



## OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (WAVERLEY)

### TWO NATIONAL PARKS LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUNDING: NOMINATION OF CHAMPION

21 SEPTEMBER 2012

#### KEY ISSUE

The Two National Parks partnership has requested that a member champion is nominated from each of the partner authorities, and as the Surrey County Council part of this project is focused on Haslemere it is suggested that the divisional member for Haslemere is nominated for this role.

#### SUMMARY

In December 2011 Hampshire County Council as lead authority for a partnership of eight authorities, including Surrey County Council, made a bid for Local Sustainable Transport Funding (LSTF) through a bid known as the *Sustainable Transport Solutions for England's Two Newest National Parks*.

In July 2012 £3.81 million was granted from this fund. Although the fund focuses on the New Forest and South Downs National Parks, Surrey County Council has an opportunity to influence the travel choices of visitors coming to, and travelling around, the South Downs National Park using Haslemere railway station as a gateway..

#### OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

**The Local Committee (Waverley) is asked to;**

Agree to nominate the divisional member for Haslemere, Mr Steve Renshaw, as champion for the Two National Parks LSTF project.

**1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 In July 2012 the *Sustainable Transport Solutions for England's Two Newest National Parks* bid was granted £3.81 million from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. This means that the New Forest National Park Authority and South Downs National Park Authority, along with their partners, have a once in a generation opportunity to influence the travel choices of visitors coming to, and travelling around, the National Parks, by embedding travel behaviour change programmes in the National Parks between Summer 2012 and March 2015.
- 1.2 By encouraging more people to choose walking, cycling and public transport we aim to make travel a distinctive and enjoyable element of the visitor experience; while protecting and enhancing, for the benefit of future generations of residents and visitors, the wildlife, landscapes, heritage and tranquillity which characterise the National Parks.

**Why Influence Visitor Travel ?**

- 1.3 The majority of visitors to the National Parks currently travel by car. For example, 79% of visitors travel by car to the South Downs, generating over 66 million car trips per year (not including the trips then made to get around the Park). During key holiday times this reliance on cars causes congestion and spoils the tranquillity of the National Parks.
- 1.4 More than half (55%) of all transport-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the National Parks are emitted by visitors' cars, negatively impacting on their unique wildlife and habitats.
- 1.5 The programme will deliver a variety of activities which will combine to:
  - Improve the train stations and bus stops where visitors arrive in to the National Parks.
  - Make it easy to reach the attractions within the National Parks by foot, bicycle, bus and train.
  - Ensure visitors know how to get to and around the National Parks with minimal impact on these precious environments.
  - Keep traffic flowing smoothly in the National Parks.
- 1.6 To do this the programme will use the full toolkit of measures which best practice has shown is most effective in getting people to try new modes of travel:
  - Improvement of infrastructure and services, e.g. cycle routes, railway stations, bus services, to ensure that the sustainable travel network is in place and fit for purpose.
  - Active engagement of key destinations, e.g. visitor destination travel plans, to help visitor attractions to advocate and enable sustainable travel.
  - Enabling activities, e.g. bicycle hire points, joint ticketing, guided walks, to ensure that people can access the equipment, skills and confidence they need to try a new mode.
  - Better information provision, e.g. maps, timetables and websites, so that people can easily access the information they need to plan their journey.

- Travel awareness campaign, e.g. marketing and promotional activities, to raise awareness of the travel options available and incentivise their use.

### **The Picture of Success**

- 1.7 By 2015 we aim to reduce the number of visitors arriving at, and travelling around, the National Parks by car (by 2-9% points depending on the Park and visitor type), with a proportional increase in the number of visitors arriving at, and travelling around, the National Parks by foot, bicycle, bus and train.
- 1.8 We believe that this change in travel choices will:
- Save 11,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from being released in the National Parks.
  - Support the visitor economy by encouraging more spending by visitors.
  - Give more visitors and residents better access to more of the National Parks.
  - Encourage visitors and residents to be more physically active.

### **Two National Park LSTF Partnership**

- 1.9 The Two National Parks LSTF bid was submitted by Hampshire County Council on behalf of the eight partnership authorities who are:
- Hampshire County Council (lead authority)
  - New Forest National Park Authority
  - South Downs National Park Authority
  - Brighton & Hove City Council
  - East Sussex County Council
  - **Surrey County Council**
  - West Sussex County Council
  - Wiltshire Council
- 1.10 A variety of public, private and community sector stakeholder partners will also be critical to successful delivery of the programme.
- 1.11 The Two National Parks LSTF will be focused on the New Forest and South Downs National Parks and whilst Surrey County Council is not covered by either of these Parks, it does border the South Downs National Park along part of the Surrey and West Sussex county boundary close to Haslemere, where there are good rail links.
- 1.12 At other locations where the South Downs National Park borders Surrey, such as in the vicinity of Docketfield, there are no local rail links, the nearest being Bentley which is located within Hampshire.
- 1.13 Therefore, Haslemere is seen as a gateway to the National Park for cyclists and bus users from the railway station.

**Champion**

- 1.14 The Two National Parks partnership have requested that a member act as 'champion' as well as a senior manager for the programme within each partner organisation.
- 1.15 The role is not seen as 'daunting or challenging' as in the first instance they will be invited to an 'engagement' event, probably around November 2012, to inform them about the programme and generate their interest in it.
- 1.16 There will not be any on-going commitment required from the champions, other than for them to be open to then being engaged on an ad hoc basis as issues arise.
- 1.17 As the project only focuses on Haslemere within the Surrey County Council area it is suggested that the division member for Haslemere is nominated for this role.

**2 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1. The business case for the Two National Parks LSTF included a financial section that does not form part of this report and was approved by the Department for Transport.

**3 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Equalities and Diversity will be taken into account during the design of schemes, but does not form part of this report.

**4 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report..

**5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1. The Two National Parks project provides an opportunity for Surrey County Council to influence the project and include Haslemere as a gateway to the South Downs National Park.
- 5.2. The inclusion of a nominated member as champion will assist the County Council's influence and commitment to this project.
- .

**6 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT**

- 6.1. Over the September and October period the partnership will identify specific initiatives and schemes for the Two National Parks LSTF programme, together with the partners responsible for delivery of each of these.
- 6.2. The partnership will:
  - Review the relevant measures outlined in the bid and the budgets allocated to them
  - Generate ideas for specific initiatives and schemes to be delivered
  - Identify the partners and budget needed to deliver each

- Prioritise initiatives and schemes for delivery, in particular in 2012/13

6.3. It is planned that the nominated champions for each authority will be briefed during November 2012.

**LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER:** Paul Fishwick , LSTF Project Manager and

**TELEPHONE NUMBER:**

03456 009 009

**E-MAIL:**

[Paul.fishwick@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.fishwick@surreycc.gov.uk)

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Sustainable Transport Solutions for England's Two Newest National Parks bid – Hampshire County Council (December 2010).

Two National Parks LSTF Interim Programme Group – Meeting 13 August 2012.