

**Member Development Programme 2014/15**  
Report by Chairman

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| <b>Summary:</b>        | This report sets out a draft Member Development Programme for 2014/15, building on the Member Development Strategy approved in May 2010. The programme is based upon discussions I have had with members during their Development Appraisals. |
| <b>Recommendation:</b> | Members' views are sought on the draft Member Development Programme for 2014/15.  |

## **1 Introduction**

1.1 At its meeting on 14 May 2010, the Authority agreed a Member Development Strategy setting out a framework for inducting and developing new members, and providing ongoing learning and development for all members to ensure that they have the wider understanding of the key issues affecting the Broads in order to make informed decisions. A key part of this is an annual Development Appraisal with all members, which is intended to review the development of the Authority with the aims of:

- identifying levels of performance and how these could be improved; and
- identifying other development opportunities for the future.

1.2 The Development Appraisals will also determine strategic issues which need to be raised with the Chief Executive and other actions to be taken to increase the performance, effectiveness and development of the Authority.

1.3 This report sets out a proposed Member Development Programme for 2014/15, building on the Strategy agreed in 2010 and providing a programme that will enhance members' wider understanding of the key issues, provide continuous development, and give members an opportunity for engagement with officers and outside bodies to aid shared learning.

## **2 Review of the Development and Performance of the Authority in 2013/14**

2.1 The annual Development Appraisals are an important part of identifying members' learning and development needs and reflecting on the development opportunities in the previous year. At the time of writing this report 18 out of 21 appraisals had been completed. Members were very positive about the member development programme in 2013/14, with complimentary remarks about how the events had aided their understanding on key issues and

increased the capacity for the Authority to make well informed decisions. The attendance rate at some member development events over the year was not always as high as had been hoped, and it will be important for members to commit to future events to maintain a high level of understanding. Defra has recently revised its reporting format for the annual appraisal of Secretary of State members to reflect best practice and I have asked the Head of Governance to incorporate the key points within the Authority's Development Appraisal template so that we can adopt best practise and have a common approach towards member appraisals. These amendments will be incorporated for the next iteration of Broads Authority Development Appraisals due to be completed in early 2015

- 2.2 Attendance at meetings of the full Authority increased from 82% to 86%, when compared to the previous period, which has helped maintain a collective understanding of the issues addressed and the continued development of the Authority. The overall attendance for all meetings is slightly lower but has still risen from 78% in 2012/13 to 81% in 2013/14; against a target of 80%. Attendance rates at Committee meetings are recorded at 88% for the Financial Scrutiny and Audit Committee, 74% for the Planning Committee and 83% for the Navigation Committee. Members are reminded that the collective attendance target for all meetings in 2014/15 remains 80%.
- 2.3 The attendance figures above are only one aspect of the collective performance of the Authority. The NPAPA Review Team told the Authority that they identified good leadership provided by lead members and good collective responsibility among senior managers and members. They also commended the Member Development Programme, and identified the Authority's way of doing this as one of their five identified "good practice" models. However, they also said that the Authority was not (and by implication must not become) complacent about what still needs to be achieved.
- 2.4 Following my discussions with members as part of the Development Appraisal interviews, I am also able to draw some conclusions as to the value for money that members have brought to the Authority as a whole. The expenditure for members' expenses and allowances in 2013/14 is projected to be approximately £46,600, which will represent a slight increase to the actual expenditure in 2012/13 of approximately £1,000. The value for money delivered for this expenditure includes:
- The extent to which the Authority acts as a focus of attention and accountability for the work done by staff.
  - The credibility of the Authority's work and approach is validated by the scrutiny and experience of its members.
  - The overall cost of the Authority's members who provide this governance is very small in the context of the overall annual budget.
  - The level of experience and capacity for decision-taking provided by 21 members could not be easily matched in any comparable body/company in the private sector.

- 2.5 The draft member development programme for 2014/15 draws on the comments made by members within their annual Development Appraisals. Any additional key themes or trends arising out of further discussions which need to be addressed as part of this programme will be addressed during the meeting.
- 2.6 There was also a feeling expressed by some members that they wished to have more opportunities outside the formal run of meetings to network and to have more informal exchanges of views. Some looked back with approval at the morning sessions which were once held before a Friday afternoon formal meeting: these incorporated not only a time for members to discuss matters privately, but also provided time for briefings on matters of interest to the Broads, without them forming part of the formal meeting. They were discontinued because of poor attendance, the increased length of the commitment on that day and very real concerns that the public could perceive that decisions were being made in private prior to the meeting.
- 2.7 The formal Authority meetings now start at 10am, as requested by Members, and the opportunity for an earlier informal or briefing session no longer presents itself. We have attempted to provide key briefings within the main Authority agenda, but this can become a recipe for long meetings, even though the content of the briefings is often widely welcomed. One of the areas we could start to examine is the extent to which briefings on key technical Broads matters should form part of the Member Development programme, allowing members to inform themselves before they are crystallised into a decision paper for the Authority. There are examples of this in the Draft Programme below.
- 2.8 Members' views are sought as to whether additional informal sessions for members to meet and discuss topical issues should be scheduled during the year and, if so, whether these would best be scheduled following Broads Authority meetings to reduce costs to the Authority and travelling time for members.

### **3 Draft Member Development Programme 2014/15**

- 3.1 Core Induction for New Members. A new members' Induction Day provides an opportunity for the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Authority, Chairman of the Navigation Committee and Chief Executive to give an overview of key issues, in order to aid wider understanding, and for members to ask questions they would not otherwise have the opportunity to address. This event was scheduled to take place on 17 September 2014, but will be brought forward (potentially to 10 September 2014) so that it does not clash with the National Parks UK New Member Induction Course. The venue and detailed programme will be determined nearer the date, to ensure that the programme includes topical issues for all new members of the Authority. The new members' induction programme also includes:

- a comprehensive Member Induction Pack;
- initial meetings with the Chairman and Chief Executive;

- a familiarisation day on the Broads to view ongoing work;
- governance training, including a briefing on the Code of Conduct;
- the opportunity to have a member mentor for six months; and
- the opportunity to attend the National Parks UK New Members Induction Course (the next of which will be held on Tues 16 to Thurs 18 September 2014 – Brecon Beacons).

3.3 Specific Training. Specific training is also held for new or potential members of the Planning Committee, who receive an additional session prior to attending their first meeting. This covers the status of the various planning policy documents, the primacy of the Development Plan and the reasons for approval/refusal. The Planning Committee has also committed to a regular programme of training and development updates in order for its members to undertake their role properly: elements of this could be carried out in conjunction with neighbouring Planning Authorities, who will be doing the same for their members.

3.4 Continuous Development: The National and International Perspective. There are opportunities to attend National Park Workshops and Conferences organised by National Parks UK (the next of which is the Workshop on 'Engaging the Younger Generation' to be held in Perth on 14 May 2014. The Authority is sending five delegates, three of whom are Members, to this Conference.

3.5 Continuous Development: Special Areas of Interest. It is proposed that a series of member briefings, presentations and site visits will be scheduled, based around the four key themes in the draft Broads Plan and Strategic Objectives, to meet the development opportunities identified within the members' Development Appraisals. The key elements for consideration are set out below, and opportunities will be sought for incorporating these briefings either within the agenda of existing meetings, or as special events.

- (i) **Theme 1: Planning for the long-term future of the Broads in response to climate change and sea-level rise.**
  - Climate Change Updates and Workshop (to include long term environmental trends, impacts of storm surges, etc.)
  - BESL Update.
- (ii) **Theme 2: Working in partnership on the sustainable management of the Broads.**
  - Update on Lake Restoration and the opportunities provided by the Water Framework Directive
  - Planning Design Quality Tour
  - External facilitator to attend a Planning Committee to feedback to Members and Officers on the Committee's operation
- (iii) **Theme 3: Encouraging the sustainable use of the Broads.**
  - Update on tourism trends, the local industry and the challenges we face.

- Update on the Implementation of the Integrated Access Strategy.
- A briefing on key navigation issues.

(iv) **Theme 4: Governance/organisational development of the Authority.**

- Workshop on good governance; what Members' responsibilities are; and how they could hone their decision-making skills.
- Financial training.
- Updates on external funding opportunities.
- Chairmanship skills.
- Briefing of newly appointed Navigation Committee members.

3.6 It is proposed that this year's Annual Site Visit will be held on 24 July 2014. It is suggested that this will concentrate on Theme 1 and encompass site visits for members to appreciate the potential impact of climate change, followed by a workshop to further understand the issues being presented. A detailed itinerary for the Annual Site Visit will be produced in due course. It is also intended to schedule a site visit for members of the Broads Forum during the year, to which Broads Authority members would also be welcome to attend.

#### **4 Timetable**

4.1 After discussion at the Authority meeting and following the incorporation of any necessary modifications, a detailed programme will be drawn up and circulated. Views are also sought about the most convenient times for the briefings. In order to ease the financial and time burden for members – and especially those who have a longer distance to travel – it might be helpful if these could be arranged where possible to fit in with other meetings, for example on the morning of Navigation Committee meetings or in the afternoon following Broads Authority meetings.

#### **5 Financial Implications**

5.1 Provision for the continuation of the Member Development Programme has been included in the 2014/15 Governance budget.

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| Background Papers:      | Nil             |
| Author:                 | Stephen Johnson |
| Date of Report:         | 1 May 2014      |
| Broads Plan Objectives: | Multiple        |
| Appendices:             | None            |