

# North Yorkshire Council

## Resources

24 January 2025

### Grant Acceptance for Beyond Nature Partnership Agreement with Yorkshire Water

#### Report of the Assistant Director – Environmental Services

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 That the Assistant Director for Resources authorises the acceptance of the grant in the sum of £324,956.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Nidderdale National Landscape (NNL) team delivers habitat conservation across the National Landscape. An important aspect of this is working closely with farmers and landowners to help them deliver environmental enhancements on their land. Yorkshire Water owns 12% of the land in the National Landscape and, as such, is one of the largest landowners in NNL. The NNL team has worked closely with Yorkshire Water for many years. In 2020, Yorkshire Water recognised the importance of their partnership with the NNL team and agreed to provide funding towards a new Beyond Nature Farming Officer role in the NNL team for the period to March 2025. The partnership is considered successful by both parties and we have jointly negotiated a new partnership agreement that will continue to fund the NNL Beyond Nature Officer role for a further 5 years.

#### 3.0 DETAIL OF PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH YORKSHIRE WATER

- 3.1 The grant funds 100% of the cost of the 1 FTE NNL Beyond Nature Farming Officer over a 5-year period. The role of the Beyond Nature Farming Officer is to consolidate environmental management practices on existing Beyond Nature farms and to expand Beyond Nature to new Yorkshire Water farm tenants. This involves:
- Delivery of one-to-one farm conservation advice to Beyond Nature farmers
  - Overseeing applications for agri environment grants, including opportunities emerging as part of the new ELM schemes, and other business and environmental grants
  - Assist in developing enhanced land management plans based on natural capital and ecosystem service delivery assessments for existing and emerging Beyond Nature farms
  - Supporting conservation delivery works on the ground through identifying requirements, programming, work specifications for and liaison with contractors, in conjunction with Yorkshire Water staff and capital processes
  - Organising conservation training and knowledge-exchange events for Beyond Nature Network members
  - Facilitating business planning to increase resilience and manage change
  - Undertaking farm carbon, soil & nutrient analysis and reviews

#### 4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 No alternatives have been considered as this funding provides a clear mechanism to fully-fund the Beyond Nature Farming Officer role, who delivers an important part of the NNL team's work. No alternative sources of funding are available and if the grant was not accepted then it would not be possible to continue this role and the valuable conservation work it delivers.

#### 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The grant will fund 100% of the costs of the NNL Beyond Nature Farming Officer, including estimated travel and subsistence, plus make a contribution to wider management costs across the NNL team. The role is NYC Grade JK and the post is 1FTE. The grant period will start in April 2025 to provide a continuous period of grant from the previous grant funding, enabling staff continuity. The contribution from Yorkshire Water is fixed and has been calculated to cover an annual pay and cost inflation rate of 3% throughout the period and standard progression on pay increments. Should staff costs be slightly higher than anticipated then there will be a slightly lower contribution to wider management costs, whereas if staff costs are slightly lower than anticipated then there will be a slightly higher contribution to the wider management costs.

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total
Beyond Nature Farming Officer costs	£53,855	£56,827	£60,026	£61,824	£63,674	£296,206
Contribution to wider management costs	£5,250	£5,500	£5,750	£6,000	£6,250	£28,750
<b>Yorkshire Water total funding</b>	<b>£59,105</b>	<b>£62,327</b>	<b>£65,776</b>	<b>£67,824</b>	<b>£69,924</b>	<b>£324,956</b>

5.2 The partnership agreement has been reviewed and approved by finance.

#### 6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The partnership agreement has been reviewed and approved by legal services (Jonathan Finn).

#### 7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no impacts on people with any protected characteristics.

#### 8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The role assists Yorkshire Water farm tenants in the National Landscape to deliver environmental enhancements on their tenant farms in partnership with Yorkshire Water (as the landowner), which have positive environmental benefits in terms of decreasing greenhouse gas emissions, improving climate resilience and enhancing biodiversity.

#### 9.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Authorisation to accept the grant offer from Yorkshire Water is recommended because:

- It will allow continuation of the existing partnership delivery approach between the NNL team and Yorkshire Water.
- It will fund 100% of the costs of the Beyond Nature Farming Officer role.

- It will enable the on-going delivery of farm conservation on Yorkshire Water farm holdings in Nidderdale National Landscape, which is a key strategic priority as identified in our Management Plan.

**10.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

10.1 That the Assistant Director – Resources approve the acceptance of the grant of £324,956 from Yorkshire Water.

APPENDICES – None

Background Documents - None

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AD – Environmental Services  
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