

3 July 2014

**Heart of Teesdale Landscape
Partnership - Update**

**Joint report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive and
Ian Thompson, Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic
Development**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with supporting information in advance of a presentation updating Members on the progress of the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership.

Background

- 2 At the meeting of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 23 February, 2012 Members received a report and presentation providing an overview of the work of the Partnership and it was agreed that a further update would be provided at a future meeting of the committee.
- 3 As part of the refresh of the work programme of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee it was agreed by Members at the meeting on the 21 June, 2013 that the committee would receive an update on the progress of the Partnership at the meeting on the 3 July, 2014.
- 4 Arrangements have therefore been made for Alex Sijpesteijn, Partnership Manager to attend the meeting on the 3 July, 2014 to provide a presentation focusing on the following:
 - Who we are
 - Projects completed so far
 - Our current projects
 - The future

Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership - background

- 5 In 2011 the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) approved funding of £1.9 million for the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership. The area has remarkable natural features and associations with historic, cultural and wildlife sites of enduring appeal to scientists, artists and authors, and visitors from far and wide.

- 6 The partnership is one of around 50 landscape partnerships operating across the UK under a national scheme established by the HLF which supports Landscape partnerships that address four priority outcomes:
 - Conserving or restoring the built and natural features that create historic landscape character;
 - Increasing community participation in local heritage;
 - Increasing access to and learning about the landscape and its heritage;
 - Increasing training opportunities in local heritage skills.
- 7 Durham County Council's contribution to the project is £519,514 which together with other match funding, in kind and volunteering contributions, gives a total project value of £3, 116,300.
- 8 The activities of the Landscape Partnership over the period 2011-2016 are guided by a Landscape Conservation Action Plan, with a range of programmes and projects supported by the (HLF), Durham County Council and other organisations.
- 9 The Landscape Partnership incorporates organisations and individuals who can contribute in some way to the project through their activity in the area, ownership of land, knowledge and skills, preparedness to help, or contributions of funds or in kind assistance. This involves local authority members, public and voluntary organisations and members of local community with specific expertise.
- 10 The Partnership covers an area of nearly 140 sq km, centred on Barnard Castle and has the objectives of helping people to:
 - Re-discover the particular visual qualities of Teesdale drawing on the historic and cultural legacy of artists, scientists and others who have explored the area and foster creativity and imagination through art, crafts and other media.
 - Understand the historic value of the local landscape and how it has been shaped over time.
 - Conserve or restore the built and natural features that characterise the area.
 - Take action to protect the local environment and wildlife, and increase biodiversity.
 - Enhance the quality and amenity value of public and community spaces, key views and settings for enjoyment and learning.
 - Engage individuals and communities in learning, training, skills and new technology to understand and interpret the local landscape, traditions and heritage and improve access, especially by those who might be disadvantaged or excluded from activities.
 - Promote opportunities for cooperation, mutual support and volunteering within the community to develop strategies and action so that the benefits of partnership can be sustained long term.

- 11 The Partnership supports a number of projects ranging from community level schemes to major improvements with some schemes directly managed by the Partnership whilst others are managed by partner agencies.
- 12 The implementation phase lasts from 2011 until 2016 however, the Heritage Lottery Fund expects that the legacy of the partnership will be at least ten years and probably much longer. The partnership has consequently placed high value and emphasis not just on durable and quality capital works but also on capacity building within the local community, particularly through support for volunteering and other in kind contributions which it is hoped can be sustained once funding ceases.

Current position

- 13 We have 75 projects, of which 23 are complete and 49 are in delivery
- 14 The Partnership's Advisory Group is made up of thirteen individuals who each bring knowledge, skills and contacts to the Scheme
- 15 Evaluation has already started with the first evaluation workshop held on 4th June 2014

Next Steps

- 16 Continue building on the momentum and project delivery of the last five months
- 17 Consider the ongoing outcomes of the evaluation process and act on recommendations for improvement
- 18 The Partnership is currently exploring the legacy of the Scheme and how to ensure its future impact

Recommendations

- 19 The Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the comment upon the information provided during the presentation.
- 20 That the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive a further update on the development and work of the Partnership at a future meeting.

Background Papers

Report to Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 23 February, 2012.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – A DCC contribution to the Partnership has been confirmed at £506,513 to match the HLF allocation of £1,895,700 for the period 2011-2016.

Staffing –

None

Risk – A risk register is kept as part of the project management of the programme.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – The Partnership pay particular attention to access issues and this has been integrated into both the LCAP and specific Developing Community Capacity strategies.

Accommodation –

Hosted at the Customer Service Access point, above Barnard Castle library

Crime and Disorder –

None

Human Rights –

None

Consultation – The partnership continues to deliver a wide programme of community consultation and engagement, and to involve local interests in developing and managing specific programmes and projects.

Procurement – Procurement will follow both DCC and the HLF financial regulations and guidelines.

Disability Issues – Complies with DCC general equality duty.

Legal Implications – Legal support is provided by DCC as and when required.