

REPORT OF ADMINISTRATION AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

SUBJECT: MEMBER MENTORING SCHEME

Purpose of Report

To seek Members' approval to introduce a Member Mentoring Scheme to encourage under-represented groups to become involved in local government.

Introduction/Background

The Brecon Beacons National Park Authority has, following a request from Welsh Government, agreed to deliver a pilot project to encourage representatives from black and ethnic minority (BME) communities to get involved in local government. Welsh Government officials have now asked this Authority and Snowdonia National Park Authority to consider developing a similar scheme to target under-represented groups. Some Welsh Government funding will be made available to cover the costs of the project.

Proposal

The detailed proposal is attached at Appendix 1. The main aim of the proposal is to provide participants with a greater understanding of the role of Members and the work of the Authority, and provide them with a unique learning and development opportunity which will help them to acquire the skills and experience to enable them to compete more effectively for future public appointment opportunities as and when they arise. It should be noted, however, that the scheme will not provide participants with a formal role within the Authority and they will not be in a position to unduly influence the decisions of the Authority.

Financial considerations

Expenses will need to be paid to the participants, although it is expected that Welsh Government funding will cover these. If the participants do not have access to a computer, provision will be made for a tablet to be provided. This, again, will be funded through Welsh Government. There will also be costs incurred through officer commitment.

Risk considerations

Welsh Government is committed to increasing the number of representatives from under-represented groups in public appointments.

The project will rely upon a sufficient number of Members volunteering to work with participants in order for the scheme to proceed.

Human Rights/Equality issues

The project complies with the Equality Act 2010, which is about ensuring a fair deal for everyone and focuses on ending discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and outcome and fostering good relations between different individuals and

communities. From the Authority's perspective, the scheme will bring new and valuable insights from people with different backgrounds and experiences, which will challenge its thinking and enhance its decision-making ability.

Biodiversity implications/Sustainability appraisal

There are no biodiversity/sustainability implications.

Welsh Language statement

The project will be delivered in accordance with the Authority's Welsh Language Scheme.

Conclusion

The project provides another exciting opportunity for the Authority to work with under-represented groups. It will also provide individuals who may be interested in being involved with the Authority/public life but are unsure how to and/or are not confident enough to approach the subject with the opportunity to do so. It is considered that the project will be of benefit to all concerned by increasing participants' confidence and knowledge to apply for a position in public life in future and by providing the Authority with a better insight into how to engage with the communities it serves.

RECOMMENDATION

Members are requested to:

- 1. approve the introduction of a Member Mentoring Scheme as set out in the proposal detailed at Appendix 1, and**
- 2. nominate eight Members to act as Mentors to the participants.**

Background Documents

None

(For further information, please contact Janet Evans, Administration and Democratic Services Manager on extension 4834 or by emailing janete@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk)

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PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MEMBER MENTORING SCHEME

1. Scheme timescale

It is intended to run the project for six months from 1 September 2015 to 31 March 2016 (depending on when enough participants have been identified).

2. Targeting participants

It is proposed that the scheme be focused on seeking to widen participation in relation to the following groups:

- Gender – increasing the proportion of females on the Authority;
- Young people – increasing the number of Members under the age of 40;
- Minority ethnic – increasing representation from minority ethnic communities

Members may wish to identify other under-represented groups.

Among the groups/organisations to be approached will be:

- Mosaic representatives identified by the Campaign for National Parks;
- Merched y Wawr/Clybiau Gwawr;
- Women's Institute;
- Clybiau Ffermwyr Ifainc/Young Farmers' Clubs.

However, participation will not be restricted to these.

It is expected that up to four individuals will participate on the scheme. Up to eight Members will also be identified to support the scheme, although not all need be involved with every activity.

3. Allocating resources

(a) *Financial costs*

Subject to Welsh Government funding, and subject to participants not having access to a computer, a laptop or tablet will be provided for the duration of the project.

Travel and childcare/dependent's costs will be reimbursed where necessary, although it is hoped that participants may be able/willing to share transport to meetings where appropriate.

(b) *Officer costs*

Induction and support will be provided by the Democratic Services team, together with other officers as and when required.

It is envisaged that a total of 17 days will be delivered (see breakdown in Section 4).

(c) *Participant commitment*
As (b) above.

(d) *Member commitment*
Much of the scheme is based around attendance at meetings of the Authority and its Committees, together with Member Workshop/Training Events. Some additional days may be required on a one-to-one basis if participants wish to develop any particular areas of interest or additional skills. 3 days have been identified in the scheme as a contingency for this.

A more detailed breakdown of costs can be found in Section 6.

4. Induction and continuing development

The scheme will deliver the following days of induction and continuing development:

Days	Activity
1	Induction by officers
4 (or 8 half days)	Attendance at meetings (at least one each of the Authority, Development Management Committee, Audit and Corporate Services Committee and Operational Review Committee)
4 (or 8 half days)	Preparing for meetings (reading/discussing with officers, whether at Llanion or at home)
3	Member Workshops/Training Events (to include a day with the Conservation team and/or Rangers)
3	Contingency days to develop particular areas of interest or additional skills needed or to attend an external event with a Member Mentor
1	Learning about the public appointments application process
0.5	Review of Member Mentoring Scheme
0.5	Feedback from public appointments application/interview process (where appropriate)
17	Total number of days involved

5. Scheme outcomes

Participants will:

- gain an understanding of the role of the National Park Authority and its Members;
- gain a better insight into the democratic process and be able to apply this to other organisations or situations;
- be able to apply the experience/knowledge gained to a public appointment recruitment process, and

- be able to equip the Authority with a better insight into how to engage in future with under-represented groups

The Authority will evaluate the scheme upon completion, with a view to extending it to other groups if appropriate.

6. Costs

The costs detailed are indicative of the potential highest amounts, e.g. for childcare/dependant's care and travelling expenses for all four participants, but this is unlikely to be known until the recruitment process has been completed:

Item	Unit	Unit cost	Number	Total
Mileage / travel costs	Miles	£0.45	£23.09*	£1570
Childcare/dependant's care	Day	£40	51	£2720
Tablet		£500	4	£2000
				£6290
Officer costs				
Democratic Services Manager	Day	£235	7	£1645
Democratic and Executive Services Assistant	Day	£152	7	£1064
				£2709
TOTAL				£8999

* Figure is based on the current average mileage claim per meeting

Officer costs

The Democratic Services Manager will be involved with induction training, scheme administration, liaising with Members, meeting preparation, support liaison, etc.

The Democratic and Executive Services Assistant will be involved with programme organisation, participant recruitment and liaison, support liaison, etc.

A range of other officers will also be involved in various training and familiarisation exercises for the participants. Where possible they will be linked to existing training days.