

REPORT OF ADMINISTRATION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

SUBJECT: MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTION

Purpose of the report

To consider and adopt the updated role description for Members.

Background

The current Member role description document was drafted some years ago following discussions with the other two Welsh National Park Authorities and with support from officers of the Welsh Local Government Association. The resultant draft document (Appendix 1) was adopted by the Authority at its Ordinary Meeting held on the 25th June 2008.

At the meeting of the Authority held on the 6th February 2013 it was reported that the National Parks UK Executive¹ tasked its Member Services Officers' Network Group² with drafting a Member role description (attached at Appendix 2). They were of the opinion that, as all Members shared the same accountabilities and responsibilities towards protected landscapes, a national role description would be beneficial. The document was considered and subsequently endorsed by the Member Development Strategy Working Group at its meeting held on the 27th February 2013 and has been used by Members during the current round of Personal Development Reviews.

Options

The current role description is five years old and in need of review to establish whether or not it is still fit for purpose. Having considered both documents, Members could either:

- (a) retain the existing Member role description, or
- (b) adopt the revised national Member role description.

Financial considerations

There are no financial considerations involved.

Risk considerations

A role description helps Members understand what their role is and what is expected of them. A national role description ensures a consistent approach across the whole family of National Park Authorities.

¹ Comprises Chairs and Chief Executive Officers of the 15 National Park Authorities in the UK

² Comprises Democratic/Member Services Officers of the 15 National Park Authorities in the UK

Compliance

The adoption of a Member role description complies with the requirements of the Welsh Local Government Association's Charter criteria, which supports the legal requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. It also complies with Corporate Objective 4: The National Park Authority is recognised as meeting good practice standards in terms of governance, providing value for money and listening to the views of residents, visitors and partners.

Human Rights/Equality issues

The report has no Human Rights/Equality implications.

Biodiversity implications/Sustainability appraisal

The report has no Biodiversity/sustainability implications.

Welsh Language statement

The report has no implications for the Authority's Welsh Language Scheme.

Conclusion

The Member role description attached at Appendix 2 has been revised to take into account relevance to all Authorities involved and to current circumstances. Its adoption will ensure a consistent approach by Members across the family of National Park Authorities.

RECOMMENDATION

That the revised Member role description attached as Appendix 2 to this report is adopted.

Background papers:

Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

Welsh Local Government Association's document: The Wales Charter for Member Support and Development – the new criteria and assessment process 2012 – National Park Authorities

The Conduct of Members (Principles) (Wales) Order 2001

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National Park Authority Member Role Description

1. Accountabilities

- To the full National Park Authority.
- To the public.

2. Role Purpose and Activity

(a) Representing the national interest

- To apply the principles and purposes of National Parks to all decision making.
- To bring the national context to bear in decision making.
- To be an advocate for the National Park Authority and its purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.

(b) Representing and supporting communities

- To represent the interests of the population of the whole area of the National Park Authority.
- To liaise with other members, principal authorities, officers and partner organisations to ensure that the needs of the National Park Authority are identified, understood and supported.
- To be a channel of communication to the community on National Park Authority strategies, policies, services and procedures, promoting wide public understanding and enjoyment of the Park and with others to foster the economic and social well-being of communities in the Park in the pursuit of its statutory purposes.

(c) Making decisions and overseeing National Park Authority performance

- To participate in National Park Authority meetings, reaching and making informed and balanced decisions, and overseeing performance.
- To participate in informed and balanced decision making when appointed to National Park Authority committees and panels.
- To support the principles of democracy and collective responsibility in decision-making.

- To promote and ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of National Park Authority services.

(d) Representing the National Park Authority (subject to appointment)

- To represent the National Park Authority on outside bodies.
- To represent the National Park Authority on local partnership bodies, promoting common interest and co-operation for mutual gain.
- To represent and be an advocate for the National Park Authority on national bodies and at national events.

(e) Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

- To promote and support good governance of the National Park Authority and its affairs.
- To promote and support open and transparent National Park Authority services.
- To support, and adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with employees of the National Park Authority.
- To adhere to the Members' Code of Conduct³ and the highest standards of behaviour in representing the National Park Authority.

(f) Personal and role development

- To participate in opportunities for development provided for members by the National Park Authority.

3. Values

- To be committed to the values of the National Park Authority and the following values in public office:
 - Openness and transparency
 - Honesty and integrity
 - Tolerance and respect
 - Equality and fairness
 - Appreciation of cultural difference
 - Sustainability.

³ Adopted 25th June 2008

PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION



National Park Purposes

The National Park exists to conserve the natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage of its area, to promote wide public understanding and enjoyment of them and, with others, to foster the social and economic well-being of communities within the Park.

Member Role Description

1. Accountabilities

- To the full National Park Authority.
- To the public interest.

2. Purpose of the Role and Activity

(a) Representing the national interest

- To bring the national context to bear in decision making.
- To promote the profile and effectiveness of the National Park Family both through the work of your own Authority and through co-operative action with key stakeholders / partners including National Parks Wales, National Parks UK; National Parks England.
- To act as an ambassador for the NPA and wider National Park Family.

(b) Representing the National Park Authority

- To represent and be an advocate for the National Park Authority on national and outside bodies and at national events.
- To represent the National Park Authority on local partnership bodies, promoting common interest and co-operation for mutual benefit.
- To be an advocate for the special qualities of the National Park.
- To liaise with other Members, principal authorities, officers and partner organisations to ensure that the purposes and aims of the National Park Authority are understood and supported.

(c) Representing and supporting communities

- To represent the interests of the population of the **whole area** of the National Park Authority.
- To be a channel of communication between the community and the National Park Authority particularly in regard to strategies, policies, services and procedures.

- To promote wide public understanding and enjoyment of the Park and with others to foster the economic and social well-being of communities in the Park in the pursuit of its statutory purposes.

(d) Making decisions and overseeing National Park Authority performance

- To apply the principles and purposes of National Parks in all decision making – balancing and integrating the environmental, social and economic considerations. When there are conflicts between the two statutory purposes the first purpose (conservation) is given priority.
- To work with the Chair, Chief Executive, other Members, Officers, Stakeholders and Partners to discharge the functions of the National Park Authority and maximise the use of human and financial resources.
- To act with independent judgement using your skills, experience, local, regional and national knowledge, in the best interests of the National Park Authority.
- To collectively participate in the development of policy direction, strategic thinking and innovation within the Authority through the development of management policy and business plans.
- To approve, scrutinise and monitor the implementation of the Authority's policies, procedures and statutory functions.
- To promote and ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of National Park Authority services.
- To support the principles of democracy and accept collective responsibility for the decisions of the National Park Authority and their impact on Authority Resources.

(e) Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

- To achieve efficient, effective, transparent and accountable governance of the National Park Authority and its affairs.
- To promote and support open and transparent National Park Authority services.
- To support, and adhere to, respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with Members and Officers of the National Park Authority.
- To adhere to the Members' Code of Conduct and the highest standards of behaviour in representing the National Park Authority.
- To engage in and demonstrate the Authority's commitment to the equalities agenda and the standards published by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

(f) Personal and role development

- To take responsibility for your own personal learning and development (local and national) as part of your Personal Development Review.
- To commit to actively participating in opportunities for development provided for Members by the National Park Authority, National Parks Wales, National Parks UK & National Parks England.
- To actively participate in the Authority's Continuous Development Processes.
- To comply with any Authority approved target for attendance at meetings and training events.

3. Values

To be committed to the values of the National Park Authority and the following values in public office:

- Openness and transparency
- Honesty and integrity
- Tolerance and respect
- Equality and fairness
- Appreciation of cultural differences
- Sustainability

Person Specification for Members of the National Park Authority

To fulfil his or her role as set out in the role description, an effective Member is required to:

Fulfil National Park Purposes

- Champion and represent the Authority as an effective mechanism for promoting conservation of the Park's natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, increasing public understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities and fostering the social and economic wellbeing of local communities.
- Be an advocate for the special qualities of the National Park.
- Promote the family of National Parks and its wider partners – including National Parks Wales; National Parks UK; National Parks England; Natural Resources Wales, Natural England; DEFRA; Scottish Natural Heritage.

Fulfil the role

- Commit to involvement of typically three to four days monthly.
- Commit to attend and contribute to meetings of the Authority, its committees and working / task groups, and raise issues of concern through the established procedures and mechanisms adopted by the Authority.
- Read and understand briefing material provided for meetings in order to be properly prepared for any debate on issues across the full range of the Authority's responsibilities (taking responsibility for seeking clarification where necessary from Lead Officers).
- Accept collective responsibility for the decisions of the NPA and the impact on Authority Resources.

Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

- Be committed to working with other Members and Officers in the best interests of the National Park and the Authority itself.
- Comply with Standing Orders and respect the democratically determined decisions of the Authority.
- Adhere to the National Park Authority Standards framework.
- Adhere to the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Engage in and demonstrate the Authority's commitment to the equalities agenda and the standards of the Welsh Language Commissioner.

Personal and role development

- Take responsibility for their own personal learning and development as part of their annual review, including:

- Attending appropriate training courses, briefing sessions and events arranged or sponsored by the Authority and partner organisations.
- Attending the National Member Induction Course as early on in their role as Member as possible.
- Participating in the Authority's processes for reviewing personal development.

The Ten General Principles of Public Life⁴

Selflessness

Members must act solely in the public interest. They must never use their position as members to improperly confer advantage on themselves or to improperly confer advantage or disadvantage on others.

Honesty

Members must declare any private interests relevant to their public duties and take steps to resolve any conflict in a way that protects the public interest.

Integrity and Propriety

Members must not put themselves in a position where their integrity is called into question by any financial or other obligation to individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their duties. Members must on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Duty to Uphold the Law

Members must act to uphold the law and act on all occasions in accordance with the trust that the public has placed in them.

Stewardship

In discharging their duties and responsibilities Members must ensure that their Authority's resources are used both lawfully and prudently.

Objectivity in Decision-making

In carrying out their responsibilities including making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, Members must make decisions on merit. While Members must have regard to the professional advice of officers and may properly take account of the views of others, including their political groups, it is their responsibility to decide what view to take and, if appropriate, how to vote on any issue.

Equality and Respect

Members must carry out their duties and responsibilities with due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity for all people, regardless of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age or religion, and show respect and consideration for others.

Openness

Members must be as open as possible about all their actions and those of their Authority. They must seek to ensure that disclosure of information is restricted only in accordance with the law.

⁴ Adapted from the Conduct of Members (Principles) (Wales) Order 2001

Accountability

Members are accountable to the electorate and the public generally for their actions and for the way they carry out their responsibilities as a Member. They must be prepared to submit themselves to such scrutiny as is appropriate to their responsibilities.

Leadership

Members must promote and support these principles by leadership and example so as to promote public confidence in their role and in the Authority. They must respect the impartiality and integrity of the Authority's statutory officers and its other employees.