

Farming Transition Position Statement

Name of Committee	National Park Authority
Date	24 th September 2021
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Purpose of Report	To seek approval for the Farming Transition Position Statement.
Single Integrated Assessment	N/A
List of Enclosures	Enclosure I <i>Farming Transition Position Statement</i>
Public Interest Test	Not applicable
Recommendation(s)	a) Members endorse the Farming Transition Position Statement for use in policy and project development

1.1 Introduction or Background

As a landscape designation, land managers and farmers are critical to maintaining landscape quality, enhancing ecological resilience and providing an arena for the quiet enjoyment the Park offers to so many visitors. The changes brought about by the UK's departure from the European Union to farming subsidy have the potential to radically transform agricultural practice across the Park. Although our role as a National Park Authority imbues us with no statutory purpose in relation to private management of land, our organisation is rich with expertise and resources which could be of assistance

to farmers and land managers as they transition from area based to outcome based subsidy regimes.

Of equal significance is the role our land managers and farmers have in helping the Authority realise the vision of the emerging Management Plan, especially in relation to our ambitions for combating climate change and facilitating nature recovery (as prioritised by Welsh Government in our strategic remit letter). If we are to succeed on these objectives, having influence over land use change is paramount.

The position statement has been in development alongside *Future Beacons* and Officers are keen to ensure it is adopted alongside the consultation to explicitly draw the linkages out in the public domain.

1.2 Proposals

The Statement on the future farming transition to Sustainable Land Management has been developed through collaboration with Members, staff and expert contributors.

The aim of the statement is to move the debate beyond polarised positions of accountability to a shared outcome of a sustainable and productive countryside.

The Position Statement provides an overview of the evidence pointing towards the need for widespread shifts in agricultural practice, describes the challenges to achieving this and defines a series of actions for the Authority to pursue to play our part in the transition to sustainable management of the land within our boundaries.

The Position Statement has been shared with representatives of the farming unions who are keen to continue working with us to deliver on shared objectives for a sustainable productive National Park.

1.3 Implications and risk

The Statement is not without risk. The farming community is facing significant challenges at the moment through the post EU exit transition, with the new Water Quality Regulations and because of the phasing out of Basic Payments: The sense of challenge and uncertainty is raising the feeling of vulnerability amongst this key community. The way we communicate and the statements we make as an Authority are critical to ensuring that we can gain the support of the farming community to help deliver shared outcomes. There is the danger that our actions if not agreed and targeted could alienate and disenfranchise the farming community if they are not sensitive to their current vulnerability. We as an Authority are reliant on good working relationships with the farming community to help the Authority deliver on landscape and nature recovery objectives. It is the stance that we take as an Authority through this statement that is critical in strengthening those relationships.

I.5 Conclusion

The final draft position statement before members today has been subject to extensive review and discussion with a range of internal and external stakeholders. Officers are satisfied that the approach provides the common ground necessary for fruitful working relationships with the farming community in the future, providing a strong statement of support during these times of transition.

Officers believe that the targeted range of actions proposed within this statement will focus our action to ensure that we are speaking to one of our most important stakeholders with a single voice and objective.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

a) Members endorse the Farming Transition Position Statement for use in policy and project development