

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET

REPORT AUTHOR: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding between Powys County Council and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

REPORT FOR: Decision

Summary:

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Powys County Council and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has been in existence since April 2006. The purpose of the MOU has been to seek to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the two organisations and seek to promote a productive relationship. The Chief Executives and Chairmen of the organisations have discussed the current MOU and are now recommending minor amendments to enhance the relationship between Powys County Council and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.

Introduction:

The MOU has been in existence since April 2006. The overriding aim of the MOU is to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the two organisations and also to promote joint working. In practice, the existence of the MOU has tended to manifest itself in the bi-annual liaison meetings between the two organisations which are provided for by the document.

In the light of experience since 2006 and the changing public service environment that is the advent of the Local Service Board and the Council's move to neighbourhood management; it is considered that the current MOU needed to be reviewed.

Proposal:

The Chief Executive of Powys County Council and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and the Chairmen have discussed a number of inter-organisational issues, including the MOU and working relationships. The result of the discussions it was considered that the current MOU would benefit from a number of slight of amendments to make it more effective for the future in promoting more efficient and joined up service delivery between the two organisations. The proposed amendments are:-

Liaison Meetings - The MOU provides for at least two liaison meetings during the year. The aim of the liaison meetings has been and will continue to be to discuss strategic issues between the two organisations. Experience has shown however, that on occasion, the meetings have tended to become too focused on specific operational issues. Operational issues are extremely important but it is considered not appropriate for the strategic liaison meetings. It proposed therefore, that when operational concerns arise, specific meetings should be convened to deal with this issue. (Paragraph 3.4 refers).

Local Service Board - The Powys Local Service Board is now working towards a single delivery plan and has identified two strategic priorities: climate change and mental health and emotional well-being. The liaison meetings in future will consider how the two organisations can support each other in achieving the strategic priorities of the Local Service Board. (Paragraph 5.4 and 5.5 refers).

Neighbourhood Management - The Council's Local Environment Initiative is seeking to develop neighbourhood management models to enhance service outcomes and also improve efficiency. The National Park Authority are keen to be involved in such an initiative and they see it as a great opportunity to improve joint working but also to develop their neighbourhood clusters. The National Park Authority is currently working with clusters of Community Councils and it is considered that engagement between the two organisations on this issue may in fact assist with dealing with a range of operational concerns which crop up from time to time. (Paragraph 5.5 refers).

Corporate Improvement Plan

Collaboration with other organisations and climate change are priorities within the Improvement Plan. The proposal is supportive of these priorities.

Options Considered/Available

Another potential option is to discontinue the liaison meetings and abandon the MOU. Such an option would attract criticism and work against the Council's state priorities.

Preferred Choice and Reasons

The preferred choice is to amend and restate the MOU. It is hoped that such a course of action will improve understanding and working between the two organisations and thus lead to more effective and efficient service delivery.

Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder,/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc

Enhanced collaboration between the two organisations will promote all of these areas.

Children and Young People's Impact Statement - Safeguarding and Wellbeing

Not applicable.

Local Member(s)

Improving working with the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority will impact on the members who represent electoral divisions within the Park area.

Other Front Line Services

Not applicable.

Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc

The proposal is aimed at supporting the work of the Local Service Board

Communications

Greater collaboration between two organisations is a “good news” story but we need to be clear as to what we are trying to achieve.

Members' Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
That the draft Memorandum of Understanding between the County Council and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority be approved and adopted.	To enhance the operational relationship between the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and the County Council.

Relevant Policy (ies):			
Within Policy:	Y / N	Within Budget:	Y / N

Relevant Local Member(s):	Members with wards within the National Park
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	

Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Fax:	Email:

Background Papers used to prepare Report: