-life balance and flexible working policies. Good planning of site visits and working time.	Increasing costs of fuel and service activities; staff reluctant to use their vehicles for work related activities and access the National Park.	Consider further amendments to working arrangements.	Wider Management Team	Ongoing
O4	The available resource (staff time & skills) dedicated to the Sill project is insufficient to deliver the Project; impacts on reputation of the Authority regionally/locally	2	1.5	3	Member Group delegated from Authority to manage/advise; dedicated staff team; ability to draw in additional expertise; project planning documents reviewed regularly.	Progress behind project plan; funders deadlines not met; project not prioritised by regional funders; staff time reallocated to priority projects.	Consider further amendments to working arrangements.	SMT	By March 2009

O5	Business interruption from loss of key staff	1.8	1.5	2.7	Monitoring of sickness and personnel related issues; effective management of teams to share knowledge and experience.	Key roles in the Authority not covered and no mitigation measures in place.	Development of contingency plans and test procedures for covering staff absence.	Wider Management	Develop draft by October 2008
Financial Risks									
F1	Unavoidable commitments increase running costs of the Authority	2.2	0.5	1.1	Three yearly budget planning; setting realistic budget plans and reviewing baseline costs each year; implementation of the savings action plan.	Pay award above core government funding; reduction in working balances; significant cost increases in core running costs e.g. energy, rates, national insurance.	Quarterly analysis of core costs; invest in more energy efficiency solutions; realise efficiency savings each year to avoid inflation creep.	Wider Management	Next three years
F2	Significant unexpected cost requirements from public inquiries	2	1.5	3	Ensure planning decisions are taken in a reasonable manner to avoid award of costs; be professionally represented at inquiries; establish a dedicated working reserve for planning inquiries and augment this with additional planning delivery grant awards.	Low level of planning delivery grant award. Result of existing Wind Energy inquiry. Level of planning appeals.	SMART targetted action plan to maximise potential from planning delivery grant; make greater use of internal expertise in planning enquiries e.g. GIS skills; ensure a robust Local Development Framework is adopted in a timely manner; implement learning lessons from 2008 Wind Energy public inquiry.	Director of Policy and Strategy; various business managers	June 2008 to October 2008

Regulatory Risks									
R1	Regional Spatial Planning ignores the special circumstances of the National Park	3	0.5	1.5	Planning regulations and engagement with regional partners and rural planning authorities; provision of skilled staff to deliver Local Development Framework.	Draft Regional policy with potentially negative effects on National Park's objectives; progress in delivering effective policy via the Local Development Framework.	Early input to national and regional planning; joint working with regional rural authorities and national working with the National Park family.	Director of Policy and Strategy	Ongoing
R2	Loss of reputation with Defra and external assessors from a poor planning service	3	0.8	2.4	Risk managed with update meetings with director; maintain full staff compliment.	Performance results; Member feedback; classification as a Standards Authority by Government; poor customer satisfaction surveys; poor response to telephone calls; levels of customer complaints.	Ongoing customer feedback surveys; quarterly performance meetings with director; staff development and training in best practice for customer handling; delivery of e-planining solutions.	Director of Policy and Strategy and relevant Business Manager	June 2006 to June 2009
R3	Risk of litigation arising from equality, data protection, planning, health and safety, and employment laws.	2.2	0.5	1.1	Insurance cover; legal advice provided to a high standard; comprehensive policies and effective working practices.	Threat of litigation; number of grievancies and other near misses.	Ensure that practices and procedures are robust and transparent; learn from experience; ensure swift action in response to near misses.	Wider Management Team	Ongoing

R4	Poor quality of planning decisions in the National Park due to changes in the planning process resulting from the Planning Bill and Heritage Protection Bill	2.1	0.8	1.68	Scoping of likely effects on National Park Authority and anticipate impending changes.	Proposals due for implementation and no measures in place.	Lobby for additional resources to cover any possible expanded remit of the National Park Authority. Work with partners to ensure high quality planning is maintained.	Director of Policy and Strategy and relevant Business Manager	Ongoing
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