



Senior Leadership Proposals

1. Executive Summary

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has an important role to play in addressing some of the most important challenges we face as a society today as we discharge our duties and responsibilities in stewarding the Park. This represents a significant opportunity for the Authority; however, the organisation does not yet have the right capabilities and capacity, or the culture and attitude which will enable us to seize that opportunity. The Chief Executive is seeking a suitably skilled and adaptable senior leadership team to support her, and to enable our intent for pace and reach as an organisation so that we deliver excellent public services and increase our positive impact.

Below the gaps at senior level there are further significant gaps in the existing staff structure with a large number of roles being temporary or with staff 'acting up' into them alongside their existing roles. There is therefore an urgent need to implement proposals for the senior leadership structure and programme management capacity for the Authority.

This report outlines a set of proposals that will provide effective strategic leadership for the future, a directorate and delivery structure aligned to key objectives and programme management capacity to effectively coordinate, support and deliver the project portfolio of work. It also seeks to create a strong and well-coordinated 'centre' to the organisation which will enable the development of streamlined processes which will lead to better liaison across all parts of the organisation, and enhanced responsiveness with the public and stakeholders.

The proposals look forward in a positive and proactive way to achieving organisational effectiveness, innovation, influence and ambition.

2. Background and Approach

Given the changing operating context for the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA), the incoming Chief Executive wanted to assure herself that this was appropriately reflected in the design of the new senior leadership structure and to anticipate further developments as far as possible, including benchmarking against other relevant bodies. Therefore, an initial evidence finding phase of engagements with key stakeholders was undertaken including;

- The current Corporate Governance Team (CGT).
- The Staff Management Forum
- All Staff Meeting
- BBNPA Member Meetings
- CEO's – Pembrokeshire & Snowdonia National Parks
- CEO - National Resources Wales (NRW)
- Welsh Government
- WAO

This baselining exercise followed a consistent and structured approach with a range of questions under the themes of; role and responsibilities; leadership, management and communication and corporate matters. The meetings were ALL very insightful and provided valuable input into the process. The openness and honesty of all participants was much appreciated.

In addition, an all staff meeting was conducted following which individual Officers from a range of services also requested meetings in the same context as the Corporate Governance Team, these requests were all accommodated.

To gather as many member views as possible engagements were scheduled over three separate meetings to provide effectiveness and flexibility. As with the Officer engagements there was a consistent and structured approach with a range of questions aligned to the role of Members including; challenges in the member role, requirements of a new operating model; views on programmes, performance and risk, views on the corporate planning cycle, scheme of delegation and consideration of the Audit Wales recommendations regarding implementation of the change programme. A number of Members were not able to attend one of the three meetings scheduled and therefore an additional meeting was convened to help ensure inclusivity. All meetings were helpful towards the development of the leadership proposals and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all participants.

Benchmarking, learning and understanding the historic, current and importantly the strategic context and challenge has also been a key element of this work, in addition to the 'internal' perspective that was explored with Officers and Members, it was also viewed as a critical requirement to speak to other National Park Authorities, particularly in Wales. Engagements were conducted with the CEO's of Pembrokeshire and Snowdonia National Park's respectively. It was important to discuss both Parks strategic structures but to really explore what was effective, what was potentially not working and to draw on their respective learning and vision for the future aligned to global, national and local drivers and objectives.

Meetings have also taken place with Audit Wales, Welsh Government (WG) and National Resources Wales (NRW). Based on the latest Audit Wales report and recommendations it was key to speak to their lead officer to explore the recommendations and to calibrate this against the wider evidence baseline particularly in relation to leadership and programme management. The WG and NRW

meetings were instigated to share and discuss progress being made with developing the senior leadership team and to 'test' some of the thinking and ideas. The meetings were positive with support for the proposed way forward and appreciation of being 'sighted' at the earliest available stage in the process, with recognition given for the hard work, approach and rigour that had been undertaken against a challenging timeframe.

3. Strategic Considerations

A key element of developing the senior leadership proposals has been alignment and forward focus on global, national and strategic objectives, whilst always having the National Parks purposes and duty as a reference point.

National Policy and the programme for government have been significant in shaping these proposals with the annual remit letter fundamental in providing clarity on strategic priorities. The declared nature and climate emergencies also having a key influence on the proposals.

Key Acts and policy including; The Well-Being and Future Generations Act, Tourism Strategy for Wales, Environment Wales Act and Valued and Resilient et al have also shaped the thinking behind the proposals.

At a more 'local' level, alignment to the emerging National Park Management Plan and Corporate Plan are also intrinsic to the most effective operating model for the park for the future.

See Appendix 1 for a full list of the proposal's basis and source.

4. Programme Management and Performance

A key gap exists in respect of the programme management framework for the Authority. The current approach is not sufficiently cohesive, robust or consistent and lacks effective measurement and accountability. Existing projects also lack the structure, discipline and reporting of proven project management methodology and approaches.

The Authority requires a new approach to overall management with effective challenge, validation and prioritisation at the initiation stage in order to ensure the respective project should be undertaken based on alignment with strategic direction and objectives.

There is an urgent need to consolidate all project work into one coordinated portfolio that can be managed and monitored for effectiveness, consistency and delivery and against which resources can be tensioned and prioritised. This approach will enable better resource management against priority projects and will enable the Authority to target high value activity and have clear start and finish points for work. It will also

improve our approach to bidding for new activity and funding. It will also enable the Authority to have a pipeline of prospective projects and capital priorities. This is supported by the findings of the Audit Wales report and subsequent recommendations and engagement through the scoping process of the senior structure review.

5. Senior Leadership Proposals

5.1 Leadership

A strong leadership team is vital to meet the Park's challenges of the present and future. The current situation is underlined in reports and through the evidence finding phase of this work and must be urgently addressed.

The fundamental requirement in recruiting new leaders is to identify a new team with the demonstratable capability to effectively lead people in an engaging, empowering and purposeful way with clarity and direction aligned to organisational aims and objectives.

The need to matrix work is also vital in achieving improvement and success going forward, there are a range of cross-cutting themes including projects that will require a cohesive and collaborative approach.

The formation of a Senior Leadership Team is imperative in ensuring; statutory compliance, operational delivery, programme delivery and review and alignment including strategy, planning and performance. It will also enable resilience, internal challenge and support, provide cover for operational reasons, enable broader engagement with members, stakeholders and the public, and ensure that decisions can be taken effectively at appropriate levels supported by a new scheme of delegation.

See appendix 2 – Senior Leadership Team Operating Model

5.2 Directorates

It is proposed that there will be two Directorates going forward, named Planning and Place and Nature Recovery and Climate Change respectively. The Directorates will be strategically led by two Directors who will report directly to the Chief Executive Officer.

Director of Planning and Place

It is proposed that the Director of Planning and Place has services and themes within their Directorate including; Planning, Sustainable Development, Sustainable Thriving Communities, Heritage and Culture, Sustainable Tourism, Outdoor Recreation and Property Management.

One of the key reasons for the groupings within the Directorate is the reflection of the park as a 'Place' including the infrastructure and assets.

Planning and sustainable development naturally work together with strategic direction set for both via the Well-Being of Future Generations Act (2015) and reaffirmed via the latest remit letter. It is also important to reflect on the statutory compliance element of planning and the key role the service will play in the future evolution of the park area.

National Park Authorities are custodians of the historic built and cultural heritage and it is vital to safeguard and manage this inheritance alongside partners where relevant.

The Tourism Strategy highlights our outstanding landscapes as one of our key assets and their special qualities and attraction to visitors whilst recognising our duty of care to ensure the special qualities of the Park are not put at risk as a consequence.

The management and development of our infrastructure is key to supporting and enhancing the parks future aims and strategy, particularly aligned to visitor attraction and compliance with environmental focussed goals. They represent a real opportunity to show our leadership by example.

The role will be a permanent member of the Senior Leadership Team of the National Park.

Director of Nature Recovery and Climate Change

It is proposed that the Director of Nature Recovery and Climate Change has services and themes within their Directorate including; De-Carbonisation, Biodiversity, Sustainable Agriculture, Maintenance of the Park Landscape, Rights of Way, Education, Visitor Engagement and Warden Services.

The proposed composition of the Directorate links the global challenge of climate change and nature with the key service and support elements that will enable progress towards the strategic objectives. There are key synergies in having effective education aligned to visitor engagement and the overarching theme of nature and climate change, the maintenance of the park landscape including rights of way and the role of warden services are also intrinsic in achieving the overarching objectives.

The proposed Directorate name and subsequent Director role title also indicates clarity and status in respect of the challenge the Authority places on this aligned to global and national objectives. It clearly highlights the Park's commitment and role in assisting in its duty to achieving key objectives such as carbon neutrality by 2030 and by 2050 net emissions target of 95% lower than the baseline set in legislation and the continuation of the work in prioritising designated landscapes improving their connectivity, condition, scale / extent and diversity of ecosystems and maintain and enhance resilient ecological networks.

The role will be a permanent member of the Senior Leadership Team of the National Park.

Programme Manager

There is an urgent need to consolidate all project work into one coordinated portfolio of activity that can be managed and monitored for effectiveness, consistency and delivery. This is supported by the findings of the Audit Wales report and subsequent recommendations and engagement through the scoping process of the senior structure review.

It is proposed that a new post of Programme Manager be created to manage, coordinate and support the Authorities programme of work. In addition, the role will be responsible for the corporate support services of Finance, HR and IT and other technology.

The BBNPA Programme Manager will manage, coordinate and control a portfolio of multiple projects from cradle to grave supporting their identification, validation, prioritisation, resourcing, progression, reporting, implementation and benefit realisation aligned to achieving the intended goals and objectives.

The BBNPA Programme Manager will be responsible for the corporate services of Finance, HR and IT and other technology, ensuring a cohesive approach based on the close synergies each of these portfolios have in delivering a multiple project programme of work, in addition to their statutory compliance duties and integral part in supporting all of the operating components of the organisation.

The role will coordinate and assist in developing the necessary partnerships with other organisations, partners and stakeholders in order to achieve optimum programme outcomes.

The role will be a permanent member of the Senior Leadership Team of the National Park.

Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer has the specific duty to ensure that the Council, its Officers, and its Members, maintain the highest standard of conduct in all they do. The role is a statutory function and is not currently permanent in the establishment of the organisation. In the new leadership structure, it is proposed that Democratic Services becomes the responsibility of the Monitoring Officer and the service is renamed; Legal and Democratic Services.

The role will be a permanent member of the Senior Leadership Team of the National Park.

Communications

Based on the importance of effective communications and the integral part it plays in the profile and reputation of the Park, the service will be a permanent member of the SLT going forward.

See Appendix 3 – Proposed Directorates.

See Appendix 4 – Consolidated Proposed Senior Structure.

6. Proposal Feedback

The proposals have been presented to and shared with the following stakeholders;

- The current Corporate Governance Team (CGT) who subsequently disseminated to their respective Teams for feedback.
- The Staff Management Forum who subsequently shared and invited feedback from their respective membership.
- Welsh Government
- WAO
- National Resources Wales (NRW)

The feedback has been very positive and constructive, headline points are listed as follows;

- Overall consensus for the requirement of two Directors and the overdue strategic leadership this will provide.
- Overall support and recognition of the need for a Programme Manager and the benefits this will provide via an effective programme management framework.
- Understanding of the context, baseline and evidence that has informed the structure particularly the emphasis on the future and the priorities set via the remit letter, programme for government and other strategies and acts.
- Understanding of the rationale for the service / themes in each directorate with the understanding that there is flexibility for this to change and evolve if required in the future. This point highlights the fact that due to the function / service delivery elements of the park there is probably no 'perfect fit' however the proposal aims to follow an initial alignment to strategic priorities, park purpose and global challenges.
- Cross-cutting themes and matrix working have been widely welcomed and recognised holistically as a necessity going forward to achieve effectiveness and success.
- A real consensus to move this proposal forward at pace with the realism that there will still be a period of time where the Authority remains in a challenging situation, mainly due to recruitment timescales.
- To focus on the Governance framework as the next priority following the Senior Leadership review.
- To consider the Section 151 Officer being a member of the SLT.

7. Budget

The posts are subject to evaluation. The indicative salary range however has been provided and costs of the three proposed new posts are based on the maximum of scale range with 32% on-costs applied. This is compared to the existing unallocated salary budget for the current financial year. This full amount would not be required for 2021/22 as we are already over halfway through the year.

For reference the unallocated salary budget forecast for future years is £159k for 2022/23 and £202k for 2023/24.

| Proposed New Posts | Indicative Pay Range | Total inclusive of on-costs @32% | Unallocated Salary Budget |
|--|----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | | |
| Director of Planning & Place | £55-65k | £85,800.00 | |
| | | | |
| Director of Nature Recovery & Climate Change | £55-65k | £85,800.00 | |
| | | | |
| Programme Manager | £50-60k | £79,200.00 | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Total | | <u>£250,800.00</u> | <u>£246,000.00</u> |

| Recommendation | Reason for Recommendation |
|--|---|
| <p>Approval for new post of;</p> <p>Director of Planning & Place</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To provide strategic leadership, organisational effectiveness, direction and objective delivery. ➤ To adequately resource the leadership capacity of the organisation in order to appropriately share the strategic workload, thinking, planning, clarity, direction and objective delivery; including SLT membership. ➤ To assist with improving; morale, empowering people, organisational and personal development and performance. ➤ To mitigate risk and potential service, project and strategic objective delivery failure. |
| <p>Approval for new post of;</p> <p>Director of Nature Recovery & Climate Change</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To provide strategic leadership, organisational effectiveness, direction and objective delivery. ➤ To adequately resource the leadership capacity of the organisation in order to appropriately share the strategic workload, thinking, planning, clarity, direction and objective delivery; including SLT membership. ➤ To assist with improving; morale, empowering people, organisational and personal development and performance. ➤ To mitigate risk and potential service, project and strategic objective delivery failure. |
| <p>Approval for the new post of;</p> <p>Programme Manager</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To provide management , coordination and control to the programme of multiple projects, supporting their identification, validation, prioritisation, resourcing, progression, reporting, implementation and benefit realisation aligned to achieving the intended goals and objectives. ➤ To implement a programme management framework that ensures; performance measures aligned to strategic and project objectives with measures that focus on outcomes; project management methodology and programme office discipline and structure that therefore generates consistency and effectiveness. ➤ To help generate and facilitate matrix working across the programmes multiple projects that is enhanced by the proposed membership of the SLT and the strategic links and collaboration this will foster. ➤ To assist with corporate support alignment to the programme brief via direct line management and support. ➤ To mitigate risk in respect of overall programme delivery via robust, validation, challenge and strategic alignment at project conception stage. ➤ To mitigate existing risk in project non-delivery, subsequent benefit realisation and under spend of allocated funding. |
| <p>To make the Post of Legal & Democratic Services including Monitoring Officer Permanent</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The post of Monitoring Officer is a statutory requirement of the Authority. ➤ To provide stability and leadership in respect of the operation of the constitution, Democratic Services and overall Governance. ➤ To mitigate risk in respect of employee turnover due to the 'temporary' status of the role. ➤ To mitigate risk in potentially not being able to recruit to or attract to a 'Statutory' role due to its temporary status. |

8. Conclusion

Putting in place this proposed Senior Structure is a key step on the improvement journey the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority must take. The proposed senior leadership requirements will provide clarity, direction, priority and structure aligned to forward work programme objectives.

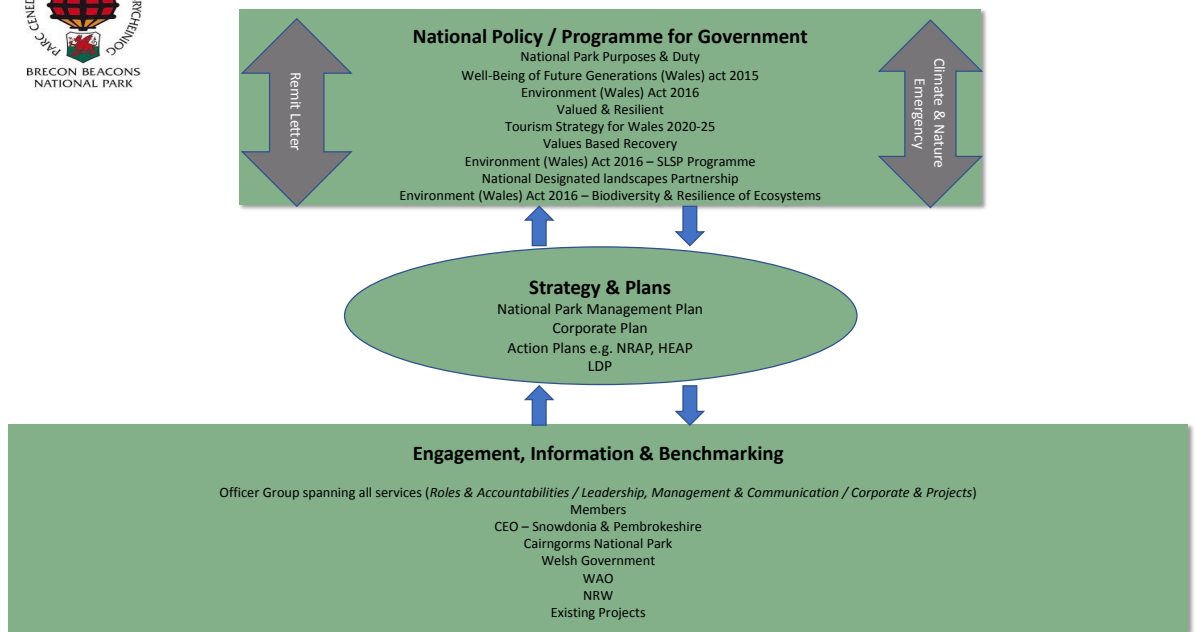
There is a lot to do to ensure that the Authority is on the right track, and that we will have the influence and impact that is expected of us, and for which we have the ambition.

The implementation of this strategic leadership model will provide a solid foundation and be the catalyst for further improvement across fundamental areas including; improved governance, effective programme and performance and risk management framework; matrix / cross functional working; processes and systems review, all of which will cumulatively lead to a high performing, successful organisation with a workforce that is supported, developed, empowered and fulfilled and which is delivering for the citizens we serve.

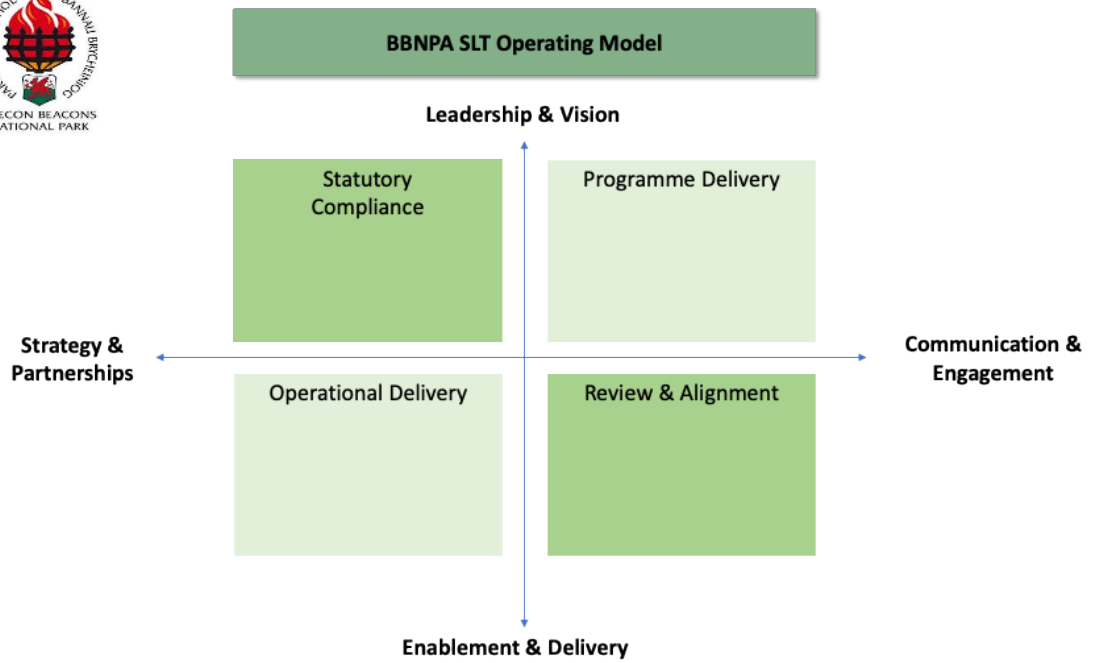
Appendix 1



Proposals Basis & Sources



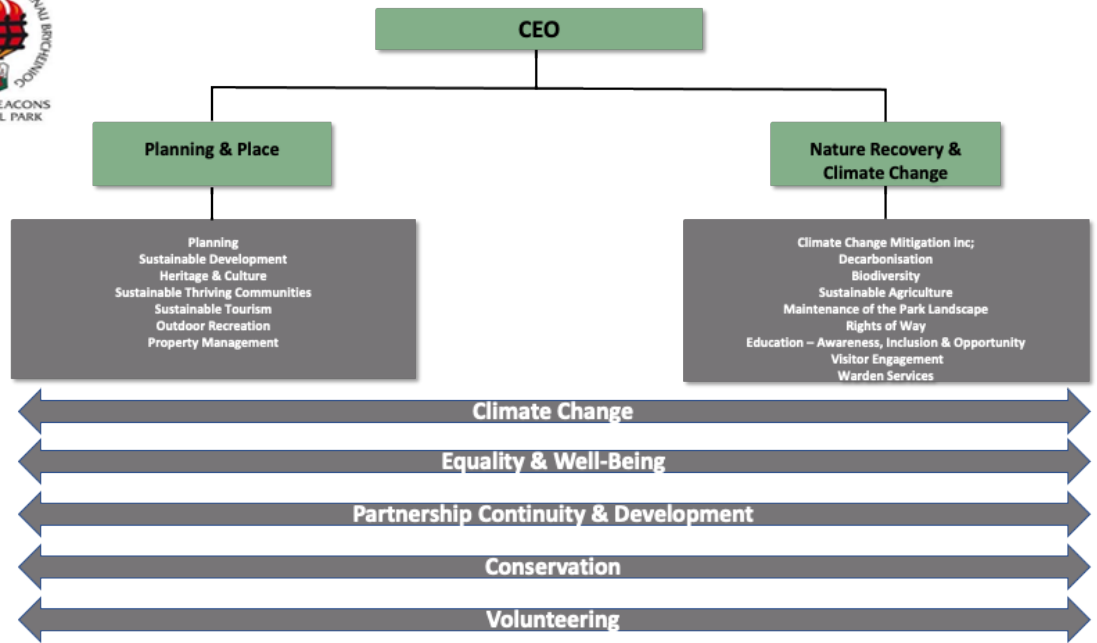
Appendix 2



Appendix 3



Proposed Directorates



Appendix 4

