SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides a briefing of the 12 June 2014 meeting of the Business Task Force (BTF). Full notes are available on request.

Recommendation that a note the briefing from the June meeting of the Business Task Force

BACKGROUND

2.1 The group’s purpose is to:

- build understanding, respect, trust and collaboration between businesses and the LDNPA (and other public sector agencies);
- to deliver tangible benefits for businesses and the National Park; and
- to strengthen the experience of visitors to the National Park.

ITEMS DISCUSSED

3.1 The roll out of Connecting Cumbria

The group discussed a Freedom of Information request that was submitted to Cumbria County Council about the roll out of Connecting Cumbria. The group agreed to invite Paul Cretney from BT Open Reach to their next meeting as he had provided some useful information on which cabinets are to become live and when. The group also discussed the seven per cent of Cumbria which will not be covered by Connecting Cumbria (much of which will lie within the National Park) and solutions along the lines of the B4RN project in North Lancashire which is helping communities to deliver their own high speed broadband projects.

4. Reviewing the Partnership’s Plan – Partnership approaches to key issues

4.1 The Business Task Force looked at and discussed the draft strategies which propose approaches to key issues in the National Park. The group were asked to highlight five approaches they liked, five approaches they had concerns around and highlight anything that they felt was missing.

Key concerns:

- Geological Disposal facility - impact on the brand of the Lake District not just the environment.
- A lot of the strategies are difficult to understand and should use plain English
- Visitor Giving, as it is described, turns it into a tax when it should be voluntary.
- Need to reword prosperous economy outcome to properly reflect the attraction of the Lake District to new businesses.

Missing:

- a co-ordinated approach to car parking
- Tourism VAT cut
- Our product – the need to appeal to youth
- Maintaining existing market
- Encourage longer stays – should include the adventure appeal - not just cultural
5. **Local Enterprise Partnership update**

5.1 Local Growth Fund bid and development of Pipeline Projects

Steve Ratcliffe updated the group on LGF bid and the group were asked to inform Steve of any investment intentions or ideas for projects which could be made ready for delivery as and when funding became available.

6. **On Street Car Parking Charges**

6.1 The group were very concerned about the effect that these would have on retail businesses within the Park and agreed to write to CCC expressing these concerns.

7. **NEXT MEETING**

7.1 The Business Task Force will next meet in September 2014 - date to be confirmed

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