



MINUTES

Meeting:	National Park Authority
Date:	Friday 26 July 2024 at 10.00 am
Venue:	Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell
Chair:	Mr K Smith
Present:	Mr J W Berresford, Ms R Bennett, Prof J Dugdale, Cllr A Gregory, Cllr L Grooby, Cllr B Hanley, Cllr Mrs G Heath, Cllr D Murphy, Cllr A Nash, Cllr Mrs K Potter, Cllr K Richardson, Cllr K Rustidge, Dr R Swetnam, Mr S Thompson, Ms Y Witter and Cllr B Woods
Apologies for absence:	Cllr M Beer, Cllr P Brady, Cllr M Buckler, Cllr M Chaplin, Cllr C Farrell, Cllr C Greaves, Cllr A Hart, Cllr L Hartshorne, Cllr I Huddleston and Cllr V Priestley.

61/24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON THE 5 JULY 2024

The minutes of the last meeting of the National Park Authority held on 5 July 2024 were approved as a correct record.

62/24 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business

63/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present to make representations to the Committee.

64/24 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Members Declarations of Interest

65/24 CHAIR'S BRIEFING

The Chair of the Authority provided the following verbal updates to Members.

- Attended Planning Committee
- Attended Programmes & Resources Committee
- Attended Governance Review Working Group
- Attended Local Plan Steering Group

- Attended Authority AGM and Members Annual Tour
- Attended annual National Park meeting for Chairs and Chief Executives at Loch Lomond & Trossachs
- Attended meetings re the establishment of a Landscape Observatory that took place at Edale Village Hall in June
- Participated in the interviews for the appointment of two Independent Persons
- Met with the new East Midlands Combined Authority Mayor, Claire Ward
- Attended Derbyshire Archaeological Advisory Committee
- Attended Ecton Mine celebration of the completion of the balance cone
- Represented the Authority at the celebration of the introduction of the new No.62 bus route serving Buxton, Chapel, Edale, Hope and Castleton

66/24 CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT (PM)

There were no further updates to the report.

There was an amendment to the report in paragraph 3.2 detailing the list of MP's for the National Park Constituencies to record that Debbie Abrahams is the MP for the Oldham East and Saddleworth Constituency and not solely Oldham as stated in the report.

There was a question regarding the UN's Race to Zero pledge which the Peak District National Park Authority has signed up to and what this means. All 15 of the National Parks have signed up to the pledge and the commitment has been made. The National Parks now have one year to develop an implementation plan. Already have some baseline information from the Small World consultation report and now have one year to formulate a detailed plan on how to implement it.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

67/24 EXTERNAL AUDIT 2023-24 AUDIT STRATEGY

The report, which asked Members to consider the 2023/24 External Audit Strategy memorandum, was presented by Daniel Watson of Mazars.

Members queried why there was such a substantial increase in the fees. The reasons for the fee increase were explained.

There is a possibility that a representative from Mazars may come to the newly formed Audit, Budget and Project Risk Monitoring Group meetings if that is required.

Members asked for clarification of the responsibilities of Members. Authority and management are responsible to ensure adequate procedures are in place in terms of fraud and regarding internal control it is up to members and management to ensure that adequate internal procedures are put in place. This is detailed on Page 6 of the Audit Strategy Memorandum Report. It was noted that Moors For the Future Partnership are a major part of both the external and internal audit.

The recommendation set out in the report was moved and seconded, put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

To note the 2023/24 External Audit Strategy Memorandum.

68/24 INTERNAL AUDIT BLOCK 2 2023/24

The Finance Manager was present to respond to Members questions.

There were no further updates to the report.

Stuart Cutts, Assistant Director - Audit Assurance, Veritau was present to answer questions from Members.

Members queried why there were recommendations without any nominated people responsible for the actions. There are nominated responsible officers allocated in the report. Due to the size of the organisation it was felt that the current level of responsibility is appropriate.

It was felt that the organisation needs to get better at identifying and recognising the impact on net zero.

The recommendation as set out in the report was moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

RESOLVED:

That the Internal Audit reports for the three areas covered under Block 2 for 2023/24 – Main Accounting, Creditors and Vehicles has been received and the proposed actions agreed.

69/24 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25

Stuart Cutts, Assistant Director-Audit Assurance at Veritau, was present to answer any questions or queries.

There were no further comments to add and no questions from Members.

The recommendation as set out in the report was moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

RESOLVED:

To approve the 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

70/24 INTERNAL AUDIT 2023/24 ANNUAL REPORT

Stuart Cutts, Assistant Director - Audit Assurance, Veritau was present at the meeting to present the report and answer any Members questions.

It was noted that the Authority had received substantial assurance overall in a year of organisational change and upheaval combined with the introduction of the new accounting system and that this is very reassuring.

There was question regarding project management and the monitoring of major projects once they have commenced. This has been noted and project management will form a large part of the work of the new Audit, Budget and Project Risk Monitoring Group and is in their terms of reference.

The transfer of the accounting system was mentioned in the audit report as a possible risk. The Finance Manager confirmed that there were no issues or cause for concern as year end had been completed without any problems.

The recommendation as set out in the report was moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

RESOLVED:

To note the 2023/24 Internal Audit Annual Report as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

71/24 FINANCIAL OUTTURN AND RESERVE APPROPRIATION 2023/24

There was nothing further to add to the report.

It was clarified that the terms “surplus” and “underspend” were both used and there was a request to use the same term for consistency and to remove any confusion.

There was a concern regarding the re-naming of the Operational Effectiveness Reserve to that of “Aldern House Reserve”. It was clarified that this reserve is for the current Aldern House and the operational effectiveness for Aldern House which is generally for unallocated money for maintenance and works on the current property.

It was noted that the re-naming of the budget head was not intended to imply any presumptions of the Authority in relation to the current or future intentions of the property or any other property. This reserve can be drawn upon for a number of operational spends and is an unspecific reserve to drawn down if needed.

It was confirmed that all of the funds are currently invested and outsourced to an investment company, our funds are lodged with North Yorkshire Council and the interest amount referred to in the report is a product of this investment.

The recommendation as set out in the report was moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the specific reserve appropriations of £0.32m shown in Appendix C of the report are approved.**
- 2. That the outturn position, variance analysis for 2023/24 and reserve movements be noted (as set out in appendices A, B and D in the report).**

72/24 LOCAL PLAN ISSUES & OPTIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL PUBLIC CONSULTATION (AM)

This report was presented by the Policy & Communities Team Manager.

It was explained that approval is needed for the consultation processes. Thanks were given to the Policy & Communities Team for their work and also for the input received from the Members steering group. The recommendations before the authority enables the steering group to finalise the draft and make any further arrangements. It was felt that consultation is key especially to those living and working in the Peak District. Success will be based on a wide consultation of all those within the Peak District along with key stakeholders.

There were questions regarding the assimilation of all the views and how this would be done. Every comment has to be taken into account and recorded and responded to. The more cogent points will be extracted and discussed with the steering group. The Policy team are working with the Marketing and Communities team on a strategy to publicise the consultation which shall run for longer than the statutory 6 weeks. There will be on-line consultations along with packs distributed to parish councils as well as face-to-face events.

Cllr Murphy left the meeting at 10.43am.

- There is a statutory consultation list and the intention is to go above and beyond this list. The new consultation portal is capable of doing a substantial part of the analysis.
- A concern was raised regarding affordable homes and accommodation for young people in order to thrive. Questions 30,31 and 32 in the consultation relate to affordable housing.
- It was mentioned that there were some omissions in the document namely relating to homes used as holiday and second homes (change of use, local licencing, loss of primary use etc). Also noted the lack of questions regarding visitor parking and provision for the parking of camper vans. The change of use of housing is referenced in the full document report but it does not form part of the consultation because currently there is no planning legislation that can be used. Issue 41 does cover visitor parking and is linked to another issue regarding recreation hubs Issue 24.

Cllr Murphy returned to the meeting at 10.50am.

Cllr Gregory attended the meeting at 10.50am.

- There are 54 Questions in the survey and it was recognised this is a big consultation because there are 2 documents combined into one document. It is possible to just answer questions relating to a single issue and focus on areas which interest you e.g. just those on housing.
- There was a question relating to the on-line portal and the legitimacy of the respondents. On an on-line portal (as with any other method) you cannot restrict responses but responses are assessed by officers. Anyone who wishes to make a representation will be free to do so.

- How will the new government plans that emerge over the next few years effect the strategies? - a close eye is being kept on this and a new National Planning Policy Framework will be issued soon.
- Members will be able to share this on their social media
- The importance of affordable housing is addressed by Issues 30,31 and 32.
- Issue 17 was discussed relating to conversion of isolated traditional building and flexibility needs to be an inherent part of this. This Issue 17 relates more to a particular category of buildings in isolated and visible locations.
- Will there be monitoring on certain questions/areas that are not being answered. Can you then target these areas? The live portal will bring in all the responses and can do live monitoring so specific targeting may be an option.
- A formal “consultation response document” will be produced along with the analysis. Can do summary analysis through the portal.
- In the near future there will be a fully staffed Policy and Communities Team and therefore they are hopeful that there is enough staff to deal with the responses and analysis.

The recommendations as set out in the report were moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That approval be granted to launch the Issues and Options public consultation exercise, pursuant to Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, for a period of 8 weeks commencing on Monday 7th October 2024 until Friday 29th November 2024 (“Regulation 18 Consultation”).**
- 2. That approval be granted to launch the Sustainability Appraisal public consultation exercise alongside the Regulation 18 Consultation.**
- 3. That authority be delegated to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Local Plan Review Member Steering Group, to finalise the consultation materials and arrangements, including any technical or drafting amendments.**

73/24 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDANT PERSONS

There were no additional comments to the report.

There was a question regarding the terms of reference for the roles and where these roles were advertised. It was advertised on the Authority website and a competitive recruitment and interview process took place with the Chair and the Monitoring Officer

presiding. It was explained that the role of an Independent Person is to assist in relation to the Member code of conduct, in that if a complaint regarding a Member is received, the Monitoring Officer is required by statute to consult with an Independent Person before making a decision on the complaint. The other Independent Person would be assigned to the subject member for them to consult with independently. The process also links into the disciplinary process for the Statutory Officers and Heads of Service. The role can also assist with any reviews of the code of conduct and any strategies that are put in place for Members.

The recommendation as set out in the report was moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Wendy Amis and Ian Orford be appointed as Independent Persons for the Authority for a term of four years ending at the Authority AGM in 2028.**

74/24 MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Chair of the Governance Review Working Group presented this report.

The Governance Review Working Group looked at the effectiveness and relevance of the training offered to Members. There are now these categories:

- 1) New Member Compulsory Training
- 2) Compulsory Training which includes Business Planning workshops in Autumn and IT Security training
- 3) Advisory Training

It was clarified that in Appendix 2 the dates given for the Planning Training were for attendance on one date e.g. 20 September or 18 October 2024.

There will be 2 Business Planning workshops and these will be on different topics so Members will be expected to attend for each topic, two workshops in total.

Rachel Bennett left the meeting at 11.19am

It was felt that the Annual Self-Assessment was a fairly basic document and perhaps there could be more scope to respond and for Members to supply more information. The Governance Review Working Group have agreed a Skills Audit for Members which will be circulated soon.

Rachel Bennett returned to the meeting at 11.21am

Members will be contacted once all Self-Assessment forms have been returned and it would be useful if these forms could be completed in Word.

The recommendations as set out in the report was moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

RESOLVED:

- 1. The Member Training and Development Framework as set out in Appendix 1 of the report is approved.**

2. **The annual programme of training and development events as set out in Appendix 2 of the report is approved.**
3. **To confirm that in person attendance at training and development events are approved duties for the payment of travel and subsistence allowances as set out in Schedule 2 of the Members' Allowances Scheme.**

75/24 NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN - PROGRESS REPORT 2023-24

The Data Strategy and Performance Officer and the Senior Strategy and Performance Officer presented this report.

There were no additions to the report.

- Comments were made on the exemplary layout of the report and how it illuminates clearly work done and work to do.
- It was noted that the National Park Management Plan is a living plan and therefore there will be changes to the actions in it over time. Also that partner representatives now responsible for the delivery of the plan may not have been involved in the creation of the plan.
- There is still quite a lot to be achieved. As this is a partnership plan running over 5 years due to financial constraints some of the projects may not happen.
- In this report Partners have contributed directly to the progress updates for the first time.
- There is a need over the next year to increase partner engagement to keep the National Park Management Plan relevant and accurate.
- There is a series of 1:2:1 meetings specifically to deal with some of the issues with constituent Authorities and other strategic partners
- We need to consider how we change our approach in order to be more adaptable to climate change. This process was started at the essential member training on June 28th 2024 and a staff workshop on July 1st 2024.
- The portal is a live repository and can include live links to other documents and show progress over a five year plan.
- It was noted that currently no actions in the plan have been completed. As this is Year 1 of a 5 year plan most targets will be achieved later in the plan period.

The recommendations as set out in the report was moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the National Park Management Plan Progress Report 2023/24 is approved.**
2. **That the implementation of any required amendments to the Progress Report 2024/24 be delegated to the Head of Resources.**

76/24 PROGRAMMES & RESOURCES COMMITTEE PROGRAMMES 2024-25

The Chair of Programmes and Resources Committee introduced the report.

The Programmes element of the committee now aligns with the 4 aims of the management plan.

The recommendations as set out in the report were moved, seconded, voted on and carried.

RESOLVED:

1. That the approved themes of Programmes and Resources align to the National Park Management Plan aims.
2. That the approved forward work plan for the Programmes and Resources Committee meetings for 2024-25 are:
 - Climate Change - September 2024
 - Landscape and Nature Recovery - December 2024
 - Welcoming Place - January 2025
 - Thriving communities - April 2025

77/24 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

No reports had been submitted.

The meeting ended at 11.40am.