

Public Document Pack

Peak District National Park Authority

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Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell, Derbyshire. DE45 1AE



Our Values: Care – Enjoy – Pioneer

Our Ref: A.1142/4720

Date: 18 July 2024



NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting: **National Park Authority**

Date: **Friday 26 July 2024**

Time: **10.00 am**

Venue: **Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell**

PHILIP MULLIGAN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence, Roll Call of Members Present and Members Declarations of Interest**
2. **Minutes of previous meeting held on the 5 July 2024** *(Pages 5 - 14)*
3. **Urgent Business**
4. **Public Participation**
To note any questions or to receive any statements, representations, deputations and petitions which relate to the published reports on Part A of the Agenda.

FOR INFORMATION

- | | | |
|----|---|--------|
| 5. | Chair's Briefing | 5 mins |
| 6. | Chief Executive Report (PM) <i>(Pages 15 - 18)</i> | 5 mins |

FOR DECISION

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------|
| 7. | External Audit 2023-24 Audit Strategy <i>(Pages 19 - 58)</i>
Appendix 1 | 10 mins |
| 8. | Internal Audit Block 2 2023/24 <i>(Pages 59 - 78)</i>
Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Appendix 3 | 10 mins |
| 9. | Internal Audit Plan 2024/25 <i>(Pages 79 - 84)</i>
Appendix 1 | 10 mins |
| 10. | Internal Audit 2023/24 Annual Report <i>(Pages 85 - 104)</i>
Appendix 1 | |
| 11. | Financial Outturn and Reserve Appropriation 2023/24 <i>(Pages 105 - 120)</i>
Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C

Appendix D | 30 mins |
| 12. | Local Plan Issues & Options and Sustainability Appraisal Public Consultation (AM) <i>(Pages 121 - 156)</i>
Appendix 1 | |

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------|
| 13. | Appointment of Independent Persons <i>(Pages 157 - 158)</i> | 10 mins |
| 14. | Member Training and Development <i>(Pages 159 - 164)</i>
Appendix 1

Appendix 2 | 10 mins |
| 15. | National Park Management Plan - Progress Report 2023-24 <i>(Pages 165 - 168)</i> | 10 mins |
| 16. | Programmes & Resources Committee Programmes 2024-25 <i>(Pages 169 - 170)</i> | 10 mins |

FOR INFORMATION

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|-----|---|--------|
| 17. | Reports from Outside Bodies - None Submitted | 5 mins |
|-----|---|--------|

Duration of Meeting

In the event of not completing its business within 3 hours of the start of the meeting, in accordance with the Authority's Standing Orders, the Authority will decide whether or not to continue the meeting. If the Authority decides not to continue the meeting it will be adjourned and the remaining business considered at the next scheduled meeting.

If the Authority has not completed its business by 1.00pm and decides to continue the meeting the Chair will exercise discretion to adjourn the meeting at a suitable point for a 30 minute lunch break after which the committee will re-convene.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (as amended)

Agendas and reports

Copies of the Agenda and Part A reports are available for members of the public before and during the meeting. These are also available on the website <http://democracy.peakdistrict.gov.uk>

Background Papers

The Local Government Act 1972 requires that the Authority shall list any unpublished Background Papers necessarily used in the preparation of the Reports. The Background Papers referred to in each report, PART A, excluding those papers that contain Exempt or Confidential Information, PART B, can be inspected on the Authority's website.

Public Participation and Other Representations from third parties

Please note that meetings of the Authority and its Committees may take place at venues other than its offices at Aldern House, Bakewell when necessary. Public participation is still available and anyone wishing to participate at the meeting under the Authority's Public Participation Scheme is required to give notice to the Customer and Democratic Support Team to be received not later than 12.00 noon on the Wednesday preceding the Friday meeting. The Scheme is available on the website <http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/about-us/have-your-say> or on request from the Customer and Democratic Support Team 01629 816362, email address: democraticandlegalsupport@peakdistrict.gov.uk.

Written Representations

Other written representations on items on the agenda, except those from formal consultees, will not be reported to the meeting if received after 12noon on the Wednesday preceding the Friday meeting.

Recording of Meetings

In accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 members of the public may record and report on our open meetings using sound, video, film, photograph or any other means this includes blogging or tweeting, posts on social media sites or publishing on video sharing sites. If you intend to record or report on one of our meetings you are asked to contact the Customer and Democratic Support Team in advance of the meeting so we can make sure it will not disrupt the meeting and is carried out in accordance with any published protocols and guidance.

The Authority uses an audio sound system to make it easier to hear public speakers and discussions during the meeting and makes an audio visual broadcast and recording available after the meeting. These recordings will be retained for three years after the date of the meeting.

General Information for Members of the Public Attending Meetings

Please note meetings of the Authority and its Committees may take place at venues other than its offices at Aldern House, Bakewell when necessary, the venue for a meeting will be specified on the agenda. There may be limited spaces available for the public at meetings and priority will be given to those who are participating in the meeting. It is intended that the meetings will be visually broadcast via YouTube and the broadcast will be available live on the Authority's website.

This meeting will take place at Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell, DE45 1AE.

Aldern House is situated on the A619 Bakewell to Baslow Road. Car parking is available. Local Bus Services from Bakewell centre and from Chesterfield and Sheffield pick up and set down near Aldern House. Further information on Public transport from surrounding areas can be obtained from Traveline on 0871 200 2233 or on the Traveline website at www.travelineeastmidlands.co.uk.

Please note that there is no refreshment provision for members of the public before the meeting or during meeting breaks. However, there are cafes, pubs and shops in Bakewell town centre, approximately 15 minutes walk away.

To: Members of National Park Authority:

Chair: Mr K Smith
Deputy Chair: Mr J W Berresford

Cllr M Beer	Ms R Bennett
Cllr P Brady	Cllr M Buckler
Cllr M Chaplin	Prof J Dugdale
Cllr C Farrell	Cllr C Greaves
Cllr A Gregory	Cllr L Grooby
Cllr B Hanley	Cllr A Hart
Cllr L Hartshorne	Cllr Mrs G Heath
Cllr I Huddleston	Cllr D Murphy
Cllr A Nash	Cllr C O'Leary
Cllr Mrs K Potter	Cllr V Priestley
Cllr K Richardson	Cllr K Rustidge
Dr R Swetnam	Mr S Thompson
Cllr J Wharmby	Ms Y Witter
Cllr B Woods	

Constituent Authorities
Secretary of State for the Environment
Natural England

Peak District National Park Authority
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 E-mail: customer.service@peakdistrict.gov.uk
 Web: www.peakdistrict.gov.uk
 Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell, Derbyshire. DE45 1AE



MINUTES

Meeting: **National Park Authority**

Date: Friday 5 July 2024 at 2.00 pm

Venue: Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell

Chair: Mr K Smith

Present: Cllr M Beer, Ms R Bennett, Cllr P Brady, Cllr M Buckler, Cllr M Chaplin, Prof J Dugdale, Cllr C Farrell, Cllr C Greaves, Cllr A Gregory, Cllr B Hanley, Cllr A Hart, Cllr Mrs G Heath, Cllr I Huddleston, Cllr D Murphy, Cllr A Nash, Cllr Mrs K Potter, Cllr V Priestley, Cllr K Richardson, Cllr K Rustidge, Dr R Swetnam, Mr S Thompson, Cllr J Wharmby, Ms Y Witter and Cllr B Woods

Apologies for absence: Mr J W Berresford, Cllr L Grooby, Cllr L Hartshorne and Cllr C O'Leary.

47/24 ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE AUTHORITY

Mr Phil Mulligan CEO, presided over the appointment of the Chair for 2024/25.

One Member, Mr Ken Smith had expressed an interest in the role of Chair of the Authority and had provided a written statement, circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. No further expressions were made.

The nomination was proposed and seconded, and as there was only one candidate the voting was carried out by a show of hands.

Following the vote, Mr Ken Smith was appointed Chair of the Authority and took the Chair.

RESOLVED:

To appoint Mr Ken Smith as Chair of the Authority for a term expiring at the Annual General Meeting in July 2025.

48/24 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR OF THE AUTHORITY

One Member, Mr James Berresford had expressed an interest in the role of Deputy Chair of the Authority and had provided a written statement, circulated to Members in advance of the meeting. No further expressions were made.

The nomination was proposed and seconded and as there was only one candidate the voting was carried out by a show of hands.

RESOLVED:

To appoint Mr James Berresford as Deputy Chair of the Authority for a term expiring at the Annual General Meeting in July 2025.

49/24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 17TH MAY 2024

The minutes of the National Park Authority Meeting held on the 17th May 2024 were approved as a correct record.

50/24 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

51/24 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present to make representations to the Meeting.

52/24 MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

53/24 REPORT OF THE MEMBER APPOINTMENT PROCESS PANEL

Membership of the two Standing Committees had been prepared in accordance with the previous Authority decision that Committee sizes be fixed to 15 with half of the Authority Membership appointed to each Committee. According to the proportionality requirements in the Environment Act there should be 8 Local Authority Members on each committee and 7 Members appointed by the Secretary of State (this includes Parish Members). However, for the previous 5 years the size of the Programmes and Resources Committee has been increased by 1 to 16 so that the Chair of the Authority can be appointed to both Committees. Ken Smith, as Chair of the Authority, had requested that this increase was continued.

The meeting then considered the report of the Member Appointments Process Panel and considered each of the appointments set out in the recommendations of the report. In most cases the appointments were moved, seconded and approved in accordance with the expressions of interest in the report, any changes to the report are identified below.

Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee

As there was only one Member, Patrick Brady who had expressed an interest in the role of Chair of Planning Committee, the voting was carried out by a show of hands.

Patrick Brady withdrew his interest in the role of Vice Chair of Planning, so as there was only one Member, Virginia Priestley who had expressed an interest in the role of Vice Chair of Planning Committee, the voting was carried out by a show of hands.

Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of Programmes and Resources Committee

As there was only one Member, Janet Dugdale who had expressed an interest in the role of Chair of Programmes and Resources Committee, the voting was carried out by a show of hands.

As there was only one Member, Charles Greaves who had expressed an interest in the role of Vice Chair of Programmes and Resources Committee, the voting was carried out by a show of hands.

Planning Committee

As 7 Secretary of State Members (including Parish Members) had expressed interests in the 7 places available on the Planning Committee, these were proposed and seconded and confirmed by a show of hands.

Jean Wharmby withdrew her interest in the Derbyshire County Council place on Planning Committee and asked that she be considered for the vacancy not taken up by the appointed Member of Cheshire East Council. Dermot Murphy was then confirmed as the Derbyshire County Council Member on Planning Committee by a show of hands.

There were 4 candidates for the 3 places for the Metropolitan/NE Derbyshire District Council Members. A ballot was then held to decide which of the 4 candidates, who had expressed an interest, and had been proposed and seconded, would fill the roles. Following the ballot, Mike Chaplin, Lee Hartshorne and Ken Richardson were appointed.

A ballot was then taken to decide which of the two Members, who had expressed an interest and had been proposed and seconded (Ken Rustidge and Jean Wharmby) in filling the vacancy not taken up by Cheshire East Council. Following the ballot, Jean Wharmby was appointed. Therefore, the vacancies on Planning Committee for Local Authority Members were appointed as follows with the remaining places filled as set out in the report:

Cheshire East Council place: Jean Wharmby

Derbyshire CC: Dermot Murphy

Metropolitan District/NE Derbyshire: Lee Hartshorne, Mike Chaplin, Ken Richardson.

Programmes and Resources Committee

As 6 Secretary of State Members (this included Parish Members), had expressed interests for the 7 places on the Programmes & Resources Committee, together with the extra place for the Chair of the Authority, these were proposed and seconded and confirmed by a show of hands. It was agreed that there will be a holding vacancy for a Secretary of State Member, due to the recent resignation of a Member, pending the completion of the recruitment process by DEFRA.

There was 1 vacancy for a Local Authority Member and Ken Rustidge was appointed to this. The appointment were proposed, seconded and appointed by a show of hands.

Local Joint Committee

Dermot Murphy and Jean Wharmby were appointed to the vacant Local Authority Members places. The appointments were proposed, seconded and appointed by a show of hands.

Appeals Panel

Janet Dugdale and Andrew Gregory withdrew their interests. The following were appointed to the vacant Local Authority Member places: Andrew Hart, Dermot Murphy, Jean Wharmby and Charlotte Farrell. The appointments were proposed, seconded and appointed by a show of hands.

Investigatory & Disciplinary Committee

Andy Nash was appointed to the vacant Local Authority Member place and Andrew Gregory was appointed to the vacant Secretary of State place. The appointments were proposed, seconded and appointed by a show of hands.

Audit, Budget and Project Risk Monitoring Group

The membership of this new group is based on appointments made earlier in the meeting, together with places for 3 other Members. Andy Nash withdrew his interest in the Group. The appointments were proposed, seconded and appointed by a show of hands.

Janet Dugdale, Chair of Programmes & Resources
Charles Greaves – Vice Chair of Programmes & Resources
Simon Thompson
Ken Richardson
Yvonne Witter

Due Diligence Panel

James Berresford and Janet Dugdale were appointed as Member and Deputy respectively following a show of hands.

Governance Review Working Group

As there were already expressions of interest from 4 Local Authority Members for the Governance Review Working Group, these were confirmed by a show of hands and it was agreed to carry the remaining vacancy. Martin Beer withdrew his interest as a Secretary of State Member so James Berresford, Patrick Brady, Janet Dugdale and Ken Smith were proposed, seconded and confirmed by a show of hands.

Local Plan Review Member Steering Group

The membership of this group was based on appointments made earlier in the meeting, together with places for 6 other Members. Therefore, the vacancies were appointed as follows:

Patrick Brady, Chair of Planning Committee
Virginia Priestley – Vice Chair of Planning Committee
Ken Smith – Authority Chair
Martin Beer
Matt Buckler
Charlotte Farrell
Bill Hanley
Andy Nash

It was agreed that there would be a holding vacancy for this group. The appointments were proposed, seconded and appointed by a show of hands.

Member Appointments Process Panel

Ken Rustidge was appointed to the Local Authority Member vacancy and Andrew Gregory was appointed to the Secretary of State vacancy. The appointments were proposed, seconded and appointed by a show of hands.

Appointments to Outside Bodies – all agreed by a show of hands. Where there was a deputy or reserve, the Members appointed were asked to let Democratic Support know by 12th July which Member was to be the deputy or reserve.

Campaign for National Parks - Matt Buckler, Janet Dugdale and Rachel Bennett.

East Midlands Council – James Berresford as Member with a vacancy for deputy.

Europarc – Rachel Bennett

Derbyshire Archaeological Advisory Committee – Ken Smith

South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority – Mike Chaplin as Member and Ken Richardson as Deputy

Peak District National Park Foundation – Martin Beer, James Berresford, Andrew Gregory, Virginia Priestley and Ruth Swetnam

Derwent Valley Community Rail Partnership – no Member appointed.

High Peak & Hope Valley Community Rail Partnership – Martin Beer as Member and Bill Hanley as Deputy

Moors for the Future Partnership Group – Virginia Priestley as Member and Ruth Swetnam & Andrew Gregory as Deputies.

Peak District Partnership – Patrick Brady

Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership – Andrew Hart as Member with a vacancy for Deputy

Derbyshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy Board & Staffordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy Steering Group – Virginia Priestley

Land Managers Forum – Ken Rustidge, Rachel Bennett, Bill Hanley and Charlotte Farrell

Peak District Local Access Forum – Martin Beer as Member and Andy Nash as Deputy

Peak District Local Nature Partnership – Matt Buckler and Ruth Swetnam

Stanage Forum Steering Group – Charlotte Farrell

RESOLVED:

- 1. To confirm the Authority's previous decision to set the size of the two Standing Committees to 15, with 8 Local Authority Members and 7 Secretary of State Members and allocate Local Authority places on Planning Committee as set out in Section B (i) of Appendix 1 of the report with an additional place on the**

Programmes and Resources Committee to accommodate the Chair of the Authority.

2. To appoint Patrick Brady as Chair and Virginia Priestley as Vice Chair of the Planning Committee and Janet Dugdale as Chair and Charles Greaves as Vice Chair of Programmes and Resources Committee until the annual Authority Meeting in July 2025

3. To appoint the following Members to the Planning Committee and the Programmes and Resources Committee until the annual Authority Meeting in July 2025.

Planning Committee

**Chair – Patrick Brady
Vice Chair – Virginia Priestley
Jean Wharmby
Dermot Murphy
Matt Buckler
Ian Huddleston
Andrew Hart
Lee Hartshorne
Ken Richardson
Mike Chaplin
Kath Potter
Bill Hanley
Martin Beer
Rachel Bennett
Ken Smith**

Programmes & Resources Committee

**Chair – Janet Dugdale
Vice Chair – Charles Greaves
Gill Heath
Becki Woods
Ken Rustidge
Andy Nash
James Berresford
Linda Grooby
Andrew Gregory
Ruth Swetnam
Simon Thompson
Yvonne Witter
Charlotte Farrell
Ken Smith
Chris O’Leary
Vacancy**

4a. To appoint the following Members until the annual Authority Meeting in July 2025 to the Local Joint Committee.

**Mike Chaplin
Ian Huddleston
Ken Richardson
Dermot Murphy
Jean Wharmby**

**Martin Beer
Kath Potter
Virginia Priestley
Ken Smith**

b) To appoint the following Members to the Appeals Panel until the annual Authority Meeting in July 2025.

**Mike Chaplin
Andrew Hart
Dermot Murphy
Jean Wharmby
Charlotte Farrell**

**Martin Beer
James Berresford
Patrick Brady
Ruth Swetnam**

c) To appoint the following Members to the Investigatory and Disciplinary Committee until the annual Authority Meeting in July 2025.

**Ken Richardson
Becki Woods
Andy Nash**

**Virginia Priestley
Yvonne Witter
Andrew Gregory**

d) To appoint the following Members to the Audit, Budget and Project Risk Monitoring Group until the annual Authority Meeting in July 2025.

Chair and Vice Chair of Programmes & Resources Committee Janet Dugdale and Charles Greaves and 3 other Members.

**Simon Thompson
Ken Richardson
Yvonne Witter**

e) To appoint the following Members to the Due Diligence Panel until the annual Authority Meeting in July 2025.

James Berresford – Member

Janet Dugdale – Deputy

f) To appoint the following Members to the Governance Review Working Group until the annual Authority Meeting in July 2025.

**Charles Greaves
Ken Richardson
Becki Woods
Vacancy**

**James Berresford
Patrick Brady
Janet Dugdale
Ken Smith**

g) To appoint the following Members to the Local Plan Review Member Steering Group until the annual Authority Meeting in July 2025.

Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee Patrick Brady and Virginia Priestley, Chair of the Authority Ken Smith and 6 other Members.

**Matt Buckler
Martin Beer
Andy Nash**

**Bill Hanley
Charlotte Farrell
Vacancy**

h) To appoint the following Members to the Member Appointments Process Panel

**Ken Richardson
Becki Woods
Ken Rustidge – Reserve**

**Ruth Swetnam
Yvonne Witter
Andrew Gregory - Reserve**

5. To appoint Members to the 18 Outside Bodies set out in Section D of Appendix 1 of the report until the annual Authority Meeting in July 2025.

6. To confirm that all these appointments are approved duties for the payment of travel and subsistence allowances as set out in Schedule 2 of the Members' Allowances Scheme.

54/24 ANNUAL CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2025 (KH)

Ken Smith reported that the calendar of meetings had been agreed by the Governance Review Working Group, and Members were asked to note that there would only be 1 Authority Meeting in July 2025.

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

RESOLVED:

To approve the Calendar of Meetings for 2025 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

55/24 MEMBER ANNUAL ATTENDANCE REPORT (2023/24/KH)

Members noted that the figures for attendance at meetings was positive. Patrick Brady asked that his essential member training figures be amended to read attending 4 out of 4 sessions rather than 5 out of 5 as he had attended the Planning Training session twice, the second time as an observer as Chair of Planning Committee.

RESOLVED:

To note the annual return of the Members' attendance for 2023/24 at meetings of the Authority, Standing Committees and Essential Member Training as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

The meeting was adjourned at 3pm and reconvened at 3.15pm. Dermot Murphy, Ken Rustidge, Andrew Hart and Patrick Brady left the meeting during this time.

56/24 CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

57/24 SERVICES SHOWCASE PRESENTATION

Phil Mulligan, CEO presented a show reel to Members showing a snapshot on some of the things that had been achieved over the year, highlighting the following:

- Members to receive the 1st Year Performance report of the Management Plan at the Authority Meeting at the end of July. Online version and reporting format now available for members of the public to access.
- It has been a challenging time for Planning as there was a risk of being put into "special measures" but this has now been turned around with 97% of the vacancies now filled as well as the appointment of 4 new apprentices in the Planning Team. A lot of work on pay has taken place which has had an effect on vacancies. Pre-app advice has restarted and the performance on speed of determination has improved to over the 70% threshold of determining applications within 8 weeks.

- 2 high profile enforcement cases were dealt with over the year at Cressbrook and Wagers Flat which went well. A new online enforcement reporting portal has been set up so members of the public can report possible breaches of planning, which will save lots of time in getting on top of new things that have been reported as well as help address the backlog.
- Community Planners working on the preparation of the new Local Plan and progress is going well. At the stage where we will be going out to consultation soon with our options and issues.
- A Joint Housing Working Group has been set up with Derbyshire Dales to get a better understanding of the affordable housing needs in the area. Members visited the affordable housing at Bradwell Springs, as part of the recent Member Annual Tour. The scheme was commended at a recent planning excellence awards.
- The Planning Team are working with Peak Cluster, a project aimed at capturing carbon emissions from the cement and lime industries in Derbyshire and Cheshire. The goal is to have the pipelines operational by 2030 to take the carbon out into the Irish Sea.
- Planners influenced STW in a major rethink on their decision to expand the reservoirs in the Upper Derwent.
- Heritage Team have been working on Ecton Mine which is now off the "at risk" register. The project was FiPL funded and a celebration is planned to mark its success.
- The works on the new agricultural buildings at Pump Farm are now nearly complete, and will soon be occupied by a tenant.
- Millers Dale change place is now open. Currently installing a temporary bike hire operation in the Goods Shed with accessible cycle hire options. EV charging points also installed in the car park.
- Hoping to have a new bridge installed at Cressbrook as the current one has been closed for years.
- Consultants who have been looking at options for visitor centres and cycle hire have just submitted their findings and recommendations. These are being worked through with a view to coming back to Members to agree how we proceed.
- A "User Pressure Group" is being established to inform our position on managing the issues to do with tourism and visitor pressures.
- Authority continues to welcome a wide range of volunteers to work with us and an engagement programme for school visits, and Brunts Barn has been adapted to make it more accessible.
- MFFP continue to do an impressive programme of works. Not just restoration of moorland but scientific research and community engagement.

- Co-working space has been created in the old CEO Office, which should provide a flexible and useful space for local business and community groups to come in and use.
- The Fires Operation Group (FOG) hosted a joint training exercise with the Fires Service, Land Managers, National Trust and the RSPB on Stanage Edge which involved a simulated mock wildfire incident. Two Wildfire Engagement Officers have been appointed (with funding from United Utilities) to engage with the public coming into the National Park around the risks of wildfires, especially from wild camping and associated bonfires and bbqs.
- On the verge of hearing if the Authority has had the Council of Europe Award Diploma renewed.
- All staff are being asked to take part in a volunteering day as part of their corporate objectives.
- CEO Roadshows have gone down well and provided an opportunity for members of the public to have their say. More roadshows to follow and engagement with the new MP's is planned following the recent General Election.

Ken Smith thanked Phil for his presentation on behalf of all Members.

58/24 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES - NONE SUBMITTED

No reports were submitted.

59/24 EXEMPT INFORMATION S100(A) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED:

That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 15 to avoid the disclosure of Exempt Information under S100 (A) (3) Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A paragraph 3 "information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)".

60/24 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE 17TH MAY 2024

The confidential minutes of the National Park Authority Meeting held on the 17th May 2024 were approved as a correct record.

The meeting ended at 4.00 pm

6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT (PM)

1. Purpose

To up-date Members of key items since the previous Authority meeting and to give an update on corporate risks.

2. Context

2.1 This report is a regular communication to share key internal and external messages and information with Members. It outlines information and changes in the internal and external environment that provides context to other reports presented to Members.

3. Proposals

3.1 As the last CEO Report was only a couple of weeks ago, there is not much to report to Members. The most significant development has been the outcome of the General Election and the formation of a new government. The appointment of Defra Ministers will be important for the National Park. At the time of writing the report this process has not been completed and it is currently unknown who the new Minister responsible for National Parks will be. It is also too early to say what major policy directions Defra will take and how these will impact on National Park or more generally what the funding outcomes for National Parks are going to be.

3.2 All constituencies which contain parts of the National Park are listed below. Three existing MPs have held their seats, with six new MPs being elected. Congratulation/introduction letters have been sent to all the MPs.

Name	Constituency	Party
John Whitby	Derbyshire Dales	Labour GAIN
Debbie Abrahams	Oldham	Labour HOLD
Olivia Blake	Sheffield Hallam	Labour HOLD
Karen Bradley	Staffordshire Moorlands	Conservative HOLD
Marie Tidball	Penistone & Stocksbridge	Labour GAIN
Paul Davies	Colne Valley, West Yorks	Labour GAIN
Tim Roca	Macclesfield	Labour GAIN
Louise Jones	North East Derbyshire	Labour GAIN
Jonathan Brian Pearce	High Peak	Labour GAIN

3.3 Since the last CEO report I have attended a meeting of the Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP). Interesting data was presented on visitor numbers and patterns. The data seems to confirm our understanding that most visitors travel a relatively short distance to access the National Park and are making repeated visits. There was further confirmation that the amount of holiday accommodation has significantly increased since the Covid pandemic and also that occupancy rates are under 50%, although this is higher than in other tourism hotspots such as Cornwall and the Lake District. All the data has been passed on to the group reviewing the impact of National Park Users, which will also review the outcomes of our own current visitor survey.

3.4 By the time of the Authority meeting we should have held the first Peak Park Summit with Nicolle Ndiweni, the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner. Ahead of the Summit meeting we are taking Nicolle on a site visit with partners to Stanage

Edge as part of an introduction/familiarisation with the National Park. A verbal update will be given on 26th July.

- 3.5 On 25th July National Parks UK is due to announce that our National Parks are the first in the world to sign up to the UN's Race to Zero pledge. Local case studies will be made available and sit alongside national media engagement.
- 3.6 Corporate risks are presented to Members in full at the beginning, middle and end of each year as part of our performance reporting cycle. The next full risk report will be presented to Members at the November Authority meeting. This report presents changes to our risk environment so far during the year.

Detailed changes are as follows:

1. Removed risk: Reputational risks (Ref: 24/25A)

Low Likelihood – Low Impact **(Green)**

This is a rolling risk associated with the organisational change process which is now complete, therefore there are no further reputational risks based on the change process not being managed sensitively or appropriately.

2. Amended risk: Injury/Loss of life & property damage due to unsafe trees (Ref: 22/23E)

High likelihood – High impact **(Red)**

The programme of works is underway, however until remedial actions have been undertaken this presents a significant risk to the Authority. Increased from a Medium likelihood – Medium impact (Amber) risk.

3. Removed risk: Derwent Valley reservoir expansion (Ref: 23/24H)

Low Likelihood – High Impact **(Amber)**

Reservoir expansion plans by Yorkshire Water/Severn Trent will no longer go ahead. Risk removed from register.

4. Amended risk: National scale new infrastructure Impact - CO2 Pipeline (Ref: 24/25P)

High likelihood – High impact **(Red)**

The Authority will not be able to apply local policies and determine any application for such development as it constitutes a major infrastructure project being determined through a Development Consent Order by the Planning Inspectorate. Early advice has been offered on the scale and options for pipelines and strategic planning resource has been carved out to oversee such developments. However if the two CO₂ pipelines go ahead as initially proposed this presents a significant risk to our Special Qualities, for example large scale disturbance and impact to landscape character impacting on public enjoyment of the landscape throughout the period of works. Furthermore, while there is scope for long-term restoration of the landscape there is significant concern over the impacts to wildlife habitats and archaeology unless the routing plans can be kept to a minimum. Increased from a Medium likelihood – High impact (Amber) risk.

5. New risk: Expansion of permitted development rights (Ref: 24/25Q)

Medium Likelihood – High Impact **(Amber)**

Escalated from Planning service risk register. Specific developments (as detailed in risk) are not currently significant in the Park, however evidence gathering is about to commence and a process to deal with such cases is required.

6. Removed risk: Engagement service capacity to deliver NPMP (Ref: 23/24F)

Medium Likelihood – Medium Impact **(Amber)**

Organisational change process complete for this service. Risk removed from register.

4. Recommendations

1. For Members to note the report.

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal
None

b. Financial
None

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan
Implications of the various risks to delivering these are updated at paragraph 3.6 and should be noted.

d. Risk Management
An element of the role of Members in risk is to monitor the management of significant risks twice yearly. The updates at paragraph 3.6 provide an overview of movements in risk since the start of year corporate risk register was agreed at the May 2024 Authority meeting.

e. Net Zero
None

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None.

7. Appendices

None.

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Phil Mulligan, CEO, 18th July 2024

Responsible Officer, Job Title

Phil Mulligan, CEO

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7. EXTERNAL AUDIT – 2023/24 AUDIT STRATEGY

1. Purpose

This report asks Members to consider the 2023/24 External Audit Strategy Memorandum from our External Auditors, Mazars. Daniel Watson, Director at Mazars will be at the Authority meeting to present the Memorandum and to answer any questions

2. Context

2.1 The External Auditor presents the Strategy for auditing the financial statements and value for money arrangements annually in advance of the audit of the financial statements, in this case it is for the 2023/24 financial statements.

2.2 Achieving unqualified opinions from the External Auditor is a critical success factor for the Authority

3. Proposals

3.1 Members are asked to consider the External Audit Strategy Memorandum for 2023/24 (Appendix 1). The Strategy outlines the scope of the work proposed and the External Auditor's assessment of audit risks and key judgement areas for the audit of financial statements and the value for money conclusion for 2023/24.

4. Recommendations

4.1 That the 2023/24 External Audit Strategy Memorandum for the 2023/24 accounts be noted.

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to section 7 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Authority must appoint a local auditor to audit its accounts for a financial year not later than 31st December in the preceding financial year. The Memorandum of Understanding in place with the External Auditor sets out how they will undertake their work.

b. Financial

The cost of the External Audit Service contract is found from within the overall Finance budget. Fees have increased year on year by 150% and the forecasted cost is estimated at £45k for 2023/24. This increase has been agreed and authorised by the PSAA (Public Sector Audit Appointments).

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

The work of the External Auditors is a key part of our governance arrangements and helps us to monitor and improve performance against our ambition in the Authority Plan to be a financially resilient organisation and provide value for money. Achieving an unqualified opinion from the External Auditor is part of the target for Objective D (Financial Resilience)

d. Risk Management

The scrutiny and advice provided by External Audit is part of our governance framework. The External Auditor's work is based on an assessment of audit risk as explained in The External Auditors report at Appendix 1.

e. Net Zero

There is no impact

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: 2023/24 External Audit Strategy Memorandum

Report Author and Responsible Officer, Job Title and Publication Date

Author: Sinead Butler, Finance Manager & Chief Financial Officer, 18th July 2024

Responsible Officer: Emily Fox, Head of Resources

Audit Strategy Memorandum

Peak District National Park Authority – Year ending 31 March 2024

26 June 2024

Peak District National Park Authority
Aldern House
Baslow Road
Bakewell
Derbyshire
DE45 1AE

29 June 2024

Forvis Mazars
One St Peter's Square
Manchester
M2 3DE

Dear Authority Committee Members,

Audit Strategy Memorandum – Year Ending 31 March 2024

We are pleased to present our Audit Strategy Memorandum for Peak District National Park Authority for the year ending 31 March 2024. The purpose of this document is to summarise our audit approach, highlight significant audit risks and areas of key judgements and provide you with the details of our audit team. As it is a fundamental requirement that an auditor is, and is seen to be, independent of its clients, section 7 of this document also summarises our considerations and conclusions on our independence as auditors. We consider two-way communication with you to be key to a successful audit and important in:

- reaching a mutual understanding of the scope of the audit and the responsibilities of each of us;
- sharing information to assist each of us to fulfil our respective responsibilities;
- providing you with constructive observations arising from the audit process; and
- ensuring that we, as external auditors, gain an understanding of your attitude and views in respect of the internal and external operational, financial, compliance and other risks facing Peak District National Park Authority which may affect the audit, including the likelihood of those risks materialising and how they are monitored and managed.

With that in mind, we see this document, which has been prepared following our initial planning discussions with management, as being the basis for a discussion around our audit approach, any questions, concerns or input you may have on our approach or role as auditor. This document also contains an appendix that outlines our key communications with you during the course of the audit and forthcoming accounting issues and other issues that may be of interest to you.

Providing a high-quality service is extremely important to us and we strive to provide technical excellence with the highest level of service quality, together with continuous improvement to exceed your expectations. If you have any concerns or comments about this report or our audit approach, please contact me on +44 (0)7909 985324.

Yours Faithfully,

Signed: {{_es_:signer1:signature }}

Daniel Watson, Director

Forvis Mazars

Contents

01	Engagement and responsibilities summary
02	Your audit engagement team
03	Audit scope, approach and timeline
04	Significant risks and other key judgement areas
05	Value for money arrangements
06	Audit fees and other services
07	Confirmation of our independence
08	Materiality and misstatements
A	Appendix A – Key communication points
B	Appendix B - Current year updates, forthcoming accounting and other issues

Page 23

Engagement and responsibilities summary

Engagement and responsibilities summary

Overview of engagement

We are appointed to perform the external audit of Peak District National Park Authority (the Authority) for the year to 31 March 2024. The scope of our engagement is set out in the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies, issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) available from the PSAA website: <https://www.psaa.co.uk/managing-audit-quality/statement-of-responsibilities-of-auditors-and-audited-bodies/>. Our responsibilities are principally derived from the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the 2014 Act) and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office (NAO), as outlined overleaf.

Engagement and responsibilities summary

Audit opinion

We are responsible for forming and expressing an opinion on whether the financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting. Our audit does not relieve management or Those Charged With Governance, as Those Charged With Governance, of their responsibilities.

The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the assessment of whether it is appropriate for the Authority to prepare its accounts on a going concern basis. As auditors, we are required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding, and conclude on:

- a) whether a material uncertainty related to going concern exists; and
- b) consider the appropriateness of the Chief Finance Officer's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements.

Fraud

The responsibility for safeguarding assets and for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and non-compliance with law or regulations rests with both Those Charged With Governance and management. This includes establishing and maintaining internal controls over compliance with relevant laws and regulations, and the reliability of financial reporting.

As part of our audit procedures in relation to fraud we are required to enquire of those charged with governance, including key management as to their knowledge of instances of fraud, the risk of fraud and their views on internal controls that mitigate the fraud risks. In accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), we plan and perform our audit so as to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial statements taken as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. However, our audit should not be relied upon to identify all such misstatements.

Internal control

Management is responsible for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

We are responsible for obtaining an understanding of internal control relevant to our audit and the preparation of the financial statements to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Peak District National Park Authority's internal control.

Wider reporting and electors' rights

We report to the NAO on the consistency of the Authority's financial statements with its Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) submission.

The 2014 Act requires us to give an elector, or any representative of the elector, the opportunity to question us about the accounts of the Authority and consider objections made to the accounts. We also have a broad range of reporting responsibilities and powers that are unique to the audit of local authorities in the United Kingdom.

Value for money

We are also responsible for forming a view on the arrangements that the Authority has in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We discuss our approach to Value for Money work further in section 5 of this report.



Your audit engagement team

Your audit team

A summary of key team members are detailed below:

Who	Role	E-mail
Daniel Watson	Director	daniel.Watson@mazars.co.uk
Tom Greensill	Manager	Tom.greensill@mazars.co.uk
Emily Reynolds	Senior – Team Leader	emily.Reynolds@mazars.co.uk



03

Audit scope, approach, and timeline

Audit scope, approach, and timeline

Audit scope

Our audit approach is designed to provide an audit that complies with all professional requirements.

Our audit of the financial statements will be conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), relevant ethical and professional standards, our own audit approach and in accordance with the terms of our engagement. Our work is focused on those aspects of your activities which we consider to have a higher risk of material misstatement, such as those impacted by management judgement and estimation, application of new accounting standards, changes of accounting policy, changes to operations or areas which have been found to contain material errors in the past.

Audit approach

Our audit approach is risk-based, and the nature, extent, and timing of our audit procedures are primarily driven by the areas of the financial statements we consider to be more susceptible to material misstatement. Following our risk assessment where we assess the inherent risk factors (subjectivity, complexity, uncertainty, change and susceptibility to misstatement due to management bias or fraud) to aid in our risk assessment, we develop our audit strategy and design audit procedures to respond to the risks we have identified.

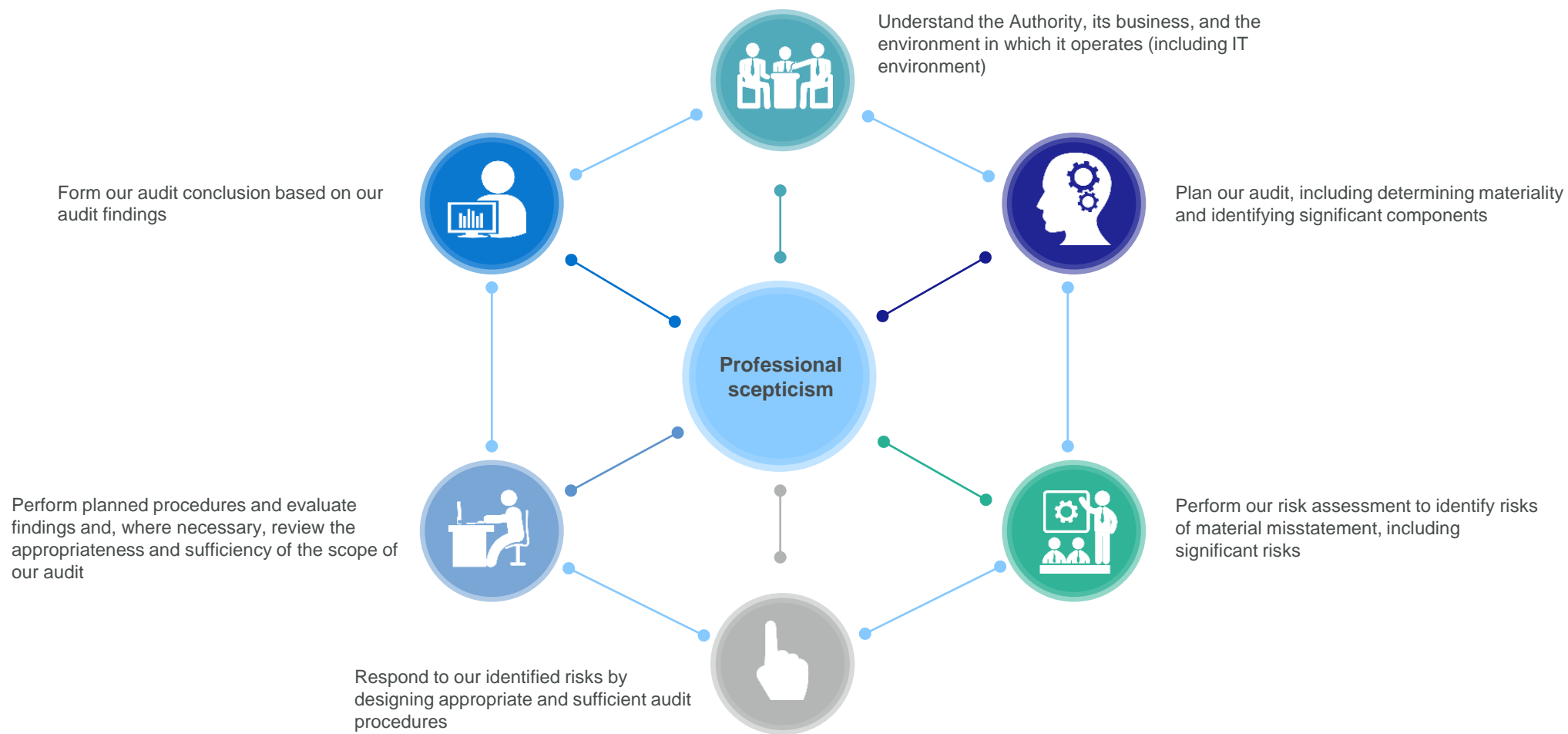
If we conclude that appropriately-designed controls are in place, we may plan to test and rely on those controls. If we decide controls are not appropriately designed, or we decide that it would be more efficient to do so, we may take a wholly substantive approach to our audit testing where, in our professional judgement, substantive procedures alone will provide sufficient appropriate audit evidence. Substantive procedures are audit procedures designed to detect material misstatements at the assertion level and comprise tests of detail (of classes of transaction, account balances, and disclosures), and substantive analytical procedures. Irrespective of our assessed risks of material misstatement, which takes account of our evaluation of the operating effectiveness of controls, we are required to design and perform substantive procedures for each material class of transaction, account balance, and disclosure.

Our audit will be planned and performed so as to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement and give a true and fair view. The concept of materiality and how we define a misstatement is explained in more detail in section 8.

The diagram on the next page outlines the procedures we perform at the different stages of the audit.

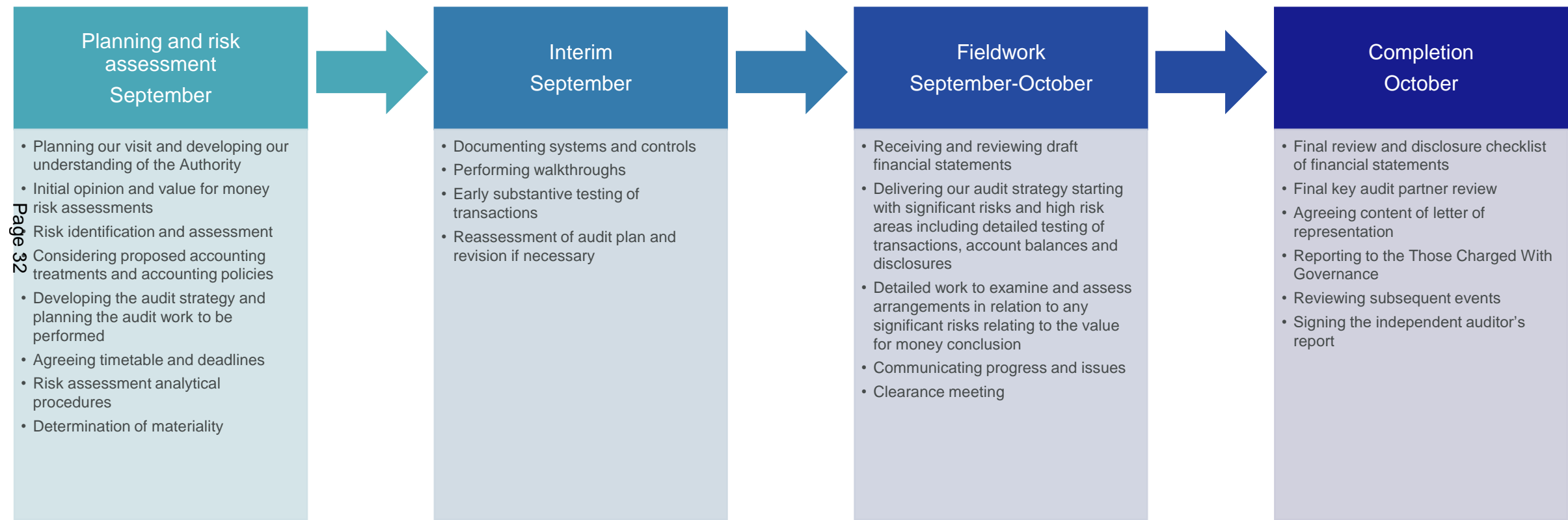
Audit scope, approach, and timeline

Risk-based approach



Audit scope, approach, and timeline

Audit timeline



Audit scope, approach, and timeline

Management's experts and our experts

Management makes use of experts in specific areas when preparing the Authority's financial statements. We also use experts to assist us to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence on specific items of account.

Item of Account	Management's expert	Our expert
Property, Plant and Equipment	District Valuer Services	Third party evidence provided via the NAO to support our challenge of valuation assumptions
Pensions	Hymans Robertson	PwC (Consulting actuary appointed by the NAO)

Service organisations

International Auditing Standards (UK) (ISAs) define service organisations as third party organisations that provide services to the Authority that are part of its information systems relevant to financial reporting. We are required to obtain an understanding of the services provided by service organisations as well as evaluating the design and implementation of controls over those services.

The table below summarises the service organisations used by the Authority and our planned audit approach.

Item of Account	Service organisation	Audit approach
Payroll Expenditure	Derbyshire County Council	We will obtain assurance by understanding the processes and controls that the Authority has in place to assure itself that transactions are processed materially corrected. We will sample test transactions based on evidence available from the Authority rather than the Service Organisation.

Audit scope, approach, and timeline

Key developments

The below key developments have taken place in the year. We have set out below how we will approach these areas during our audit.

Implementation of new accounting system

Page 34

During 2023/24, Peak District National Park Authority has undertaken an accounting system migration from Exchequer to Iplicit. In October 2023, the nominal ledger, accounts receivable and accounts payable functions were closed in Exchequer and became managed via Iplicit. There is a risk that the migration will not capture all data held in the prior system. The omission of such data could ultimately lead to material misstatement within the financial statements.

There is a further risk the migration leads to a loss of data and accounting records during transfer. Such a loss of data may result in a risk that during the audit, we are unable to obtain sufficient and appropriate third-party evidence.

In order to address this risk, we will:

- Gain an understanding of the process undertaken to transfer the data from one ledger to the other, and the checks performed by management to ensure that this was completed appropriately and successfully;
- Review the Authority's reconciliation of the closing balances contained in the old general ledger at the date of the transfer to the open balances imported into the new general ledger;
- Engage internal IT specialists to perform tailored work around data migration process undertaken by the Authority.

Significant risks and other key judgement areas

Significant risks and other key judgement areas

Following the risk assessment approach discussed in section 3 of this document, we have identified risks relevant to the audit of financial statements. The risks that we identify are categorised as significant, enhanced or standard. The definitions of the level of risk rating are given below:

Significant risk

A risk that is assessed as being at or close to the upper end of the spectrum of inherent risk, based on a combination of the likelihood of a misstatement occurring and the magnitude of any potential misstatement. A fraud risk is always assessed as a significant risk (as required by auditing standards), including management override of controls and revenue recognition.

Enhanced risk

An area with an elevated risk of material misstatement at the assertion level, other than a significant risk, based on factors/ information inherent to that area. Enhanced risks require additional consideration but do not rise to the level of a significant risk. These include but are not limited to:

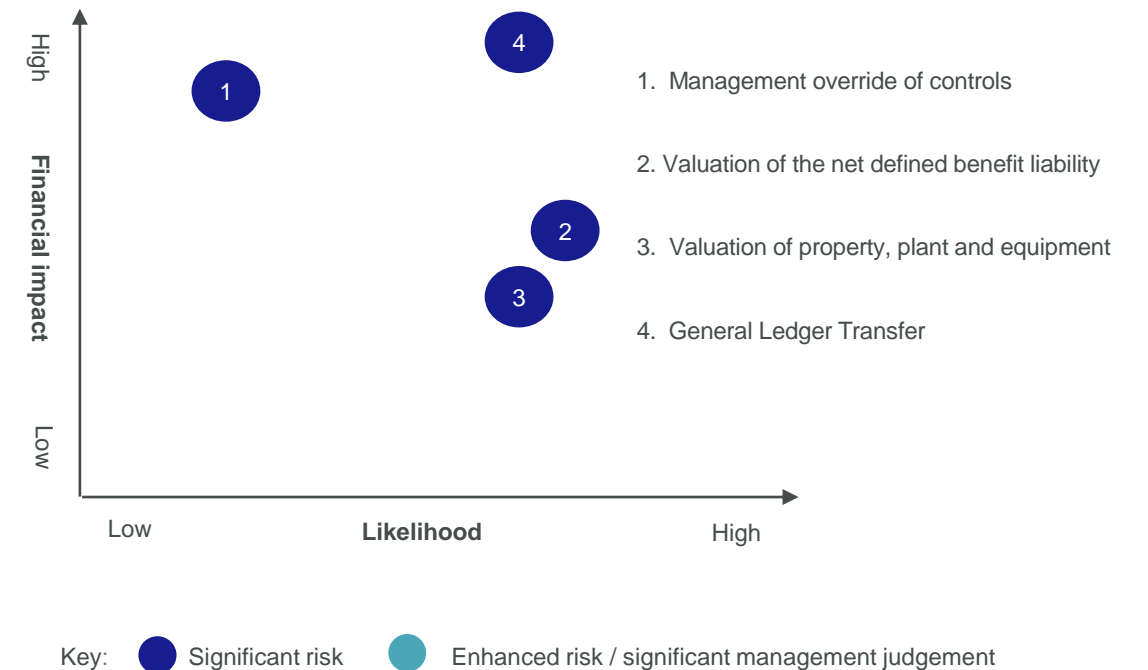
- Key areas of management judgement and estimation uncertainty, including accounting estimates related to material classes of transaction, account balances, and disclosures but which are not considered to give rise to a significant risk of material misstatement; and
- Risks relating to other assertions and arising from significant events or transactions that occurred during the period.

Standard risk

A risk related to assertions over classes of transaction, account balances, and disclosures that are relatively routine, non-complex, tend to be subject to systematic processing, and require little or no management judgement/ estimation. Although it is considered that there is a risk of material misstatement, there are no elevated or special factors related to the nature of the financial statement area, the likely magnitude of potential misstatements, or the likelihood of a risk occurring.

Summary risk assessment

The summary risk assessment, illustrated in the table below, highlights those risks which we deem to be significant and other enhanced risks in respect of the Authority. We have summarised our audit response to these risks on the next page.



Significant risks and other key judgement areas

Specific identified audit risks and planned testing strategy

We have presented below in more detail the reasons for the risk assessment highlighted above, and also our testing approach with respect to significant risks. An audit is a dynamic process, should we change our view of risk or approach to address the identified risks during the course of our audit, we will report this to Those Charged With Governance.

Significant risks

	Description	Fraud	Error	Judgement	Planned response
1	<p>Management override of controls</p> <p>This is a mandatory significant risk on all audits due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur.</p> <p>Management at various levels within an organisation are in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of their ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur there is a risk of material misstatement due to fraud on all audits.</p>	●	●	●	We plan to address the management override of controls risk through performing audit work over accounting estimates, journal entries and significant transactions outside the normal course of business or otherwise unusual.

Page 37

Significant risks and other key judgement areas

Significant risks

	Description	Fraud	Error	Judgement	Planned response
Page 38	<p>2 Net defined benefit liability valuation The defined benefit liability relating to the Local Government pension scheme represents a significant balance on the Authority's balance sheet.</p> <p>The Authority uses an actuary to provide an annual valuation of these liabilities in line with the requirements of IAS 19 Employee Benefits.</p> <p>Due to the high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with this valuation, we have determined there is a significant risk in this area.</p>	●	●	●	<p>We plan to address the risk by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> critically assessing the competency, objectivity and independence of the Derbyshire Pension Fund's Actuary; liaising with the auditors of the Derbyshire Pension Fund to gain assurance that the controls in place at the Pension Fund are operating effectively. This will included the processes and controls in place to ensure data provided to the Actuary by the Pension Fund for the purposes of the IAS 19 valuation is complete and accurate; reviewing the appropriateness of the Pension Asset and Liability valuation methodologies applied by the Pension Fund Actuary, and the key assumptions included within the valuation. This will include comparing them to expected ranges, utilising information by the consulting actuary engaged by the National Audit Office; and agreeing the data in the IAS 19 valuation report provided by the Fund Actuary for accounting purposes to the pension accounting entries and disclosures in the Authority's financial statements
	<p>3 Valuation of property, plant and equipment Land and buildings are a significant balance on the Authority's balance sheet.</p> <p>The valuation of land and buildings is complex and is subject to a number of management assumptions and judgements.</p> <p>Due to the high degree of estimation uncertainty associated, we have determined there is a significant risk in this area</p>	●	●	●	<p>We plan to address this risk by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> critically assessing the Authority's valuer's scope of work, qualifications, objectivity and independence to carry out the required programme of revaluations; Considering whether the overall revaluation methodologies used by the Authority's valuer are in line with industry practice, the CIPFA code of practice and the Authority's accounting policies; assessing whether valuation movements are in line with market expectations by considering valuation trends; critically assessing the treatment of the upward and downward revaluation movements in the Authority's financial statements with regards to the requirements of the CIPFA code of practice. Critically assessing the approach that the Authority adopts to ensure that assets that are not subject to revaluation in 2023/24 are materially correct, including considering the robustness of that approach in light of the valuation information reported by the Authority's valuers.

Significant risks and other key judgement areas

Significant risks

	Description	Fraud	Error	Judgement	Planned response
<div>4</div> <div>Page 39</div>	<p>General Ledger transfer During 2023/24, Peak District National Park Authority has undertaken an accounting system migration from Exchequer to Ipllicit. In October 2023, the nominal ledger, accounts receivable and accounts payable functions were closed in Exchequer and became managed via Ipllicit. There is a risk that the migration will not capture all data held in the prior system. The omission of such data could ultimately lead to material misstatement within the financial statements.</p> <p>There is a further risk the migration leads to a loss of data and accounting records during transfer. Such a loss of data may result in a risk that during the audit, we are unable to obtain sufficient and appropriate third-party evidence.</p>	<div>●</div>	<div>●</div>	<div>●</div>	<p>-In order to address this risk, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Gain an understanding of the process undertaken to transfer the data from one ledger to the other, and the checks performed by management to ensure that this was completed appropriately and successfully; -Review the Authority’s reconciliation of the closing balances contained in the old general ledger at the date of the transfer to the open balances imported into the new general ledger; -Engage internal IT specialists to perform tailored work around data migration process undertaken by the Authority.

Significant risks and other key judgement areas

Other considerations

In consideration of ISA (UK) 260 *Communication with Those Charged with Governance*, as part of our audit we obtain the views of, and enquire whether Those Charged With Governance has knowledge of, the following matters:

- Did you identify any other risks (business, laws & regulation, fraud, going concern etc.) that may result in material misstatements?
- Are you aware of any significant communications between the Group and regulators?
- Are there any matters that you consider warrant particular attention during the course of our audit, and any areas where you would like additional procedures to be undertaken?

We plan to do this by formal letter to Those Charged With Governance which we will obtain prior to completing our audit.

Significant difficulties encountered during the course of audit

In accordance with ISA (UK) 260 *Communication with Those Charged with Governance*, we are required to communicate certain matters to Those Charged With Governance which include, but are not limited to, significant difficulties, if any, that are encountered during our audit. Such difficulties may include matters such as:

- Significant delays in management providing information that we require to perform our audit.
- An unnecessarily brief time within which to complete our audit.
- Extensive and unexpected effort to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence.
- Unavailability of expected information.
- Restrictions imposed on us by management.
- Unwillingness by management to make or extend their assessment of an entity's ability to continue as a going concern when requested.

We will highlight to you on a timely basis should we encounter any such difficulties (if our audit process is unduly impeded, this could require us to issue a modified auditor's report).

Internal audit function

We do not intend to rely on the work of internal audit. However, we will review their work and it to inform our assessment of the control environment and we will modify the nature, extent and timing of our audit procedures

We will meet with internal audit to discuss the progress and findings of their work prior to the commencement of our controls evaluation procedures.

05

Value for money arrangements

Value for money arrangements

The framework for value for money work

We are required to form a view as to whether the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The NAO issues guidance to auditors that underpins the work we are required to carry out in order to form our view and sets out the overall criterion and sub-criteria that we are required to consider.

2023/24 will be the fourth audit year where we are undertaking our value for money (VFM) work under the 2020 Code of Audit Practice (the Code). Our responsibility remains to be satisfied that the Authority has proper arrangements in place and to report in the audit report and/or the audit completion certificate where we identify significant weaknesses in arrangements. Separately we provide a commentary on the Authority's arrangements in the Auditor's Annual Report.

Specified reporting criteria

The Code requires us to structure our commentary to report under three specified criteria:

- Page 42
- 1. Financial sustainability** – how the Authority plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;
 - 2. Governance** – how the Authority ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks; and
 - 3. Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness** – how the Authority uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services

Our approach

Our work falls into three primary phases as outlined opposite. We need to gather sufficient evidence to support our commentary on the Authority's arrangements and to identify and report on any significant weaknesses in arrangements. Where significant weaknesses are identified we are required to report these to the Authority and make recommendations for improvement. Such recommendations can be made at any point during the audit cycle and we are not expected to wait until issuing our overall commentary to do so.

Our VFM planning and risk assessment work is an ongoing process and to date, no risks of significant weaknesses in arrangements have been identified. We will report any identified risks to the Authority on completion of our planning and risk identification work.

Planning and risk assessment	<p>Obtaining an understanding of the Authority's arrangements for each specified reporting criteria. Relevant information sources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NAO guidance and supporting information;• information from internal and external sources including regulators;• knowledge from previous audits and other audit work undertaken in the year; and• interviews and discussions with officers and Members.
Additional risk-based procedures and evaluation	<p>Where our planning work identifies risks of significant weaknesses, we will undertake additional procedures to determine whether there is a significant weakness.</p>
Reporting	<p>We will provide a summary of the work we have undertaken and our judgements against each of the specified reporting criteria as part of our commentary on arrangements. This will form part of the Auditor's Annual Report.</p> <p>Our commentary will also highlight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• significant weaknesses identified and our recommendations for improvement; and• emerging issues or other matters that do not represent significant weaknesses but still require attention from the Authority.

Audit fees and other services

Audit fees and other services

Fees for work as the Authority’s appointed auditor




Our fees (exclusive of VAT and disbursements) for the audit of Peak District National Park Authority for the year ended 31 March 2024 are outlined below.

Area of work	2023/24 Proposed Fee	2022/23 Fee
Code Audit Work	£44,821	£13,727
Additional costs associated with the audit not included in the previous scale fee (additional testing requirements driven by regulatory requirements, additional testing from new auditing standards, additional work to deliver the VFM responsibilities)	-	£10,100
Additional costs associated with the audit not included in the current scale fee (ISA 315, General ledger transfer)	TBC	-

07

Confirmation of our independence

Confirmation of our independence

	Requirements	We comply with the International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants, including International Independence Standards issued by the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants together with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK reflected in the ICAEW Code of Ethics and the FRC Ethical Standard 2019.
	Compliance	We are not aware of any relationship between Forvis Mazars and Peak District National Park Authority that, in our professional judgement, may reasonably be thought to impair our independence. We are independent of Peak District National Park Authority and have fulfilled our independence and ethical responsibilities in accordance with the requirements applicable to our audit.
	Non-audit and Audit fees	We have set out a summary any non-audit services provided by Forvis Mazars (with related fees) to Peak District National Park Authority in Section 6, together with our audit fees and independence assessment.

We are committed to independence and confirm that we comply with the FRC's Ethical Standard. In addition, we have set out in this section any matters or relationships we believe may have a bearing on our independence or the objectivity of our audit team.

Based on the information provided by you and our own internal procedures to safeguard our independence as auditors, we confirm that in our professional judgement there are no relationships between us and any of our related or subsidiary entities, and you and your related entities, that create any unacceptable threats to our independence within the regulatory or professional requirements governing us as your auditors.

We have policies and procedures in place that are designed to ensure that we carry out our work with integrity, objectivity, and independence. These policies include:

- All partners and staff are required to complete an annual independence declaration.
- All new partners and staff are required to complete an independence confirmation and complete annual ethical training.
- Rotation policies covering audit engagement partners and other key members of the audit team.
- Use by managers and partners of our client and engagement acceptance system, which requires all non-audit services to be approved in advance by the audit engagement partner.

We confirm, as at the date of this report, that the engagement team and others in the firm as appropriate, Forvis Mazars LLP [and, when applicable, Forvis Mazars' member firms] are independent and comply with relevant ethical requirements. However, if at any time you have concerns or questions about our integrity, objectivity or independence, please discuss these with Authority in the first instance.

Prior to the provision of any non-audit services, Daniel Watson will undertake appropriate procedures to consider and fully assess the impact that providing the service may have on our independence as auditor.

Principal threats to our independence and the associated safeguards we have identified and/ or put in place are set out in Terms of Appointment issued by PSAA available from the PSAA website: [Terms of Appointment from 2018/19 - PSAA](#). Any emerging independence threats and associated identified safeguards will be communicated in our Audit Completion Report.

08

Materiality and misstatements

Materiality and misstatements

Definitions

Materiality is an expression of the relative significance or importance of a particular matter in the context of the financial statements as a whole.

Misstatements in the financial statements are considered to be material if they could, individually or in aggregate, reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users based on the financial statements.

Materiality

We determine materiality for the financial statements as a whole (overall materiality) using a benchmark that, in our professional judgement, is most appropriate to entity. We also determine an amount less than materiality (performance materiality), which is applied when we carry out our audit procedures and is designed to reduce to an appropriately low level the probability that the aggregate of uncorrected and undetected misstatements exceeds overall materiality. Further, we set a threshold above which all misstatements we identify during our audit (adjusted and unadjusted) will be reported to Those Charged With Governance.

Judgements on materiality are made in light of surrounding circumstances and are affected by the size and nature of a misstatement, or a combination of both. Judgements about materiality are based on a consideration of the common financial information needs of users as a group and not on specific individual users.

An assessment of what is material is a matter of professional judgement and is affected by our perception of the financial information needs of the users of the financial statements. In making our assessment we assume that users:

- Have a reasonable knowledge of business, economic activities, and accounts;
- Have a willingness to study the information in the financial statements with reasonable diligence;
- Understand that financial statements are prepared, presented, and audited to levels of materiality;
- Recognise the uncertainties inherent in the measurement of amounts based on the use of estimates, judgement, and consideration of future events; and
- Will make reasonable economic decisions based on the information in the financial statements.

We consider overall materiality and performance materiality while planning and performing our audit based on quantitative and qualitative factors

When planning our audit, we make judgements about the size of misstatements we consider to be material. This provide a basis for our risk assessment procedures, including identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement, and determining the nature, timing and extent of our responses to those risks.

The overall materiality and performance materiality that we determine does not necessarily mean that uncorrected misstatements that are below materiality, individually or in aggregate, will be considered immaterial.

We revise materiality as our audit progresses should we become aware of information that would have caused us to determine a different amount had we been aware of that information at the planning stage.

Materiality and misstatements

Materiality (continued)

We consider that gross revenue expenditure is the key focus of users of the financial statements and, as such, we base our materiality levels around this benchmark.

We expect to set a materiality threshold of 2% of gross revenue expenditure.

As set out in the table below, based on currently available information from the prior year audit financial statements, we anticipate overall materiality for the year ended 31 March 2024 to be in the region of £315k (£315k in the prior year), and performance materiality to be in the region of £252k (£252k in the prior year).

We will continue to monitor materiality throughout our audit to ensure it is set at an appropriate level.

Page 49	2023/24	2022/23
	£'000s	£'000s
	Overall materiality	£315
	Performance materiality	£252
	Clearly trivial	£9

We will accumulate misstatements identified during our audit that are above our determined clearly trivial threshold.

We have set a clearly trivial threshold for individual misstatements we identify (a reporting threshold) for reporting to Those Charged With Governance and management that is consistent with a threshold where misstatements below that amount would not need to be accumulated because we expect that the accumulation of such amounts would not have a material effect on the financial statements.

Based on our preliminary assessment of overall materiality, our proposed clearly trivial threshold is £9k, based on 3% of overall materiality. If you have any queries about this, please raise these with Daniel Watson.

Each misstatement above the reporting threshold that we identify will be classified as:

- **Adjusted:** Those misstatements that we identify and are corrected by management.
- **Unadjusted:** Those misstatements that we identify that are not corrected by management.

We will report all misstatements above the reporting threshold to management and request that they are corrected. If they are not corrected, we will report each misstatement to Those Charged With Governance as unadjusted misstatements and, if they remain uncorrected, we will communicate the effect that they may have individually, or in aggregate, on our audit opinion.

Misstatements also cover quantitative misstatements, including those relating to the notes of the financial statements.

Reporting

In summary, we will categorise and report misstatements above the reporting threshold to Those Charged With Governance as follows:

- Adjusted misstatements;
- Unadjusted misstatements; and
- Disclosure misstatements (adjusted and unadjusted).

Appendices

A: Key communication points

B: Current year updates, forthcoming accounting and other issues

C: Consultations on measures to tackle the local government financial reporting and audit backlog

Appendix A: Key communication points

We value communication with Those Charged With Governance as a two way feedback process at the heart of our client service commitment. ISA (UK) 260 *Communication with Those Charged with Governance* and ISA (UK) 265 *Communicating Deficiencies In Internal Control To Those Charged With Governance And Management* specifically require us to communicate a number of points with you.

Relevant points that need to be communicated with you at each stage of the audit are outlined below.

Form, timing and content of our communications

We will present the following reports:

- Our Audit Strategy Memorandum;
- Our Audit Completion Report; and
- Auditor's Annual Report

These documents will be discussed with management prior to being presented to yourselves and their comments will be incorporated as appropriate.

Key communication points at the planning stage as included in this Audit strategy memorandum

- Our responsibilities in relation to the audit of the financial statements;
- The planned scope and timing of the audit;
- Significant audit risks and areas of management judgement;
- Our commitment to independence;
- Responsibilities for preventing and detecting errors;
- Materiality and misstatements; and
- Fees for audit and other services.

Key communication points at the completion stage to be included in our Audit Completion Report

- Significant deficiencies in internal control;
- Significant findings from the audit;
- Significant matters discussed with management;
- Significant difficulties, if any, encountered during the audit;
- Qualitative aspects of the entity's accounting practices, including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures;
- Our conclusions on the significant audit risks and areas of management judgement;
- Summary of misstatements;
- Management representation letter;
- Our proposed draft audit report; and
- Independence.

Appendix A: Key communication points

ISA (UK) 260 *Communication with Those Charged with Governance*, ISA (UK) 265 *Communicating Deficiencies In Internal Control To Those Charged With Governance And Management* and other ISAs specifically require us to communicate the following:

Required communication	Where addressed
Our responsibilities in relation to the financial statement audit and those of management and Those Charged with Governance.	Audit Strategy Memorandum
The planned scope and timing of the audit including any limitations, specifically including with respect to significant risks.	Audit Strategy Memorandum
With respect to misstatements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Uncorrected misstatements and their effect on our audit opinion;The effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods;A request that any uncorrected misstatement is corrected; andIn writing, corrected misstatements that are significant.	Audit Completion Report
With respect to fraud communications: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Enquiries of Those Charged With Governance to determine whether they have a knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud affecting the entity;Any fraud that we have identified or information we have obtained that indicates that fraud may exist; andA discussion of any other matters related to fraud.	Audit completion Report and discussion at Audit Committee Audit planning and clearance meetings

Appendix A: Key communication points

Required communication	Where addressed
<p>Significant matters arising during the audit in connection with the entity’s related parties including, when applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-disclosure by management;• Inappropriate authorisation and approval of transactions;• Disagreement over disclosures;• Non-compliance with laws and regulations; and• Difficulty in identifying the party that ultimately controls the entity.	Audit Completion Report
<div>Page 53</div> <p>Significant findings from the audit including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our view about the significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures;• Significant difficulties, if any, encountered during the audit;• Significant matters, if any, arising from the audit that were discussed with management or were the subject of correspondence with management;• Written representations that we are seeking;• Expected modifications to the audit report; and• Other matters, if any, significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process or otherwise identified in the course of the audit that we believe will be relevant to the Those Charged With Governance in the context of fulfilling their responsibilities.	Audit Completion Report

Appendix A: Key communication points

Required communication	Where addressed
Significant deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit.	Audit Completion Report and Those Charged With Governance meetings
Where relevant, any issues identified with respect to authority to obtain external confirmations or inability to obtain relevant and reliable audit evidence from other procedures.	Audit Completion Report
Audit findings regarding non-compliance with laws and regulations where the non-compliance is material and believed to be intentional (subject to compliance with legislation on tipping off) and enquiry of Those Charged With Governance into possible instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements and that Those Charged With Governance may be aware of.	Audit Completion Report and Audit Committee meetings
<p>With respect to going concern, events or conditions identified that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the events or conditions constitute a material uncertainty; • Whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements; and • The adequacy of related disclosures in the financial statements. 	Audit Completion Report
<p>Communication regarding our system of quality management, compliant with ISQM 1, developed to support the consistent performance of quality audit engagements. To address the requirements of ISQM (UK) 1, the firm's ISQM 1 team completes, as part of an ongoing and iterative process, a number of key steps to assess and conclude on the firm's System of Quality Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure there is an appropriate assignment of responsibilities under ISQM1 and across Leadership • Establish and review quality objectives each year, ensuring ISQM (UK) 1 objectives align with the firm's strategies and priorities • Identify, review and update quality risks each quarter, taking into consideration of number of input sources (such as FRC / ICAEW review findings, AQT findings, RCA findings, etc.) • Identify, design and implement responses as part of the process to strengthen the firm's internal control environment and overall quality • Evaluate responses to identify and remediation process / control gaps <p>We perform an evaluation of our system of quality management on an annual basis. Our first evaluation was performed as of 31 August 2023. Details of that assessment and our conclusion are set out in our 2022/2023 Transparency Report, which is available on our website here.</p>	Audit Strategy Memorandum

Appendix B: Current year updates, forthcoming accounting & other issues

New standards and amendments

Effective for accounting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024

The information detailed on this slide is for wider IFRS information only. They will be subject to inclusion within the FReM and Code as determined by FRAB.

Amendments to IAS 1 Presentation of Financial Statements: Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-current (Issued January 2020), Deferral of Effective Date (Issued July 2020) and Non-current Liabilities with Covenants (Issued October 2022)

The January 2020 amendments clarify the requirements for classifying liabilities as current or non-current in IAS 1 by providing clarification surrounding: when to assess classification; understanding what is an 'unconditional right'; whether to determine classification based on an entity's right versus discretion and expectation; and dealing with settlements after the reporting date.

The October 2022 amendments specify how covenants should be taken into account in the classification of a liability as current or non-current. Only covenants with which an entity is required to comply with by the reporting date affect the classification as current or non-current. Classification is not therefore affected if the right to defer settlement of a liability for at least 12 months is subject to compliance with covenants at a date after the reporting date. These amendments also clarify the disclosures about the nature of covenants, so that users of financial statements can assess the risk that non-current debts accompanied by covenants may become repayable within 12 months.

Amendments to IAS 16 Leases: Lease Liability in Sale and Leaseback (Issued September 2022)

The amendments include additional requirements to explain how to subsequently measure the lease liability in a sale and leaseback transaction, specifically how to include variable lease payments.

For further information, please refer to our blog article: [Amendments to IFRS 16 Leases – Lease Liability in a Sale and Leaseback](#)

Amendments to IAS 7 Statement of Cash Flows and IFRS 7 Financial Instruments: Disclosures: Supplier Finance Arrangements (Issued May 2023)

The amendments introduce changes to the disclosure requirements around supplier finance arrangements with the intention of providing more detailed information to help users analyse and understand the effects of such arrangements.

The amendments provide an overarching disclosure objective to ensure that users of financial statements are able to assess the effects of such arrangements on an entity's liabilities and cash flows, as well as some additional disclosure requirements relating to the specific terms and conditions of the arrangement, quantitative information about changes in financial liabilities that are part of the supplier financing arrangement, and about an entity's exposure to liquidity risk.

For further information, please refer to our blog article: [IASB publishes final amendments on supplier finance arrangements](#)

Appendix B: Current year updates, forthcoming accounting & other issues

New standards and amendments (continued)

Effective for accounting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2023

Amendments to IAS 1 Presentation of Financial Statements and IFRS Practice Statement 2 Making Materiality Judgements: Disclosure of Accounting Policies (Issued February 2021)

The amendments set out new requirements for material accounting policy information to be disclosed, rather than significant accounting policies. Immaterial accounting policy information should not be disclosed as accounting policy information taken in isolation is unlikely to be material, but it is when the information is considered together with other information in the financial statements that may make it material.

Amendments to IAS 8 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors: Definition of Accounting Estimates (Issued February 2021)

The amendment introduces a new definition for accounting estimates and clarifies how entities should distinguish changes in accounting policies from changes in accounting estimates. The distinction is important because changes in accounting estimates are applied prospectively only to future transactions and other future events, but changes in accounting policies are generally applied retrospectively to past transactions and other past events.

IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts (issued May 2017) and Amendments to IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts (Issued June 2020)

IFRS 17 is a new standard that will replace IFRS 4 *Insurance Contracts* (IFRS 4). The standard sets out the principles for the recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosure about insurance contracts issued, and reinsurance contracts held, by entities.

Amendments to IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts: Initial Application of IFRS 17 and IFRS 9 Financial Instruments (Issued December 2021)

The amendments address potential mismatches between the measurement of financial assets and insurance liabilities in the comparative period because of different transitional requirements in IFRS 9 and IFRS 17. The amendments introduce a classification overlay under which a financial asset is permitted to be presented in the comparative period as if the classification and measurement requirements of IFRS 9 had been applied to that financial asset in the comparative period. The classification overlay can be applied on an instrument-by-instrument basis.

IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts has not yet been adopted by the FReM. Adoption in the FReM is expected to be from April 2025; early adoption is not permitted.

Contact

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8. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT BLOCK 2 2023/24

1. Purpose

The report presents to Members the Internal Auditors recommendations for the second block of the 2023/24 audit and the agreed actions for consideration. The Internal Auditors will be present at the meeting to answer any questions relating to the audit report.

2. Context

2.1 The Auditors give an opinion based on four grades of assurance. Substantial Assurance, Reasonable Assurance, Limited Assurance and No Assurance. Creditors received a rating of Substantial assurance. Main Accounting received a rating of Reasonableness Assurance and Vehicles received a rating of Reasonable Assurance.

2.2 The priority of agreed actions is determined based on a rating of Critical, Significant, Moderate and Opportunity. Main Accounting received one Moderate finding. Vehicles received two Moderate findings and Creditors received none. Follow up actions and implementation deadlines have been agreed with responsible managers and further details can be found within Appendix 1-3.

3. Proposals

3.1 Managers have carefully considered the internal auditors' recommendations and the agreed actions are set out in the audit reports in Appendices 1 - 3 for Members consideration.

4. Recommendations

1. That the Internal Audit reports for the three areas covered under Block 2 for 2023/24 Main Accounting, Creditors and Vehicles (in appendices 1-3 respectively) be received and the proposed actions agreed.

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Authority, as a relevant authority defined in paragraph 2, Schedule 2 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance.

b. Financial

There are resource implications of implementing recommendations and this is why the priority rating of recommendations is important as this has to be managed with existing budgets and staffing levels, taking account of the level of risk agreed by management. The cost of the Internal Audit Service Level Agreement is included within the overall Finance Budget.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

The Authority Plan includes Objective F (Governance) - to have best practice governance arrangements in place.

d. Risk Management

The Internal Audit process is regarded as an important part of the overall internal controls operated by the Authority.

e. Net Zero

There is no impact

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Internal Audit Report-Creditors

Appendix 2: Internal Audit Report-Main Accounting

Appendix 3: Internal Audit Report-Vehicles

Report Author and Responsible Officer, Job Title and Publication Date

Author: Sinead Butler, Finance Manager & Chief Financial Officer, 18th July 2024

Responsible Officer: Emily Fox, Head of Resources



INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

VEHICLES
PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Page 61

	Critical	Significant	Moderate	Opportunity
Findings	0	0	2	0
Overall audit opinion	Reasonable assurance			

Status: Final
Date issued: 5th June 2024
Responsible officer: Finance Officer

INTRODUCTION

The Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) maintains a fleet of approximately thirty vehicles, of which four are office pool cars and the remaining are a mixture of cars, vans and heavy-duty vehicles for park maintenance. Of these vehicles, two are fully electric cars and five are electric vans. Vehicles are for use around the park by rangers and pool cars for staff members travelling on PDNPA business.

All vehicles are maintained and serviced regularly through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Derbyshire County Council (DCC), with PDNPA maintaining oversight. This ensures the vehicles are fit for purpose and safe for staff use. All vehicles are required to be fully taxed and insured and the Finance Officer is responsible for monitoring these areas.

Vehicles (and equipment) audits have been carried out by Veritau in 2017, 2019 and 2021. This audit has included a follow-up of previously identified issues, such as vehicle maintenance and completion of log sheets.

OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The purpose of this audit was to provide assurance to management that procedures and controls within the system will ensure that:

- ▲ Vehicles are maintained to an acceptable standard and their associated servicing costs and contracts are effectively managed and monitored.
- ▲ Submitted log sheets are complete, accurate and authorised appropriately.
- ▲ Vehicle related tax and insurance is up-to-date, accurate and monitored.

KEY FINDINGS

Testing confirmed that the controls the authority has in place in relation to MOT, tax, insurance and regular safety inspections are working correctly and we are able to provide assurance that these key functions are being managed effectively.

The authority has contracts with Derbyshire County Council (DCC) to provide the maintenance for their vehicles. The maintenance Service Level Agreement (SLA) has not been reviewed since it was initially signed in 2009. During testing the

Finance Officer confirmed they were satisfied with the level of service provided and that they did not believe they were being over-charged. However, given the agreements have not been reviewed for 15 years, it would be advisable for these to be reviewed and benchmarked to ensure the authority is receiving best value for money.

At the authority, every vehicle or trailer is recalled every six months for a safety inspection, annual service or MOT, regardless of the age of the vehicle. All ten of the vehicles we sampled had undergone some form of maintenance in the past six months. One invoice did not contain the registration number of the vehicle; however as it is the only authority vehicle of its type (a Warslow Moors agricultural tractor), it could be identified without this information. All vehicles which required a MOT have current MOTs.

The authority's Travel and Subsistence Scheme requires that "*all vehicle log sheets will be reviewed and checked for correctness.*" However the Scheme does not state who should undertake this activity and the Scheme could make this clearer or provide a list of those authorised to do these checks. For most authority-owned vehicles, a standard log sheet form is provided. This is manually completed by the driver, signed by a manager and scanned onto the network directory. No further checks are undertaken after the form has been authorised. For pool cars, logbooks located in vehicles are manually completed, collected quarterly and mileage is re-charged to services. Each car has an Outlook calendar for bookings, so there is an audit trail to evidence vehicle usage. Logbooks are not authorised, however the Finance Officer explained that reasonableness checks are undertaken as part of the quarterly re-charge process.

The three logbooks and two of the seven log sheets tested had not been signed to confirm they had been checked. Due to the manual processes in place, and illegibility of some entries, we could not accurately verify whether mileage was correct in all cases. However, the miles claimed matched the odometer readings provided. From five mileage claims reviewed, two were accurate, but three had overstated mileage for journeys, for an additional 72 miles in total.

The authority's insurance policy is with Zurich which is managed through DCC. The Finance Officer informs DCC of any vehicle changes. The authority maintains a master list of vehicles which is compared annually to the list held by the insurance company to ensure accuracy. All ten vehicles we reviewed were on the master list and the insurance company's list and their road tax was current. Some details were missing from the master list for some vehicles, such as MOT and road tax dates. Five out of six vehicles which had been disposed of had been removed from the insurance company's list. A trailer, which had been marked as stolen on the authority's list, was not listed under any categories on the insurance company's list.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited. Our overall opinion of the controls within the system at the time of the audit was that they provided Reasonable Assurance.

1 Review of vehicle maintenance contract

Moderate

Control weakness

The Service level Agreement (SLA) with Derbyshire County Council (DCC) has not been reviewed since May 2009.

What is the risk?

The authority may not be receiving the best value for money or service standards for the maintenance of its vehicles.

Findings

Derbyshire County Council (DCC) undertakes the maintenance of PDNPA vehicles, and a comprehensive Service Level Agreement (SLA) is in place to govern the arrangement. However, the initial agreement and its terms have not been reviewed since May 2009. Furthermore, no tendering processes for vehicle maintenance have been undertaken during this time.

It was explained to us the contracts had not been reviewed as there had been no indication the authority was being over-charged and there had been no issues with the service received. It was also preferable for the authority to use local suppliers and so they were satisfied with DCC as their supplier for vehicle maintenance. Furthermore, the authority no longer has a dedicated fleet manager, with this responsibility delegated to service line managers, and this has led to a control weakness of where responsibility for the contract lies.

However, by not reviewing this agreement, the authority may not be receiving value for money or the best standard of service. Undertaking a review of the contract, some bench-marking activity or a full procurement/tendering exercise would help to provide assurance that the authority is receiving good value.

Agreed action

We will liaise with DCC in regard to the out-of-date maintenance contract and take necessary steps to put a new contract in place.

Responsible officer: Finance Officer

Timescale: 30 September 2024

2 Completion of log sheets and logbooks

Moderate

Control weakness

The process to complete log sheets and logbooks is reliant upon manual input, and there is a lack of oversight.

What is the risk?

Mileage fraud could occur. Vehicles could be used for purposes not sanctioned by the authority.

Findings

The authority's Travel and Subsistence Scheme requires that log sheets be completed and checked for every journey undertaken. The Scheme does not however state who should undertake this activity so it would be advisable if this were made clearer in the Scheme or a list of people with the authority to undertake these checks were provided. However, no further checks are undertaken following approval to ensure that log sheets are fully completed and appropriately checked. Although testing was made more difficult due to illegible records or multiple destinations included, we confirmed that mileage had been overclaimed for listed journeys in three out of five cases, for an additional 72 miles in total (26, 5 and 41 miles). However the total miles claimed matched the start and end odometer readings recorded on the log sheets. Most of the approval signatures were not legible and two signatures were missing completely.

One log sheet had not been sent for weekly scanning in line with the process followed for all other vehicles and there was no evidence that mileage had been checked. The standard template was not used in two cases, including this one.

Logbooks are not authorised, however the Finance Officer explained that reasonableness checks are undertaken as part of the quarterly re-charge process. It is sometimes difficult to perform these checks due to vehicles being used for multiple visits in one day and illegibility of the records.

The completion, review and authorisation of log sheets and logbooks is a manual process and developing a more automated procedure could improve efficiency and reduce the risks that reliance on manual processes creates, such as loss of records, lack of authorisation and a risk of fraud occurring. This could also help to reconcile mileage, as in a number of cases during our testing, destinations and journeys were not legible.

Agreed action

1. The Travel & Subsistence scheme will be updated to identify those who check and sign log sheets.
2. A reminder will be issued to staff and drivers concerning the importance of correctly and legibly completing fleet log sheets and mileage log books and submitting them for approval.
3. The Finance Officer will explore a systems-based approach for the automatic collation of vehicle mileage data – i.e. Tracking Solutions or other App based solutions.

Responsible officer: Finance Officer**Timescale:** 31 March 2025

Audit opinions

Audit work is based on sampling transactions to test the operation of systems. It cannot guarantee the elimination of fraud or error. Our opinion is based on the risks we identify at the time of the audit. Our overall audit opinion is based on four grades of opinion, as set out below.

Opinion	Assessment of internal control
Substantial assurance	Overall, good management of risk with few weaknesses identified. An effective control environment is in operation but there is scope for further improvement in the areas identified.
Reasonable assurance	Overall, satisfactory management of risk with a number of weaknesses identified. An acceptable control environment is in operation but there are a number of improvements that could be made.
Limited assurance	Overall, poor management of risk with significant control weaknesses in key areas and major improvements required before an effective control environment will be in operation.
No assurance	Overall, there is a fundamental failure in control and risks are not being effectively managed. A number of key areas require substantial improvement to protect the system from error and abuse.

Finding ratings

Critical	A fundamental system weakness, which presents unacceptable risk to the system objectives and requires urgent attention by management.
Significant	A significant system weakness, whose impact or frequency presents risks to the system objectives, which needs to be addressed by management.
Moderate	The system objectives are not exposed to significant risk, but the issue merits attention by management.
Opportunity	There is an opportunity for improvement in efficiency or outcomes but the system objectives are not exposed to risk.

Where information resulting from audit work is made public or is provided to a third party by the client or by Veritau then this must be done on the understanding that any third party will rely on the information at its own risk. Veritau will not owe a duty of care or assume any responsibility towards anyone other than the client in relation to the information supplied. Equally, no third party may assert any rights or bring any claims against Veritau in connection with the information. Where information is provided to a named third party, the third party will keep the information confidential.



INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

CREDITORS

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Page 69

	Critical	Significant	Moderate	Opportunity
Findings	0	0	0	0
Overall audit opinion	Substantial assurance			

Status: Final

Date issued: 4 July 2024

Responsible officer: Finance Manager

INTRODUCTION

Creditor payments are a key service within the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA). Effective controls need to be in place to mitigate the risks associated with creditors payments, including bank mandate fraud and overpayments to suppliers.

PDNPA introduced a new cloud-based finance system in October 2023, iplicit. This new system has changed how purchase orders and invoices are authorised, automated many processes and creditor payments are now made electronically.

OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The purpose of this audit was to provide assurance to management that procedures and controls within the system will ensure that:

- ▲ Payments for supplies and services are suitably ordered, authorised, and received
- ▲ Invoices are paid within an appropriate timescale
- ▲ Supplier and invoice information is recorded correctly on the iplicit system and requests to change supplier's details are evaluated in accordance with procedures
- ▲ There is appropriate segregation of duties built into the iplicit system

At the time of the audit the opening balances for the new system had not been uploaded to iplicit due to the external audit for 2022/23 not yet being completed. Consequently, this work did not review the new systems opening balance sheet. We have confirmed that the balances have subsequently been uploaded.

KEY FINDINGS

We found that from the selected cases examined (Exchequer to September 2023 and iplicit from October 2023) that all payments to suppliers had been appropriately authorised and were within delegated authority limits. There was evidence available in all cases including that goods had been received and receipted. Testing of all purchase orders to confirm whether they were raised prior to the invoice date was not possible due to a lack on information available in the reports that could be run from the systems. We confirmed that all purchase orders examined had been raised in advance of the invoice date.

All invoices checked were paid promptly and within the 30 day timescale. During the four previous financial years the percentage of invoices paid within 30 days ranged from 91% and 94%. However, during the 2023/24 financial year we found that performance had dropped to 81% The delays in payment were in the main attributable to the move from Exchequer to iplicit, with performance dropping to 71% during that period alone. A contractor was hired temporarily to help with the system onboarding and to clear the supplier invoice backlog. The contract completed on the 31st March 2024, and this change has already shown some improvements with performance for quarter 1 of 2024/25 increasing to 76%. However, we found that the information produced from iplicit includes data in relation to disputed invoices which is distorting the results. The National Park Authority are working with the system provider to help them interpret the data, as well as working through the reporting available to them within the system.

We established that when the finance team receives a request for a change of supplier details, contact is made with the supplier using the details already held on the system so that the information is verified. Finance also check the name and address of the supplier to see if they already exist in the system to ensure that all appropriate anti-fraud measures are followed before any details are updated. We also found that a data cleanse of suppliers was undertaken prior to the transfer to the new iplicit system during 2024, and no duplicate suppliers were identified. A list of all change requests received by the National Park Authority was provided by the service for examination during the audit, and the evidence supporting the changes was all found to be in order.

Segregation of duties was reviewed as part of the sample testing. We established that the iplicit system has enforced appropriate segregation of duties, and testing confirmed appropriate segregation in all instances. There was no requirement within Exchequer for the purchase order raiser and authoriser to be separate, but we still found that all payments were authorised appropriately.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Overall, good management of risk with few weaknesses identified. An effective control environment is in operation but there is scope for further improvement in the areas identified.

Audit opinions

Audit work is based on sampling transactions to test the operation of systems. It cannot guarantee the elimination of fraud or error. Our opinion is based on the risks we identify at the time of the audit. Our overall audit opinion is based on four grades of opinion, as set out below.

Opinion	Assessment of internal control
Substantial assurance	Overall, good management of risk with few weaknesses identified. An effective control environment is in operation but there is scope for further improvement in the areas identified.
Reasonable assurance	Overall, satisfactory management of risk with a number of weaknesses identified. An acceptable control environment is in operation but there are a number of improvements that could be made.
Limited assurance	Overall, poor management of risk with significant control weaknesses in key areas and major improvements required before an effective control environment will be in operation.
No assurance	Overall, there is a fundamental failure in control and risks are not being effectively managed. A number of key areas require substantial improvement to protect the system from error and abuse.

Finding ratings

Critical	A fundamental system weakness, which presents unacceptable risk to the system objectives and requires urgent attention by management.
Significant	A significant system weakness, whose impact or frequency presents risks to the system objectives, which needs to be addressed by management.
Moderate	The system objectives are not exposed to significant risk, but the issue merits attention by management.
Opportunity	There is an opportunity for improvement in efficiency or outcomes but the system objectives are not exposed to risk.

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Page 73

MAIN ACCOUNTING

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Status: Final
Date issued:4 July 2024
Responsible officer: Finance Manager

	Critical	Significant	Moderate	Opportunity
Findings	0	0	1	0
Overall audit opinion	Reasonable assurance			

INTRODUCTION

The Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) introduced a new cloud based finance system; iplicit, on 1 October 2023. This new system records all the financial activity of the PDNPA. It is used to prepare the annual accounts and various financial returns required by the Government.

Weekly bank reconciliations, accurate use of journals and appropriate use of suspense accounts are an important part of the financial internal control framework. A new bank reconciliation module is currently being embedded within the new system, and the authority has introduced revised procedures to cover these areas.

OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The purpose of this audit was to provide assurance to management that procedures and controls within the system will ensure that:

- ▲ Bank reconciliations are performed on a regular basis and authorised appropriately
- ▲ Journals are accurately recorded and are appropriately authorised
- ▲ Access controls are appropriately allocated, reviewed and maintained
- ▲ Assurance is gained that backup retentions for the system are working as intended

At the time of the audit the opening balances for the new system had not been uploaded to iplicit due to the external audit for 2022/23 not yet being completed. Consequently, this work did not review the new systems opening balance sheet. We have confirmed that the balances have subsequently been uploaded.

KEY FINDINGS

The previous finance system, Exchequer did not have bank reconciliation functionality; however, we confirmed that weekly spreadsheets were being used to manually reconcile accounts. Upon review of these reconciliations, we confirmed that the process was robust and had been performed on a monthly basis. The new iplicit system has a bank reconciliation module which we found provided a clear audit log to demonstrate both regularity of reconciliations and appropriate authorisations in each instance. The weekly spreadsheets that were in use previously are still maintained to assist with monitoring income streams, but they no longer form part of the reconciliation process each month.

The Exchequer system did not require any authorisation or approval for journals, although we found that journal sheets were completed, and these had been retained and were available for examination. The iplicit system has a clear audit trail recording the creator and authoriser for all journals. We found that all journals sampled were appropriately authorised and recorded accurately.

Access to Exchequer and iplicit is managed by the finance team. Arrangements for new starters, leavers and volunteers were reviewed and it was confirmed that access is appropriately maintained. The review of all volunteer access is undertaken every 6 months, and the accounts are disabled for those users that have not accessed the expenses system within that timeframe. One large account cleanse has already been carried out on the new system. There are currently 5 members of finance staff who are admin users for iplicit, and they are able to create new user accounts and amend access rights.

A contract is in place between Azure and the National Park Authority, which outlines the services expected which includes a process for back-ups. However, there is no mention in the contract that Azure will provide regular assurance of this to the National Park Authority, and we have established that no evidence has been provided to date. Neither has the National Park Authority asked for any assurances over this same period. This matter was highlighted during the audit, and a one-off request for assurance was then made by the National Park Authority which Azure responded to by providing a log of back-up data. A further request for regular back-up information has since been submitted and the National Park Authority is now awaiting a formal response from Azure.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Overall, satisfactory management of risk with a number of weaknesses identified. An acceptable control environment is in operation but there are a number of improvements that could be made.

1 No confirmation of back-ups is received by the National Park Authority

Moderate

Control weakness

There is no monitoring or review of the back-up process as the supplier does not provide any information to the National Park Authority to confirm that back-ups have been taken or that any tests of the back-up data have been carried out.

What is the risk?

Back-ups are not taken and data is lost.

Findings

During the audit, we established that current contract requirements do not stipulate that Azure routinely provides any back-up related information to the National Park Authority for assurance purposes, nor has the National Park Authority previously asked for any confirmation that back-ups are being carried out or that data has been backed up accurately. A one-off request was then made to Azure by the National Park Authority on 4th March 2024 and a log containing back-up data was provided which demonstrated that Azure SQL Database automatically creates full database back-ups weekly, differential database back-ups every 12 hours, and transaction log back-ups every 5-10 minutes. The back-ups are stored for at least 7 days for all service tiers. An enhancement request was also submitted to Azure on 4th March 2024 to request regular visibility of the back-up services being provided to the National Park Authority and a follow up request was also made on 7th May 2024 and the National Park Authority is now waiting on a formal response although Azure has confirmed that the request has been received.

Agreed action

Implementation and review of backup reports, expected imminently from service provider. If any delay in the report being built we will request directly in the Interim. Quarterly checks on robustness of backup reports to be reviewed and on a quarterly basis from Q3. Evidence will be retained and available for inspection by both Internal & External audit.

Responsible officer: Finance Manager

Timescale: 31 December 2024

Audit opinions

Audit work is based on sampling transactions to test the operation of systems. It cannot guarantee the elimination of fraud or error. Our opinion is based on the risks we identify at the time of the audit. Our overall audit opinion is based on four grades of opinion, as set out below.

Opinion	Assessment of internal control
Substantial assurance	Overall, good management of risk with few weaknesses identified. An effective control environment is in operation but there is scope for further improvement in the areas identified.
Reasonable assurance	Overall, satisfactory management of risk with a number of weaknesses identified. An acceptable control environment is in operation but there are a number of improvements that could be made.
Limited assurance	Overall, poor management of risk with significant control weaknesses in key areas and major improvements required before an effective control environment will be in operation.
No assurance	Overall, there is a fundamental failure in control and risks are not being effectively managed. A number of key areas require substantial improvement to protect the system from error and abuse.

Finding ratings

Critical	A fundamental system weakness, which presents unacceptable risk to the system objectives and requires urgent attention by management.
Significant	A significant system weakness, whose impact or frequency presents risks to the system objectives, which needs to be addressed by management.
Moderate	The system objectives are not exposed to significant risk, but the issue merits attention by management.
Opportunity	There is an opportunity for improvement in efficiency or outcomes but the system objectives are not exposed to risk.

Where information resulting from audit work is made public or is provided to a third party by the client or by Veritau then this must be done on the understanding that any third party will rely on the information at its own risk. Veritau will not owe a duty of care or assume any responsibility towards anyone other than the client in relation to the information supplied. Equally, no third party may assert any rights or bring any claims against Veritau in connection with the information. Where information is provided to a named third party, the third party will keep the information confidential.

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9. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Internal Audit Plan is to provide the Head of Internal Audit with sufficient evidence to give an opinion on the effectiveness of risk management, governance and internal control across the full range of activities of the organisation.

2. Context

2.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require that the Authority undertakes an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and its system of internal control in accordance to proper practices. Our Internal Auditors, Veritau Ltd, manage this on behalf of the Authority. Stuart Cutts, Assistant Director-Audit Assurance will be joining the meeting to present the 2024/25 plan and answer any questions.

3. Proposals

3.1 Members are asked to consider and approve the Internal Audit 2024/25 Audit Plan, a copy of which is attached at Appendix 1.

4. Recommendations

4.1 That the Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25 be approved.

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Authority, as a relevant authority defined in paragraph 2, Schedule 2 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance.

b. Financial

The cost of the Internal Audit is allocated from the Finance Budget. As we are coming to the end of our 5 year contract with Veritau at the end of the current financial year, we will put the contract out for tender in quarter 3 of 2024/25.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

The Authority Plan includes Objective F (Governance) - to have best practice governance arrangements in place.

d. Risk Management

The Internal Audit process is regarded as an important part of the overall internal controls operated by the Authority.

e. Net Zero

There is no impact.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Internal Audit Annual Audit Plan 2024/25

Report Author and Responsible Officer, Job Title and Publication Date

Author: Sinead Butler, Finance Manager & Chief Financial Officer. 18th July 2024

Responsible Officer: Emily Fox, Head of Resources

INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25

Date: 26 July 2024



**PEAK
DISTRICT**
NATIONAL
PARK





INTRODUCTION

- 1 This document sets out the planned 2024/25 programme of work for internal audit, provided by Veritau for the Peak District National Park Authority.
- 2 The work of internal audit is governed by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. In accordance with those standards, the Head of Internal Audit is required to provide an annual internal audit opinion to the Authority based on an objective assessment of the framework of governance, risk management and control.
- 3 The internal audit plan has been prepared on the basis of a risk assessment and takes into account the changes in the risk profile for the Authority. This is intended to ensure audit resources are prioritised towards those systems or areas which are considered to be higher risk and/or which contribute the most to the achievement of the Authority's priorities and objectives. The content of the internal audit plan has been subject to consultation with the Head of Finance and the Monitoring Officer, who have also consulted with other senior officers.
- 4 The internal audit plan is submitted for formal approval by the National Park Authority who are responsible for overseeing the work of internal audit and monitoring progress against the plan. Changes to the plan will be agreed with the Finance Manager or Monitoring Officer (as appropriate) and will be notified to National Park Authority meetings. We will provide updates on the scope and findings of our work to the National Park Authority throughout 2024/25.
- 5 The plan is based on 35 days of audit work.



INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25

- 6 The plan includes work covering financial and operational systems and services. The plan also includes an allocation of time to support delivery of the audit work plan.
- 7 Details of the 2024/25 plan are set out in appendix A.

Appendix A: Proposed programme of work for 2024/25

Topic	Notes	Days	Timing
Budget setting, monitoring and reporting	The work will review the Authority's budget setting monitoring and reporting processes including how effective and consistently the new finance system (iplicit) is being used for budgeting by officers.	6	Quarter 3 (2024/25)
Rent reviews, Leases and Concessions	The Authority collects rental income from over 500 assets. We will assess the arrangements in place, including sample testing of specific areas to ensure appropriate processes, review and agreements are in place.	6	Quarter 3 (2024/25)
Moors for the Future	A review of the financial and governance arrangements in place at the Moors for the Future Partnership. Work will include reviewing the management of one project through the whole project 'life cycle'.	6	Quarter 3 (2024/25)
Income	A review of the arrangements for managing income from third parties and grants.	5	Quarter 4 (2024/25)
Reserves	A review of the arrangements in place for managing reserves including the Authority's processes to earmark, use, and assess the appropriateness and adequacy of reserves.	5	Quarter 4 (2024/25)
Volunteering	A review of the arrangements for managing volunteers, including recruitment, retention and expense payments made by the new (iplicit) finance system.	3	Quarter 4 (2024/25)
Management	Liaison with the Authority's management, external audit, preparation of relevant reports and attendance at National Park Authority meetings and time to follow up agreed actions from the previous year.	4	-
Total		35	

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10. INTERNAL AUDIT 2023/24 ANNUAL REPORT

1. Purpose

This report asks Members to consider the Internal Audit 2023/24 Annual Report.

2. Context

2.1 The overall opinion of the Head of Internal Audit on the framework of governance, risk management and control operating in the Authority is that it provides Substantial Assurance. No reliance was placed on the work of other assurance bodies in reaching that opinion.

2.2 There are no significant control weaknesses which, in the opinion of the Head of Internal Audit, need to be considered for inclusion in the Annual Governance Statement.

2.3 There were 6 areas audited in 2023/24. 3 areas received an opinion of Substantial Assurance: Project Management, Performance Management and Creditors. 3 areas received an opinion of Reasonable Assurance: Planning Enforcement, Vehicles and Main Accounting. Follow up actions and implementation deadlines have been agreed with responsible managers and further details can be found within Appendix 1.

3. Proposals

3.1 Members are asked to consider the Internal Audit 2023/24 Annual Report. The report contains the Head of Internal Audit's overall assurance opinion, and a summary of the key findings in each area audited during the year. Stuart Cutts, Assistant Director – Audit Assurance, Veritau will be at the meeting to present the report and answer any Members questions.

4. Recommendations

1. The 2023/24 Annual Report from the Internal Auditors as set out in Appendix 1 be noted.

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Authority, as a relevant authority defined in paragraph 2, Schedule 2 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance.

b. Financial

The cost of the Internal Audit Service contract is found from within the overall Finance budget.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

The Authority Plan includes Objective F (Governance) - to have best practice governance arrangements in place.

d. Risk Management

The Internal Audit process is regarded as an important part of the overall internal controls operated by the Authority.

e. Net Zero

There is no impact.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Internal Audit Annual Report 2023/24

Report Author and Responsible Officer, Job Title and Publication Date

Author: Sinead Butler, Finance Manager & Chief Financial Officer 18th July 2024

Responsible Officer: Emily Fox, Head of Resources 09/07/2024

ANNUAL HEAD OF INTERNAL OPINION REPORT

26 July 2024



CONTENTS



Background

4



Internal audit
work carried out

4



Professional standards

4



Opinion of the Head of Internal Audit

5

Appendix A
2023/24 internal audit work

6

Appendix B
Summary of key findings from audits reported to the
Authority in February 2024

7

Appendix C
Audit opinions and ratings

10

Appendix D
Quality assurance and improvement programme

11



Stuart Cutts
Assistant Director - Audit Assurance



Max Thomas
Head of Internal Audit

Circulation list: Members of the National Park Authority



BACKGROUND

- 1 The work of internal audit is governed by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and the Authority's audit charter. These require the Head of Internal Audit to bring an annual report to the National Park Authority. The report must include an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's framework of governance, risk management and control. The report should also include:
 - (a) any qualifications to the opinion, together with the reasons for those qualifications (including any impairment to independence or objectivity)
 - (b) any particular control weakness judged to be relevant to the preparation of the annual governance statement
 - (c) a summary of work undertaken to support the opinion including any reliance placed on the work of other assurance bodies
 - (d) an overall summary of internal audit performance and the results of the internal audit service's quality assurance and improvement programme, including a statement on conformance with the PSIAS.



INTERNAL AUDIT WORK CARRIED OUT IN 2023/24

- 2 Internal audit work carried out during the year, and the opinion given for each audit, is detailed in appendix A. All work for the year has been completed.
- 3 No special investigations were carried out during the year.
- 4 Appendix B summarises the key findings from internal audit reports that were presented to the Authority in February 2024 (the remaining reports are being presented to the current meeting in full). Appendix C provides an explanation of our assurance levels and ratings for management action.



PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Quality assurance and improvement programme

- 5 In order to comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) the Head of Internal Audit is required to develop and maintain an ongoing quality assurance and improvement programme (QAIP). The objective of the QAIP is to ensure that working practices continue to conform to the required professional standards. The results of the QAIP should be reported to senior management and the Audit Committee along with any areas of non-conformance with the standards. The QAIP consists of various elements, including:
 - ▲ maintenance of a detailed audit procedures manual and standard operating practices
 - ▲ ongoing performance monitoring of internal audit activity

- ▲ regular customer feedback
 - ▲ training plans and associated training and development activities
 - ▲ periodic self-assessments of internal audit working practices (to evaluate conformance to the Standards).
- 6 External assessments of internal audit services must be conducted at least once every five years by a qualified, independent assessor or assessment team from outside the organisation. The most recent external assessment of Veritau internal audit working practices was undertaken between June and August 2023. This concluded Veritau internal audit activity generally conforms to the PSIAS¹ and, overall, the findings were very positive.
- 7 The feedback included comments that the internal audit service was highly valued by Veritau's clients. Key stakeholders also felt confident in the way Veritau had established effective working relations, both in our approach to planning, and the way we engaged flexibly with our clients throughout the internal audit process, at both strategic and operational levels. Further details of the QAIP are given in Appendix D.

Professional standards update

- 8 The PSIAS are based on the mandatory elements of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF). New IIA professional standards were published in January 2024 and will apply from 9 January 2025. The UK Public Sector Internal Audit Standards Advisory Board (IASAB) is currently reviewing the implications for the PSIAS. Any subsequent changes to the UK's PSIAS will be subject to consultation and will apply from 1 April 2025.
- 9 The Internal Audit Charter sets out how internal audit at the Authority will be provided in accordance with the PSIAS. No changes are proposed to the charter at this time, but changes will be required in 2025 to reflect the forthcoming updates to professional standards.



OPINION OF THE HEAD OF INTERNAL AUDIT

- 10 The overall opinion of the Head of Internal Audit on the framework of governance, risk management and control operating in the Authority is that it provides **Substantial Assurance**. No reliance was placed on the work of other assurance providers in reaching this opinion, and there are no significant control weaknesses which, in the opinion of the Head of Internal Audit, need to be considered for inclusion in the Annual Governance Statement.
- 11 The opinion given is based on work that has been undertaken directly by internal audit, and on knowledge gained through our ongoing liaison and planning with officers.

¹ PSIAS guidance suggests a scale of three ratings, 'generally conforms', 'partially conforms' and 'does not conform'. 'Generally conforms' is the top rating.

Appendix A: 2023/24 Internal audit work

Audit	Status	Assurance Level
Performance management	Completed	Substantial Assurance
Planning enforcement	Completed	Reasonable Assurance
Project management	Completed	Substantial Assurance
Main accounting system	Completed	Reasonable Assurance
Creditors	Completed	Substantial Assurance
Vehicles	Completed	Substantial Assurance

Appendix B: Summary of key findings from work reported to the Authority in February 2024

System/ area	Opinion	Area reviewed	Reported to Authority	Comments	Management actions agreed
Performance management	Substantial Assurance	<p>We reviewed the Authority's arrangements to ensure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An appropriate performance management framework and reporting cycle was in place. Performance of objectives and their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are reviewed appropriately on a regular basis. KPIs have supporting data dictionaries that are accurate and complete. 	February 2024	<p>Strengths</p> <p>Performance is measured by a range of objectives and targets set out in the Authority Plan which are regularly reported to members and the public.</p> <p>Key performance indicators are clearly defined and correspond directly to the Authority's priorities. Longer-term and more ambitious targets are included in the National Park Management Plan.</p> <p>There are clear reporting deadlines and timescales for the collation and publication of their service areas' data on the new 'Performance Reporting' website. Reporting feeds clearly through into the Progress Report, which presents the objectives of the Authority Plan and reports on progress in meeting them over time. All KPIs created with the Authority Plan were reported to Members for the first time in November 2023.</p> <p>There is a consolidated data dictionary, which defines how the Authority produces its performance data for the eight objectives which form the 'Enabling Delivery' aim. Testing found for all objectives, the data owner, frequency of calculation, reporting date and frequency are clearly defined. The geographic and temporal scope of the data to be calculated are also defined where relevant, to ensure the correct data is used in calculations.</p> <p>Areas for improvement</p> <p>No areas for improvement were identified.</p>	No management actions.

System/ area	Opinion	Area reviewed	Reported to Authority	Comments	Management actions agreed
Planning enforcement	Reasonable Assurance	<p>We reviewed the Authority's arrangements to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning enforcement processes are well documented, and roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. A clear process is in place to manage potential breaches, including the maintenance of a register. Reports of potential planning breaches from the public are efficiently received, documented and acted upon, leading to timely Performance and compliance with enforcement targets is calculated accurately and reported to the Planning Committee quarterly. 	February 2024	<p>Strengths</p> <p>The Local Enforcement Plan defines planning enforcement procedures and processes across 11 sections. The plan includes key information such as how to report a potential breach of planning control and expected timescales for responses to enquiries.</p> <p>The planning system and the hub serve as a comprehensive breach register, capturing essential details and supporting documentation. A sample of resolved cases found enquiries had all been resolved appropriately and in line with procedure.</p> <p>High priority cases reviewed had site visits carried out in line with the one-week timescale.</p> <p>Areas for improvement</p> <p>The Local Enforcement Plan has not been updated since 2018. Consequently at least one section of the plan (Section 3 – Monitoring) does not reflect the current practice being followed by officers.</p> <p>Some site visits are not always being carried out within the timescales outlined in the plan. Enforcement Plan.</p> <p>Targets for case resolution were not always being met.</p>	<p>Vacancies will be filled and training for new staff provided.</p> <p>Targets for site visits will be reinforced.</p> <p>High priority cases will be reviewed to ensure sufficient resources are provided.</p> <p>The enforcement plan will be reviewed and an updated draft prepared.</p> <p>Member approval will be obtained, and a revised plan published.</p> <p>Deadline for completion of all agreed actions is 31 July 2024.</p>

System/ area	Opinion	Area reviewed	Reported to Authority	Comments	Management actions agreed
Project management	Substantial Assurance	<p>The audit reviewed the Authority's project management arrangements to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust governance processes are in place to manage and monitor new and ongoing projects. Appropriate scrutiny procedures are followed prior to project approval, including a consideration of risk and financial impact. <p>The audit reviewed procedures in the two largest departments, by volume of projects (Moors for the Future and Asset Management).</p>	February 2024	<p>Strengths</p> <p>Documentation is in place to help support management of projects. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities take place within both teams.</p> <p>In the Moors for the Future dedicated Project Manager posts are responsible for overseeing approximately 20 projects. These officers have, or are being trained in, a relevant project management qualification.</p> <p>Within the Asset Management Team, projects are assigned to officers who hold a RICS Chartered Surveyors qualification. Where building works is involved, officers with the Chartered Building Surveyors qualification are responsible.</p> <p>The Moors for the Future Team present a tracker report to RMM on a monthly basis which provides updates on projects in delivery, projects in development, financial forecasts and staffing updates.</p> <p>Six projects were assessed to confirm whether the appropriate authorisation route was followed, including whether the financial impact and risks had been considered. In all cases, the correct authorisation was sought and granted. A business case was appropriately completed in all cases.</p> <p>Areas for improvement</p> <p>Larger projects are not monitored at a corporate level once in progress. There is no central list of all ongoing projects across the authority. Compiling a list would help to ensure there is greater corporate oversight.</p>	<p>We will consider the ongoing monitoring of projects alongside the Governance Working Group who are also looking at what committee receives and the visibility of items.</p> <p>Creating a central list of projects will also be considered with the grant development officer role.</p> <p>Work is ongoing, and management expect to conclude this work by the end of March 2025, which is the deadline for the agreed action.</p>

Appendix C: Audit opinions and ratings

Audit work is based on sampling transactions to test the operation of systems. It cannot guarantee the elimination of fraud or error. Our opinion is based on the risks we identify at the time of the audit. Our overall audit opinion is based on four grades of opinion, as set out below.

Opinion	Assessment of internal control
Substantial assurance	Overall, good management of risk with few weaknesses identified. An effective control environment is in operation but there is scope for further improvement in the areas identified.
Reasonable assurance	Overall, satisfactory management of risk with a number of weaknesses identified. An acceptable control environment is in operation but there are a number of improvements that could be made.
Limited assurance	Overall, poor management of risk with significant control weaknesses in key areas and major improvements required before an effective control environment will be in operation.
No assurance	Overall, there is a fundamental failure in control and risks are not being effectively managed. A number of key areas require substantial improvement to protect the system from error and abuse.

Finding ratings	
Critical	A fundamental system weakness, which presents unacceptable risk to the system objectives and requires urgent attention by management.
Significant	A significant system weakness, whose impact or frequency presents risks to the system objectives, which needs to be addressed by management.
Moderate	The system objectives are not exposed to significant risk, but the issue merits attention by management.
Opportunity	There is an opportunity for improvement in efficiency or outcomes but the system objectives are not exposed to risk.

Annex D: Internal Audit - Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme 2024

1.0 Background

Ongoing quality assurance arrangements

Veritau maintains appropriate ongoing quality assurance arrangements designed to ensure that internal audit work is undertaken in accordance with relevant professional standards (specifically the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards). These arrangements include:

- ▲ the maintenance of a detailed audit procedures manual
- ▲ the requirement for all audit staff to conform to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct Policy
- ▲ the requirement for all audit staff to complete annual declarations of interest
- ▲ detailed job descriptions and competency profiles for each internal audit post
- ▲ regular performance meetings
- ▲ regular 1:2:1 meetings to monitor progress with audit engagements
- ▲ induction programmes, training plans and associated training activities
- ▲ attendance on relevant courses and access to e-learning material
- ▲ the maintenance of training records and training evaluation procedures
- ▲ membership of professional networks
- ▲ agreement of the objectives, scope and expected timescales for each audit engagement with the client before detailed work commences (audit specification)
- ▲ the results of all audit testing and other associated work documented using our audit management system (previously Sword Audit Manager but now replaced by K10 Vision)
- ▲ file review by senior auditors and audit managers and sign-off at each stage of the audit process
- ▲ the ongoing investment in tools to support the effective performance of internal audit work (for example data interrogation software)
- ▲ post audit questionnaires (customer satisfaction surveys) issued following each audit engagement
- ▲ regular client liaison meetings to discuss progress, share information and evaluate performance

On an ongoing basis, completed audit work is subject to internal peer review by a Quality Assurance group. The review process is designed to ensure audit work is completed consistently and to the required quality standards. The work of the Quality Assurance group is overseen by an Assistant Director. Any key learning points are shared with the relevant internal auditors and audit managers. The Head of Internal Audit will also be informed of any general areas requiring

improvement. Appropriate mitigating action will be taken where required (for example, increased supervision of individual internal auditors or further training).

Annual self-assessment

On an annual basis, the Head of Internal Audit will seek feedback from each client on the quality of the overall internal audit service. The Head of Internal Audit will also update the PSIAS self-assessment checklist and obtain evidence to demonstrate conformance with the Code of Ethics and the Standards. As part of ongoing performance management arrangements, each internal auditor is also required to assess their current skills and knowledge against the competency profile relevant for their role. Where necessary, further training or support will be provided to address any development needs.

The Head of Internal Audit and other members of the Internal Audit management team also participate in various professional networks and obtain information on operating arrangements and relevant best practice from other similar audit providers for comparison purposes.

The results of the annual client survey, PSIAS self-assessment, professional networking, and ongoing quality assurance and performance management arrangements are used to identify any areas requiring further development and/or improvement. Any specific changes or improvements are included in the annual Improvement Action Plan. Specific actions may also be included in the Veritau business plan, internal audit strategy action plan, and/or individual personal development action plans. The outcomes from this exercise, including details of the Improvement Action Plan are also reported to each client. The results will also be used to evaluate overall conformance with the PSIAS, the results of which are reported to senior management and the board² as part of the annual report of the Head of Internal Audit.

External assessment

At least once every five years, arrangements must be made to subject internal audit working practices to external assessment to ensure the continued application of professional standards. The assessment should be conducted by an independent and suitably qualified person or organisation and the results reported to the Head of Internal Audit. The outcome of the external assessment also forms part of the overall reporting process to each client (as set out above). Any specific areas identified as requiring further development and/or improvement will be included in the annual Improvement Action Plan for that year.

2.0 Customer Satisfaction Survey 2024

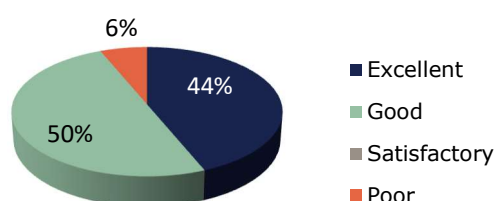
In March 2024 we asked clients for feedback on the overall quality of the internal audit service provided by Veritau. Where relevant, the survey also asked questions about counter fraud and information governance services. A total of 163 surveys (2023 – 176) were issued to senior managers in client organisations. A total of 17 responses were received representing a response

² As defined by the relevant audit charter.

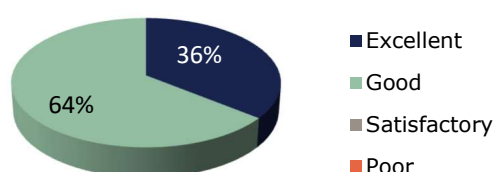
rate of 10.4% (2023 – 10.8%). Respondents were asked to rate the different elements of the audit process as either excellent, good, satisfactory or poor.

Respondents were also asked to provide an overall rating for the service. The results of the survey are set out in the charts below. These are presented as percentages, for consistency with previous years. However, it is recognised that the low number of respondents means that the percentage for each category is sensitive to small changes in actual responses (1 respondent represents about 6%).

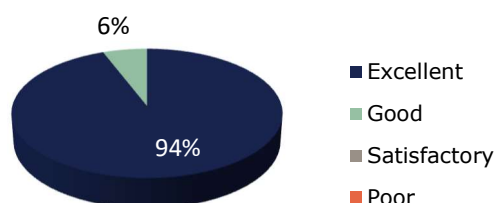
Quality of audit planning / coverage



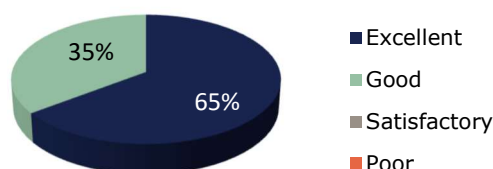
Provision of advice / guidance



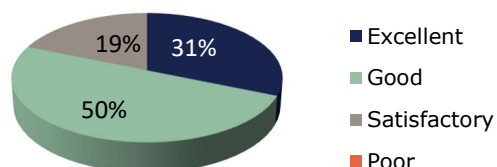
Staff conduct and professionalism



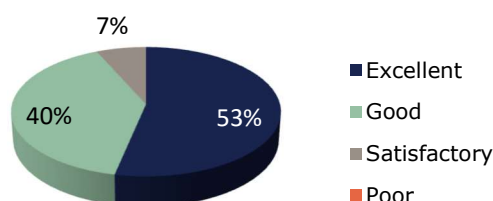
Ability to establish positive rapport



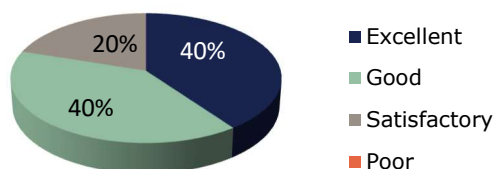
Knowledge of area being audited



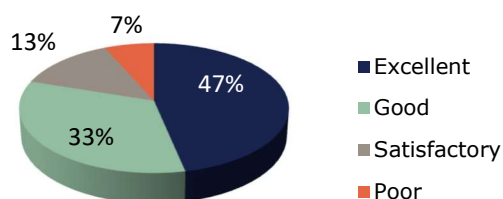
Minimising disruption for area being audited



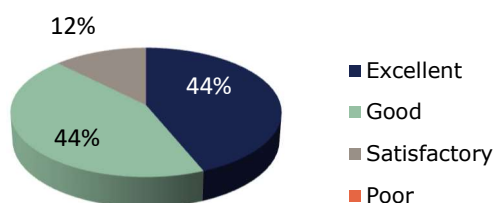
Communication of issues during audit



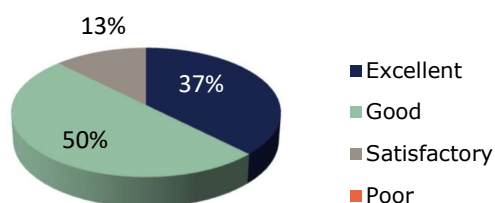
Quality of feedback at end of audit



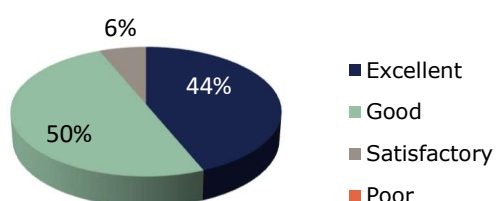
Accuracy / format / length / style of report



Relevance of audit opinions / conclusions



Overall rating for the Internal Audit service



The overall ratings in 2024 were:

	2024		2023	
Excellent	7	44%	13	69%
Good	8	50%	5	26%
Satisfactory	1	6%	1	5%
Poor	0	0%	0	0%

The feedback shows that the majority of respondents continue to value the service being delivered.

3.0 Self-Assessment Checklist 2024

CIPFA has prepared a detailed checklist to enable conformance with the PSIAS and the Local Government Application Note to be assessed. The checklist is reviewed and updated annually. Documentary evidence is provided where current working practices are considered to fully or partially conform to the standards.

Current working practices are considered to be at standard. However, as in previous years there are a few areas of non-conformance. These areas are mostly as a result of Veritau being a shared service delivering internal audit to a number of clients as well as providing other related governance services. None of the issues identified are considered to be significant. Existing arrangements are considered appropriate for the circumstances and require no further action. The following table shows the areas of non-compliance, which remain unchanged from last year.

Conformance with Standard	Current Position
Where there have been significant additional consulting services agreed during the year that were not already included in the audit plan, was approval sought from the audit committee before the engagement was accepted?	Consultancy services are usually commissioned by the relevant client officer (generally the s151 officer). The scope (and charging arrangements) for any specific engagement will be agreed by the Head of Internal Audit and the relevant client officer. Engagements will not be accepted if there is any actual or perceived conflict of interest, or which might otherwise be detrimental to the reputation of Veritau.
Are consulting engagements that have been accepted included in the risk-based plan?	Consulting engagements may be commissioned and agreed separately.
Does the risk-based plan include the approach to using other sources of assurance and any work that may be required to place reliance upon those sources?	The development of assurance mapping and the use of other sources of assurance has been included as an action in the refreshed internal audit strategy (see below). Our approach will be informed by further guidance from CIPFA and the LGA which is expected in 2024. Any use of the methodology will also be dependent on securing client engagement in the assurance mapping process.

Conformance with Standard	Current Position
Does ongoing performance monitoring contribute to quality improvement through the effective use of performance targets?	Historic targets used as performance measures do not provide meaningful information about the value of audit work delivered. The development of new and effective measurement tools is being done as part of the implementation of the refreshed internal audit strategy (see below).

4.0 External Assessment

As noted above, the PSIAS require the Head of Internal Audit to arrange for an external assessment to be conducted at least once every five years to ensure the continued application of professional standards. The assessment is intended to provide an independent and objective opinion on the quality of internal audit practices.

An external assessment of Veritau's internal audit working practices was undertaken in summer 2023, by John Chesshire, an approved reviewer for the Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors. The report concluded that Veritau internal audit activity 'generally conforms' to the PSIAS³ and, overall, the findings of the review were very positive. The feedback included comments that the internal audit service was highly valued by its member councils. Key stakeholders felt confident in the way Veritau had established effective working relations, both in our approach to planning, and the way we engage flexibly with our clients throughout the internal audit process, at both strategic and operational levels.

The report concluded that Veritau 'generally conforms' to 59 of the 60 applicable principles. One area for improvement was highlighted relating to assurance mapping. The recommendation and our response are included in the table below:

Recommendation	Response
The Chief Audit Executive (CAE) should continue to develop a proportionate, formal approach to assurance mapping, coordination and where appropriate, reliance, to enhance the function's risk-based planning, delivery and the effectiveness of assurance provided to key stakeholders.	Agreed – we will develop our approach to assurance mapping and working with other internal and external assurance provision. The approach will be flexible to reflect the different sectors and clients we provide internal audit services to.

³ PSIAS guidance suggests a scale of three ratings, 'generally conforms', 'partially conforms' and 'does not conform'. 'Generally conforms' is the top rating.

A copy the external assessment report was reported to this committee on 23 October 2023

5.0 Improvement Action Plan

Overall, the internal audit services provided by Veritau continue to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. However, we recognise that the pace of change in local government and the wider public sector mean that there is a need to continually review and update aspects of the service to ensure it stays up to date and continues to deliver good value.

We refreshed our internal audit strategy during 2023/24. The updated strategy identifies the working practices we will prioritise for development over the next three years, to ensure we:

- ▲ understand our clients' organisation, the environment they operate in and emerging pressures. We need to plan work flexibly to meet changing needs and target areas that are most important for our clients and where we can add the most value.
- ▲ focus on providing support at the right time. Retrospective audits providing commentary after the fact have limited benefit in a fast-changing environment. We should anticipate change, provide advice in advance, and focus on providing ongoing assurance in real time.
- ▲ maximise the benefit of audit work through the use of technology. For example, using data to analyse whole populations or detect emerging issues; develop better information for clients to help them understand and act on outcomes from audit work; and understand and make use of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence to improve our efficiency.

To achieve these objectives, we will focus on the following key areas:

- ▲ embedding a strategic approach to work programme development and the use of the audit opinion framework
- ▲ Redesigning and modernising our audit working practices (including assignment planning and reporting)
- ▲ further developing our use of data analytics
- ▲ developing our key performance indicators and the measures of added value

Detailed action plans have been prepared to support each area of focus, and a number of these actions have already been completed. For example, our standard audit committee reports have been redesigned, a pilot exercise to test the use of agile audit techniques has been completed and new performance dashboards have been created (for use by auditors, managers and clients). Progress is being tracked each month. The next areas to focus on include taking steps to reduce elapsed time (the time between an audit starting and the final report being agreed) and providing clients with an interface to allow them to update agreed actions themselves.

In addition, we have replaced our existing audit management system with a new system called K10 Vision. The new system has been developed using the latest technology and offers improved functionality for both users and clients.

6.0 Overall Conformance with PSIAS ***(Opinion of the Head of Internal Audit)***

Based on the results of the quality assurance process I consider that the service generally conforms to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, including the *Code of Ethics* and the *Standards*.

The guidance suggests a scale of three ratings, 'generally conforms', 'partially conforms' and 'does not conform'. 'Generally conforms' is the top rating and means that the internal audit service has a charter, policies and processes that are judged to be in conformance to the Standards.

11. FINANCIAL OUTTURN AND RESERVE APPROPRIATION 2023/24

1. Purpose

To inform Members of the outturn position of the Authority for the 2023/24 financial year and seek approval for appropriations to and from reserves.

2. Context

2.1 The National Park Grant for 2023/24 was held at the same value as 2022/23 at £6.7m. The original balanced revenue budget was approved by Members in February 2023 (Minute reference 11/23). Following an organisational restructure and implementation of the Pay Strategy in January 2024, Members approved a revised budget in December 2023 (Minute reference 104/23). The revised revenue budget forecast a surplus of **£317k** for 2023/24.

2.2 The Budget Monitoring group, consisting of six nominated Members, the CEO, the Head of Resources and the Finance Manager, has continued to meet during the year to discuss budgets year to date, forecasts, significant risks to budget and review the level of reserves.

2.3 Appendix A, shows the final draft surplus or deficit arising from each service, after appropriations to and from reserves have been considered. A pre-audit underspend of **£422k**, is the draft result of the Revenue outturn. The results have been scrutinised with budget managers and Heads of Service. The preliminary results were also discussed with the Budget Monitoring group on the 3rd May. Commentary on significant variances are also presented in Appendix A. Vacancy factor and higher than forecast interest account for the majority of the surplus. There have been a number of adjustments reviewed and approved in the interim between Budget Monitoring and final issue of draft accounts. This surplus has been allocated to specific reserves, further detail of which can be found in Appendix C.

2.4 Appendix D, shows the draft outturn result for the capital outturn is £263k overspend. This has been funded by a net movement in capital reserves of £71k. This is capital expenditure on approved capital projects offset by capital receipts received in the year. £138k has been funded by specific reserves. The offsetting difference of £55k has been funded direct from revenue expenditure.

2.5 Reserve movements, closing balances and commentary are presented in Appendix C.

2.6 The General reserve has sufficient funds, with a closing balance of £478k. This remains comfortably in the recommended position of 2% of net expenditure plus £100k contingency.

2.7 A new reserve has been created, named the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Reserve, to start planning for known future deficits that are forecast in the MTFP. The reinvestment of surplus money is the most prudent use of funds, to protect the budget in future years.

2.8 The Operational Effectiveness reserve has been renamed the Aldern House reserve. The Aldern House reserve can still be utilised, where agreed, for the operation needs

of the business but we also look to build a reserve, looking towards the future for a new Head Quarters.

- 2.9 The 2023/24 draft financial statements are required to be signed off by the Chief Finance Officer by 31st May 2024 as per the statutory deadlines for Local Authorities.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 Members are asked to consider the outturn position and reserve movements for 2023/24. Supporting Appendices detail the draft closing positions for 2023/24. Members are asked to note the renaming of the Operational Effectiveness reserve to the Aldern House reserve. Members are asked to note the implementation of the new Medium-term Financial Plan reserve.

4. Recommendations

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

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 (“the Act”), the Authority’s Chief Finance Officer has a statutory duty to report to Members, the Monitoring Officer and external auditors on the robustness of the budget setting process and adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. Further, the Authority has a statutory duty, under section 28 of the Act, to periodically conduct a budget monitoring exercise of its expenditure and income against the budget calculations during the financial year. If this monitoring establishes that the budgetary situation has deteriorated, the Authority, acting reasonably and in compliance with statutory duties and responsibilities, must take such remedial action as it considers necessary to deal with any projected overspends.

In addition, pursuant to section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has a statutory duty to make proper arrangements for the administration of its financial affairs.

b. Financial

The financial implications are contained in the main body of the report.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

The Authority Plan includes Objective D (Financial Resilience) – To be financially resilient and provide value for money.

d. Risk Management

The Annual Governance Statement prepared by the Monitoring Officer is reported to and approved by Members. The Senior Management Team consider financial risks in the Risk Register during the year. The External Auditor considers the financial position of the Authority as part of the annual Value for Money conclusion. The recommendations within are considered to be part of the evidence to support the effectiveness of the value for money processes as they relate to the 2023/24 financial year.

- e. Net Zero
There is no impact.

6. Background papers (not previously published)
None.

7. Appendices
Appendix A- Variance analysis
Appendix B-Revenue Outturn
Appendix C-Reserves
Appendix D-Capital outturn

Report Author and Responsible Officer, Job Title and Publication Date

Author: Sinead Butler, Finance Manager and Chief Finance Officer, 18th July 2024
Responsible Officer: Emily Fox, Head of Resources 03/07/2024

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		Col A	Col B	Col C	Col E
Service & Department	Dept code	(Overspend)	Underspend	Appropriation s (to) from reserves	Final Surplus (Deficit)
		App B	App B	App C	
Assets & Enterprise					
Aldern House	CEA	(43)	0	43	(0)
Asset & Enterprise	CEJ	(9)	0	0	(9)
Asset & Enterprise Projects	VAP	(4)	0	4	(0)
CMP Team	CED	0	24	(24)	(0)
Car Parks & Toilets	CET	(19)	0	0	(19)
Car Parks - Non Estate	CEP	(27)	0	0	(27)
Concessions	CEI	(6)	0	0	(6)
Corporate Property Team	CES	0	18	(18)	(0)
Cycle Hire	CEB	(98)	0	0	(98)
Forestry & Woodlands	CFT	0	4	(8)	(3)
Grant Development	CEG	0	18	0	18
Minor Properties	CEM	(3)	0	0	(3)
North Lees Estate	CEN	0	27	(27)	(0)
Rural Estates Team	CEF	0	85	0	85
Trails	CEQ	0	38	(38)	0
Visitor Centres	CEV	0	292	(218)	74
Eastern Moors	CEE	(3)	0	0	(3)
Warslow Moors Estate	CEW	0	1	0	1
<i>Moors for the future</i>					
AMP7 Work	VM7	0	462	(462)	0
EA NFM Delivery	VK3	(173)	0	173	0
Great North Bog	VK1	0	53	(53)	0
MFF Partner Projects Extra	VM4	0	0	(0)	0
Mend Our Mountains	VM6	(15)	0	15	0
Moor Grn Inv Proj	VM8	(7)	0	7	(0)
Moor Resilience Project	VM9	0	44	(44)	0
Moor for Climate	VK2	(130)	0	130	(0)
MoorLIFE2020	VM3	(810)	0	577	(233)
Moors For Future 2	VC6	(11)	0	11	0
Moors for Future Team	CMF	(130)	0	130	(0)
NE Private Lands Projects	VM2	(254)	0	254	0
Working with SMB	VK4	0	72	(72)	0
Assets & Enterprise total		(1,742)	1,137	379	(225)
Chief Executive Officer					-
Corporate Management	ACS	-	75	- 20	55
Head of Paid Service					
Slippage	SLP	-	150	165	315

Service & Department	Dept code	(Overspend)	Underspend	Appropriation s (to) from reserves	Final Surplus (Deficit)
		App B	App B	App C	
Landscape & Engagement					
Access & ROW	RRU	0	40	0	40
Access & ROW Proj	VAM	0	8	15	23
Countryside Volunteers	RRC	0	32	0	32
Engagement Admin	RRA	(67)	0		(67)
Engagement Projects	VED	0	97	(99)	(2)
Engagement Team	RRB	0	5		5
Farm & Countryside	RLF	0	27	15	42
Farming in Protected Landscapes	VPL	0	125	(120)	5
Land & Nature	RLN	0	17	0	17
Land & Nature Projects	VNE	(31)	0	27	(4)
Landscape & Engagement	RLE	(0)	0	0	(0)
Pennine Way	RRP	0	3	0	3
Rangers Projects	VCD	0	20	(20)	0
Rangers Specialist Vehicles	RRS	(1)	0	0	(1)
Rangers Team	RRE	0	48	0	48
Rangers Vehicle Fleet	RRV	0	1	0	1
Landscape & Engagement total		(99)	422	(182)	141
Planning					-
Cult Heritage Projects	VCH	0	0	(0)	(0)
Cultural Heritage	PCH	0	24	0	24
Development Control	PDC	(85)	0	18	(67)
Planning	PDP	(1)	0	0	(1)
Policy, Communities & Transport	PPC	0	37	0	37
South West Peak Project	VSW	(6)	0	6	0
Strategic Planning	PDS	0	29	0	29
Planning total		(91)	90	24	22
Resources					-
Communications & Marketing	AIM	(1)	0	0	(1)
Corporate Projects	VEF	0	(7)	(8)	(15)
Customer & Democratic Support	AIC	(1)	0		(1)
Finance	AFS	(77)	0	20	(57)
Information Management	AIT	(18)	0	13	(5)
Legal	ALE	0	48	0	48
Members	AME	0	5	0	5
People Management	APE	0	17	(6)	11
Resources	ARE	(3)	0	0	(3)
Strategy and Performance	ASP	0	40	0	40
Resources total		(100)	102	19	20
Total-less interest income		(2,032)	1,977	385	329
Investment interest receipts			464		93
Appropriation of underspent budgets				-422	(422)
Total underspend		(2,032)	2,440	(37)	0

ASSETS & ENTERPRISECycle hire overspend of £98k.

- Income under budget due to adverse weather and decrease in sale of used bikes and components - £52k.
- Overspends-Pay £22k, utilities and services £24k.

Visitor Centre underspend of £74k

Please note the Donor money of £237k, was received in full and transferred to reserves for use across the next three financial years.

- Income, less cost of sales, increase by £33k versus budget.
- Underspends-Vacancy factor 59K, Rates under budget by £27k (Governments rates relief).
- Overspends-Utilities, service and other overspend £45k.

Rural estates team underspend of £85K

- Vacancy factor/organisational restructure,

Corporate Management underspend of £55k

- The budget was set at a conservative level, with FIPL costs being estimated, MFTF allowing for staff vacancy and National Comms not being included originally.

LANDSCAPE & ENGAGEMENTAccess & Row underspend of £40k

- Underspends-Vacancy factor £27k, non-pay £9k various, income £4k higher than budget.

Countryside volunteers underspend of £32k

- Underspends-Vacancy factor £13k, transport £11k, higher than forecast internal recharges £14k
- Overspends-Various £4k.

Engagement admin underspend of £67k

- Underspends-Vacancy factor £23k, supplies & services £4k underspend, Organisational restructure £40k.

Land & Nature underspend of £17k

- Underspends-Vacancy factor £23K, Internal recharges income of £4k.
- Overspends-Budgeted Historic England grant not received £10k

Farm & Countryside underspend of £42k

- Vacancy factor.

Rangers team underspend of £48k

- Underspends -Vacancy factor £18k, premises and land costs £14k, Mileage claims £7k, volunteer expenses £7k
- Overspends-Internal recharges & service and supply £9K
- Income higher than forecast by £11k

PLANNING

Planning underspend of £22k

- Underspends-Vacancy factor £232k due to unprecedented staff retention and hiring issues.
- Overspends-Non-pay overbudget by £101k-Consultants to support vacancies'
- Income under budget by £109k due to constraints offering consultancy and advisory services due to vacancies.

RESOURCES

Legal Team underspend of £48k

- Vacancy factor

Strategy & performance underspend of £40k

- Vacancy factor.

Finance overspend of £57k

- Overspends-Interim Finance manager role £54k. Audit and valuation fees £7k, Non-pay £5k.
- Underspends-Vacancy factor of £9k.

It was agreed at RMM not to utilise reserves for the Interim role, as originally planned, as the Resources departments combined had an overall underspend to budget.

Interest receipts are £93k above the revised budget of £370k. This is due to continuous higher than expected interest rates across the full financial year.

There may be adjustments to the final outturn during the external audit of the statement of accounts. The Authority's External Auditors (Mazars) are scheduled to start work in September and October 2024 and for the final position to be presented to Members in at the earliest available Authority meeting post sign off. Please note there are still significant challenges for the audit profession in completing Local Authority audits in a timely manner so audit dates may be subject to change.

Rounding errors may occur		Col A	Col B	Col C	Col D	Col E
Service & Department	Dept code	Total Budget 2023/24	Outturn	Overspend	Underspend	Variance %
Assets & Enterprise						
Aldern House	CEA	135	178	(43)	0	(32%)
Asset & Enterprise	CEJ	20	29	(9)	0	(47%)
Asset & Enterprise Projects	VAP	0	4	(4)	0	100%
CMP Team	CED	180	156	0	24	13%
Car Parks & Toilets	CET	109	128	(19)	0	(17%)
Car Parks - Non Estate	CEP	(143)	(116)	(27)	0	19%
Concessions	CEI	(13)	(7)	(6)	0	48%
Corporate Property Team	CES	274	256	0	18	7%
Cycle Hire	CEB	(24)	74	(98)	0	408%
Eastern Moors	CEE	27	30	(3)	0	(13%)
Forestry & Woodlands	CFT	21	17	0	4	20%
Grant Development	CEG	148	130	0	18	12%
Minor Properties	CEM	(7)	(4)	(3)	0	44%
North Lees Estate	CEN	(101)	(128)	0	27	(26%)
Rural Estates Team	CEF	270	185	0	85	31%
Trails	CEQ	95	57	0	38	40%
Visitor Centres	CEV	249	(43)	0	292	117%
Warslow Moors Estate	CEW	(95)	(96)	0	1	(2%)
Moors for the future						
AMP7 Work	VM7	0	(462)	0	462	100%
EA NFM Delivery	VK3	0	173	(173)	0	100%
Great North Bog	VK1	0	(53)	0	53	100%
MFF Partner Projects Extra	VM4	0	(0)	0	0	100%
Mend Our Mountains	VM6	0	15	(15)	0	100%
Moor Grn Inv Proj	VM8	0	7	(7)	0	
Moor Resilience Project	VM9	0	(44)	0	44	100%
Moor for Climate	VK2	0	130	(130)	0	100%
MoorLIFE2020	VM3	0	810	(810)	0	100%
Moors For Future 2	VC6	0	11	(11)	0	100%
Moors for Future Team	CMF	65	195	(130)	0	(200%)
NE Private Lands Projects	VM2	0	254	(254)	0	100%
Working with SMB	VK4	0	(72)	0	72	100%
Assets & Enterprise		1,210	1,814	(1,742)	1,137	
Chief Executive Officer						
Corporate Management	ACS	85	10	0	75	
Head of Paid Service						
Slippage	SLP	315	165	0	150	
Landscape & Engagement						
Access & ROW	RRU	131	91	0	40	30%
Access & ROW Proj	VAM	23	15	0	8	34%
Countryside Volunteers	RRC	109	77	0	32	29%
Engagement Admin	RRA	61	128	(67)	0	(110%)
Engagement Projects	VED	(2)	(99)	0	97	(4858%)
Engagement Team	RRB	251	246	0	5	2%
Farm & Countryside	RLF	211	184	0	27	13%
Farming in Protected Landscapes	VPL	5	(120)	0	125	2499%
Land & Nature	RLN	216	199	0	17	8%
Land & Nature Projects	VNE	2	33	(31)	0	(1527%)
Landscape & Engagement	RLE	20	20	(0)	0	(2%)
Pennine Way	RRP	0	(3)	0	3	
Rangers Projects	VCD	(24)	(44)	0	20	(84%)
Rangers Specialist Vehicles	RRS	4	5	(1)	0	(22%)
Rangers Team	RRE	442	394	0	48	11%
Rangers Vehicle Fleet	RRV	35	34	0	1	3%
Landscape & Engagement		1,484	1,161	(99)	422	
Planning						
Cult Heritage Projects	VCH					
Cultural Heritage	PCH	307	283	0	24	8%
Development Control	PDC	503	588	(85)	0	(17%)
Planning	PDP	21	22	(1)	0	(3%)
Policy, Communities & Transport Planning	PPC	289	252	0	37	13%
South West Peak Project	VSW	0	6	(6)	0	100%
Strategic Planning	PDS	208	179	0	29	14%
Planning		1,328	1,329	(91)	90	
Resources						
Communications & Marketing	AIM	218	219	(1)	0	(1%)
Corporate Projects	VEF	0	(133)	0	133	100%
Customer & Democratic Support	AIC	614	615	(1)	0	(0%)
Finance	AFS	357	434	(77)	0	(22%)
Information Management	AIT	721	739	(18)	0	(2%)
Legal	ALE	327	279	0	48	15%
Members	AME	122	117	0	5	4%
People Management	APE	360	343	0	17	5%
Resources	ARE	20	23	(3)	0	(15%)
Strategy and Performance	ASP	225	185	0	40	18%
Resources		2,964	2,962	(100)	102	
Balance Sheet Suspense	XXX			0	0	
Capital	CAP			0	0	
Total						
Total		7,388	7,442	(2,032)	1,977	

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Movement on Reserves and Reserve Levels

		App A Col B		App A Col A		App C			
	<u>Opening Balance 01/04/2023</u>	<u>Capital expenditure from Revenue reserves</u>	<u>contingencies / not allocated</u>	<u>interest receipts above/ (below) budget</u>	<u>Impact of underspends / income at year end</u>	<u>Impact of overspends at year end</u>	<u>Further Reserve requests</u>	<u>Capital adjustments</u>	<u>Closing Balance 31/03/24</u>
General Fund	615,900	(138,645)		93,354	1,976,622	(2,032,092)	(37,397)		477,741
Capital Reserve	1,391,576						(70,148)		1,321,428
	2,007,476	(138,645)	0	93,354	1,976,622	(2,032,092)	(107,545)	0	1,799,169
<u>Specific Reserves</u>									
Car Parks & Facilities	20,410								20,410
Trails Reserve	605,451						(38,028)		567,423
Corporate Property	120,241						(24,938)		95,303
ICT	460,416						(88,334)		372,082
Woodland	0						7,674		7,674
Cycle Hire	39,106						(39,106)		0
Vehicle Maintenance	26,500								26,500
Planned Maintenance	21,545								21,545
Minerals & Legal	566,852								566,852
Restructuring	926,052						(200,743)		725,309
North Lees	90,981						26,856		117,837
Minor Properties	18,045								18,045
Post Covid Working	126,186						(126,186)		0
VAT	220,000								220,000
Aldern House	1,379,875						290,811		1,670,686
Revenue Grant	2,323,920						278,725		2,602,644
CMPT	32,419						23,922		56,341
Medium Term Financial Plan	0						286,000		286,000
Local Plan	129,000								129,000
Authority Delivery Plan	250,000						(32,703)		217,297
	7,356,999	0	0	0	0	0	363,948	0	7,720,947
Matched Funding	847,543						(314,000)		533,543
Slippage Reserve	399,813	(150,000)					(165,000)		84,813
Restricted Funds	125,027						13,804		138,831
Remove Capital adjustments								(208,793)	
	10,736,858	(288,645)	0	93,354	1,976,622	(2,032,092)		(208,793)	10,277,303

Reserve Appropriations

APPENDIX C

Appropriation from the Restructuring Reserve	(25,224)
Appropriation from authority plan reserve	(32,703)
Appropriation to Restricted Reserves	13,804
Appropriation to CMPT reserve	23,921
Appropriation from matched funding-Moorlife	(500,000)
Appropriation from Slippage	(315,000)
Appropriation from IT reserve	(88,334)
Transfer from Restructuring reserves	(75,519)
Transfer to Aldern House reserve	75,519
Transfer from Restructuring reserves	(100,000)
Transfer to MTFP Reserve	100,000
Transfer from Cycle Reserve	(39,106)
Transfer to Aldern House reserve	39,106
Transfer from Post Covid reserve	(126,186)
Transfer to Aldern House reserve	126,186
Appropriation to Aldern House reserve-	50,000
Appropriation to Matched funding reserve	186,000
Appropriation to Medium Term Financial Plan Reserve	186,000
Appropriation from CPR Reserve	(24,938)
Appropriation to Woodland reserve	7,674
Appropriation from Trails reserve	(38,028)
Appropriation to Revenue Grants reserve	(2,479,898)
Appropriation from Revenue Grants reserve	2,758,622
Appropriation to North Lees reserve	26,856
Appropriation from Capital reserve	(70,148)
Total movement	(321,396)

RESERVE APPROPRIATIONS-DETAILED MOVEMENT

APPENDIX C

- a. Reserve appropriations, shown in Appendix C, resulted in a net movement of £251k for revenue expenditure and £70k for capital expenditure.
- b. Due to a higher than forecast surplus in the draft one outturn, some costs which had planned use from the restructuring reserve, were absorbed in the revenue account, resulting in lower surplus. This was discussed and agreed at RMM on the 7th May 2024.
- c. This enabled a transfer of funds totaling £175k from the restructuring reserve to specific reserves, detailed below:
 - £75k to Aldern House reserve
 - £100k to the Medium-Term Financial Plan reserve
- d. The draft surplus on the Revenue Outturn is for 2023/24 is £422k and has been transferred as follows:
 - £186k to the Medium-Term Financial Plan reserve
 - £186k to the Matched funding reserve
 - £50k to the Aldern House reserve
- e. Revenue Grants reserve closed with a net movement of £278k into the reserve, for future projects and planned operational expenses.

The remaining reserves held by the Authority were reviewed by the CEO, Head of Resources and the Finance Manager to assess their planned use and appropriateness. The following was agreed:

- f. A transfer of funds totaling £126k from the Post Covid reserve, which is no longer required to the Aldern House reserve.
- g. A transfer of £39k from the cycle reserve to the Aldern House reserve, as this reserve had remained static for a number of years.
- h. £315k of planned spend from the Slippage reserve was utilised. The slippage reserve is now being phased out and will cease at the end of the current financial year.

- i. £500k was released from the Matched Funding reserve to partially cover the Moorlife 2020 deficit. This was agreed at RMM on 16/01/2024. The end result after final invoices and payments being a deficit of £810k. This deficit has been rolled forward annually over the term of the project. £77k was utilised from excess funds in the Revenue Grants Reserves relating to Moors projects. It was deemed prudent to absorb the full loss in a year where reserves were high and the outturn had a surplus outcome. The difference remaining of £233k was absorbed in the revenue outturn. For context, Moorlife 2020, which commenced in 2015, was a grant funded project from the EU Life Programme to fund UK conservation projects. The deficit has arisen from an exchange rate issue. 40% of the project income came in the initial pre-financing claim as an upfront payment. This was at the same time as a very unusual and large spike in the value of Sterling. As a Local Authority the PDNPA had a time limit in which to convert the Euro income to Sterling and so had no choice but to do so. This resulted in a loss of sterling value in this first claim. It was hoped that an improved exchange rate at further claim dates would balance this but the upside was negligible.

		Expenditure			Funding					Income		Col K
		Col A	Col B	Col C	Col D	Col E	Col F	Col G	Col H	Col I	Col J	
		Budget	Outturn	Variance	Grants	Capital Receipts	Capital Receipts (WM)	Specific Reserves	Borrowing/C FR	Income	Unallocated Income	Main Cause of Variance / Comments
CAPITAL OUTTURN												
Assets & Enterprise												
Corporate Assets Capital Works												
Corporate Assets Capital Works	C02	451,000	95,538	355,462		95,538						Remedial works arising from condition surveys has been delayed due to lack of staff capacity within the Property team.
Corporate Assets Capital Works	C02	204,000	0	204,000		0						Remedial works arising from condition surveys has been delayed due to lack of staff capacity within the Property team.
Bakewell Visitor Centre Capital	C05	10,000	18,710	(8,710)		18,710						Project delivered within budget approved with second RMM business case.
Castleton VC Heating System	C06	25,000	5,521	19,479		5,521						Works are ongoing on this project and we are aiming to deliver this with the best value we can achieve.
Pump Farmhouse												
	C09	220,000	243,439	(23,439)			243,439					Slight overspend due to original cost estimates being inadequate.
Millers Dale Changing Place	C10	81,000	84,359	(3,359)	26,000			58,359		(26,000)	0	Project will still be delivered within existing approval.
Millers Dale Changing Place	C10	19,000	0	19,000				0				Grant funded - Trails reserve used in lieu of grant receipts
Hayes Farm Bore Hole	C11	25,000	13,761	11,239			13,761					Contingency budget
Trails Structures Capital Works												Project on site, slight delays due to ground conditions.
Trails Structures Capital Works	C13	72,000	127,560	(55,560)		103,128		24,432				Overspend to be funded from trails reserve as per original business case.
Trails Structures Capital Works	C13	33,000	33,419	(419)		33,419						
Land at Boarsgrove	C14	500,000	479,507	20,493	479,507					(523,500)	(43,993)	Unallocated income held in capital grants unapplied reserve
Car Park Machines	C16	55,000	55,000	0					55,000			
New Road Farm	C17	130,000	3,243	126,757			3,243					Project delayed to 24/25 year.
North Lees - Cruck Barn	tbc	300,000	0	300,000								Project delayed due to planning issues - planned for 24/25 year
North Lees - Holiday Let	tbc	50,000	0	50,000								Project postponed pending NL Estate management plan
North Lees - Campsite	tbc	36,000	0	36,000								Project postponed pending NL Estate management plan
North Lees - Renewables	tbc	150,000	0	150,000								Project postponed pending NL Estate management plan
WM - Brownhills	tbc	20,000	0	20,000								Project delayed due to lack of staff capacity within the Property team.
WM - Higher Wigenstall Barn	tbc	10,000	0	10,000								Project delayed due to lack of staff capacity within the Property team.
Assets & Enterprise - Total		2,391,000	1,160,056	1,230,944	505,507	256,315	260,442	82,791	55,000	(549,500)	(43,993)	
Chief Executive Officer												
Chief Executive Officer - Total		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Landscape & Engagement												
Cressbrook Footbridge Capital	C15	179,000	888	178,112	888					(20,000)	(19,112)	Residual income held in reserve
Cressbrook Footbridge Capital	C15	20,000	0	20,000								Contingency budget
Landscape & Engagement - Total		199,000	888	198,112	888	0	0	0	0	(20,000)	(19,112)	
Resources												
IT Capital - Devices	C01	65,000	28,254	36,746				28,254				Funded from revenue - service overspent so ICT reserve used
IT Capital - Software	C01	27,750	27,600	150				27,600				Implicit implementation
Resources - Total		92,750	55,854	36,896	0	0	0	55,854	0	0	0	
Total		2,682,750	1,216,798	1,465,952	506,395	256,315	260,442	138,645	55,000	(569,500)	(63,105)	
CAPITAL DISPOSALS												
Chief Executive Officer												
Vehicle Sales	C04	0	993	(993)		993				(57,075)	(56,082)	Moved to Capital Receipts Reserve
Knotbury End Farmhouse	C07	0	2,577	(2,577)			2,577			(330,000)	(327,423)	Moved to Capital Receipts Reserve - Ringfenced for WM Capital expenditure only
Total		0	3,570	(3,570)	0	993	2,577	0	0	(387,075)	(383,505)	
Subtotal		2,682,750	1,220,368	1,462,382								

Surplus/Deficit

Outturn	1,220,368
Capital income	(569,500)
Capital Disposals	(387,075)
Total outturn	<u>263,793</u>

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12. LOCAL PLAN REVIEW ISSUES AND OPTIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL PUBLIC CONSULTATION (AM)

1. Purpose

To seek approval to undertake a consultation exercise in support of the review of the local plan.

2. Context

2.1 The local plan for the Peak District National Park (PDNP) (Core Strategy, 2011 and the Development Management Policies Document, 2019) is currently being reviewed with the intention that all planning policies will be contained in one document. The revised local plan will contain planning policies for the PDNP to 2045.

2.2 There is considerable flexibility open to local planning authorities in how they carry out the initial stages of local plan production, provided they comply with the specific requirements in Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

2.3 An Issues and Options document has therefore been prepared for public consultation that sets out:

- national policy for plan-making in a national park.
- issues for planning policy that have arisen due to (i) new national legislation and policy, including the Climate Change Act 2008, the Environment Act 2021 and the National Planning Policy Framework; (ii) the Peak District National Park Authority's response to the biodiversity and climate emergencies as set out in the National Park Management Plan; (iii) challenges around thriving and sustainable communities and (iv) performance and robustness of existing policy.
- current policies that are proposed to be brought forward into the new local plan (policies where no issues have been identified).
- options and/or questions for new or changed policies (where any of the issues in bullet 2 above suggest a different policy approach should be debated, or where there is a policy 'gap'.)

2.4 Local plans are also subject to the requirements for Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment. These have been undertaken at a level appropriate to this stage of the plan-making process.

2.5 The consultation documents have been properly considered by the Local Plan Review Steering Group over a number of months as part of their work on the local plan review and in preparation for this consultation exercise.

2.6 If approved, public consultation will take place for 8 weeks (from 7 October 2024 to 29 November 2024). Anyone wishing to make comments will be encouraged and helped to do so. Comments can be made by post, email or using the on-line consultation portal.

2.7 The Policy and Communities Team will work with the Marketing and Communications Team to devise and implement a strategy to publicise the consultation across various media. It will include face-to-face events throughout the National Park.

2.8 Consultation responses will inform the next stages of plan-making. These are to draft policy (in effect, to write the new local plan), and undertake another round (or 2) of statutory public consultation.

2.9 The precise nature and timing of the next stages of local plan are unknown. In line with Government guidance on the submission of plans under the current plan-making system, our published Local Development Framework says that following the Regulation 18 consultation we will write the plan, consult again under Regulation 19 and submit to the Secretary of State by 30 June 2025. This is extremely difficult to achieve. Government has further advised that plans at Regulation 18 stage in November 2024 (ie plans such as ours) should be submitted under the proposed new plan-making system. However, there is no secondary legislation (no Regulations) with regard to plan-making under the new system. This may become clearer under the new Government.

3. Proposals

3.1 A summary of the issues, options (where relevant) and questions that are proposed for public consultation is in Appendix 1. The Issues and Options consultation document is available as a background paper.

3.2 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report on the Issues and Options (combining Stages A and B of the SA process) has been prepared by consultants (see background papers). This is also subject to consultation and will inform the next stages of plan review. A full Sustainability Appraisal Report (part C of the SA process) will be prepared for the draft plan.

3.3 The purpose of a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is to understand and mitigate against any negative impact on protected sites that may arise as a result of policies in the new local plan. The first stage is to undertake a screening process, set out conclusions in a screening report, and consult with Natural England. This has been undertaken for this stage of the local plan review (see background papers). A full 'appropriate assessment' will be undertaken for the draft plan.

4. Recommendations

- 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 Steering Group, to finalise the consultation materials and arrangements, including any technical or drafting amendments.**

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to Section 19(1B) and (1C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Authority has a statutory duty to identify its strategic priorities and have policies to address these in the development plan. The National Planning Policy Framework states policies in local plans and spatial development strategies, should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every 5 years, and should then be updated as necessary.

Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 requires the Authority to consult with specified bodies or persons on the subject of a local plan which the local authority is proposing to prepare, and invite them to make representations.

In addition, in undertaking a plan review the Authority must prepare a report to appraise the sustainability of the proposals, pursuant to Section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, and carry out an assessment to test if a plan or project proposal could significantly harm the designated features of a European site in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Impacts on equality, diversity and inclusion will be undertaken as policy is formed, taking into consideration the evidence and responses from consultees received throughout the process. Closer to submission, an Equality Impact Assessment will be produced for the whole of the revised local plan.

b. Financial

This is a major review of planning policy that will incur expenditure in relation to the commissioning of evidence, undertaking publicity and public consultation, and in the examination hearings. There is currently £129k in the planning policy reserve to cover this.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

Management Plan: Objective 10 under the Thriving Communities Aim has as a headline delivery target “By 2028 we will have a Local Plan that enables people with local roots to live in or return to the National Park and help families to remain together in mutual support.

Authority Plan: Review and adopt updated Local Plan

d. Risk Management

The current local plan will continue to exist as the legal development plan for the PDNP until it is replaced. The risks associated with challenge to policies is small because of our focus on national park purposes and the review process currently underway.

e. Net Zero

Addressed in the Issues and Options Report and the Sustainability Appraisal.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

Issues and Options consultation document

Sustainability Appraisal Report

Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Summary of the issues, options (where relevant) and questions that are proposed for public consultation.

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Adele Metcalfe, Policy and Communities Team Manager, 18th July 2024

Responsible Officer, Job Title

Adele Metcalfe, Policy and Communities Team Manager,

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Issue1

Spatial strategy: proposed Local Plan spatial objectives for sustainable development in a national park

To ensure development is managed in a way that:

- delivers the first purpose of a national park to conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
- delivers the second purpose of a national park to promote understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities
- is responsive to its distinctive landscape character and special qualities
- delivers significant enhancement
- reduces consumption of resources
- promotes nature recovery, carbon sequestration, blue and green infrastructure. ¹

To retain and enable the development of new homes, businesses and community facilities in accordance with the above and in locations that support thriving and sustainable communities, reduce the need to travel and enable travel by sustainable means (low carbon, public transport and active travel.) This will address the duty on national park authorities to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities.

Question 1

- a. Do you agree with the proposed Local Plan spatial objectives for sustainable development?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 2

Spatial Strategy: Delivering national park purposes

General Spatial Policies in the new local plan will continue to align with the purposes and duty of a national park, limit the scale and extent of development and give great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage.

New policies will respond to obligations arising from the Climate Change Act 2008 and the Environment Act 2021.

GSP 2 will include an additional reference to nature recovery, special qualities and the net zero target.

GSP 3 will include the requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain and reference the Peak District Design Code.

¹ Blue-green infrastructure refers to the use (for example as public space or for walking and cycling) of blue elements, like rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, and green elements, such as trees, forests, fields and parks, in urban and land-use planning and other public benefits such as clean air, water and flood prevention.

Question 2

- a. Have we identified the right policy issues with regard to delivering national park purposes?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 3

Spatial strategy: defining valued landscape character and special qualities

Individual elements of landscape and cultural heritage combine to give the National Park its unique and special quality. All our planning policies and decision-making depend on an agreed understanding of what we value; what we want to conserve, and what we want to enhance. Currently this is set out in the Landscape Strategy and in the Core Strategy list of 'valued characteristics'.

We think the local plan should better align with the Management Plan where the Peak District's Special Qualities are defined. We can do this by replacing the current list of Core Strategy 'Valued Characteristics' with a new list of Special Quality Key Features. Key Features are the individual elements that combine to create a Special Quality.

Key Features for each Special Quality are set out in Appendix 2.

Question 3

What additional elements should be included in a Special Quality Key Features list for the local plan?

Issue 4

The spatial strategy: settlement tiers

Currently we have a 2-tier policy. All settlements are classified according to whether in principle, new-build development for homes, business and community facilities is acceptable or not acceptable. In policy terms there is no difference between Hope and Castleton, or Tideswell and Endors.

In reality we know that different forms and scales of new-build development are better suited to some settlements and not to others. Policy and decision-making do take this into account already, by looking at the need for development, and there are obvious market influences too. However we could change the policy approach to give residents and applicants more certainty about the scale and type of new-build development that is appropriate for different settlements.

If we think it should be changed, we can either retain the 2-tier approach and think again about which settlements are included, or we can create more tiers and direct different types and levels of development accordingly.

If we decide to change our approach, we will consult again on the criteria for deciding which settlements should go in which tier, and on the allocation of settlements to tiers.

Option1

Retain the current approach – a ‘two-tier’ strategy of those settlements where new development is acceptable in principle, and the rest, where it is not.

There are 63 settlements where new development is acceptable in principle, and the rest, where it is not. The 63 villages are as shown in the table above.

The advantages of this approach are:

- it is appropriate for a protected landscape where there are many small settlements
- It has the potential to spread development evenly across all settlements.

The disadvantages of this approach are:

- it excludes some villages where the development of one or two self-build homes could be acceptable
- it is not responsive to the issues faced by housing authorities and housing associations that need planning certainty and economies of scale to deliver housing development.

Option 2

Retain a 2-tier strategy but review the list

We retain the principle that settlements fall in to 2 types - those where new development is acceptable in principle, and the rest, where it is not. But we review the list. Settlements may move into or out of the list as a result of the review.

Option 3

We have a more tiers and direct different types and levels of development accordingly. All settlements would feature somewhere within the tiers.

The proposal set out below is a five-tier strategy. Different types and levels of development can take place depending on the tier. All settlements would feature somewhere within the tiers.

Tier One - market town and larger settlements with good services that are well-located for public transport and active travel.

Development in principle is acceptable for:

- local needs affordable homes to address the housing needs arising from the Peak District National Park part of the relevant housing authority.² The current occupancy cascade policy would be changed for Tier One settlements (see Chapter 7 Issue 31).
- retail, business and community facilities of an appropriate scale to serve identified need and the settlement's visitor capacity
- local people in housing need building their own homes.

Tier One settlements will have the capacity for development assessed as part of the plan-making process. 'Capacity for development' means assessing whether, and at what scale, development can take place without harm to landscape character, or to a settlement's setting within the historic landscape, or to any other of the Peak District's special qualities.

² Housing authorities are district, borough or unitary authorities. There are several housing authority areas that cover the National Park.

This assessment would also take into account important open space and the views of the parish council.

Tier Two - larger settlements with key services.

Development in principle is acceptable for:

- local needs affordable homes to meet the housing needs of that parish and adjoining parishes within that local authority area
- small-scale retail, business and community facilities
- local people in housing need building their own homes.

Tier Three - smaller settlements with community services.

Development in principle is acceptable for:

- local need affordable homes to meet the housing needs of that parish
- small-scale retail, business and community facilities
- local people in housing need building their own homes.

Tier Four - hamlets and settlements with few or no services.

Development in principle is acceptable for local people from that parish in housing need building their own homes.

Tier Five - settlements split by national park boundary.

Each boundary settlement is different so one policy approach would not be appropriate. Local needs affordable housing may be acceptable depending on the circumstances.

The advantages of this approach are:

- No settlements are excluded
- It is proactive not reactive; a way for the planning authority and housing authority to work together to tackle housing need
- homes in Tier One settlements would be offered to eligible people from any parish within the Peak District part of the relevant district, so people living in parishes where no sites can be found are not disadvantaged (provided there is a reasonably close Tier One settlement.)

The disadvantages of this approach are:

- communities may not readily accept that their settlement should have higher levels of development than another
- individuals may not readily accept that their housing needs would be better met in a different parish
- it may make smaller communities less sustainable because fewer homes may be built

Question 4

- a. Which option do you prefer?
 - b. Do you think there is another option?
 - c. What are the reasons for your answers?
-

Issue 5

Spatial strategy: sites for housing development

The current local plan does not allocate land for new housing. Instead we use an 'exceptions' approach because new homes are not permitted 'except' in the special circumstances set out in policy and on brownfield land. The exceptions approach is appropriate in a protected landscape. However we need to consider whether to allocate sites in some settlements. This approach works best with a tiered settlement strategy. Only those settlements in the top tier would have allocated sites and elsewhere the exceptions approach would still apply (see Chapter 2 Issue 4).

Site allocations are shown on a map. They indicate where, in principle, development is acceptable in planning terms and a landowner is willing to sell. Policy would specify that development must meet local affordable need.

Site allocations would not prevent applications coming forward and being permitted on other sites.

Option 1

Exceptions approach

We retain the current approach. We do not allocate sites in any settlement.

The advantages of this approach are:

- It is existing policy, understood and accepted by communities and developers
- it can help to keep land value lower
- it would not unduly delay the local plan
- it responds to local need and location at the time of application
- it is likely to favour smaller sites and smaller communities.

The disadvantage of this approach are:

- In practice, not enough sites are being delivered (but this may be due to a combination of factors, including funding) and some villages will still not have new homes
- It only responds to housing need at the time of application and cannot easily address local housing need over the long term.

Option 2

Exception sites plus site allocations in 'Tier One' settlements

The exceptions approach applies, but in addition, we allocate sites in those settlements that are the most suitable and sustainable locations for new development. We describe these as 'Tier One' settlements (see Chapter 2 Issue 4) being: 'the market town and larger settlements with good services that are well-located for public transport and active travel'. In all other settlements, and outside of the allocated sites, the exceptions approach would still apply. Policy would require housing development on allocated sites to meet local affordable need and be phased over the plan period to 2045.

Tier One settlements will have the capacity for development assessed as part of the plan-making process. 'Capacity for development' means assessing whether, and at what scale, development can take place without harm to landscape character, or to a settlement's setting within the historic landscape, or to any other of the Peak District's special qualities.

This assessment would also take into account important open space and the views of the parish council. A Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) would identify potential sites within this context.

The advantages of this approach are:

- It would enable a more detailed consideration of options and national park purposes, removed from the immediate pressure of seeking to meet a housing need.
- It would give more certainty to individuals, developers (Registered Social Landlords), the local community and decision-makers on whether a site was likely to be acceptable or not.
- Done well, it can bring a community together with a common purpose.
- It would create a supply of deliverable sites with landowner consent.
- In 'Tier One' settlements, the new homes would be offered initially to anyone in housing need from any parish within the Peak District part of the relevant district. This is an advantage for people in housing need living in smaller settlements where new homes are more difficult to develop.

The disadvantages of this approach are:

- It is likely to delay production of the plan.
- it can create tension and disunity within a community.
- It will put pressure on land values.
- In 'Tier One' settlements, the new homes would be offered initially to anyone in housing need from any parish within the Peak District part of the relevant district. This would be a departure from the long-established principle that new homes should first and foremost meet the needs of the parish, or adjoining parish, in which the development is located.

Question 5

- a. What is your preferred option?
- b. What is the reason for your answer?

Issue 6

Spatial Strategy: development boundaries

Development boundaries (shown on a map) and the associated policy, together define the development limits of a settlement. They can help to manage development pressure and avert speculative proposals for development on sites that are detached from a settlement. Only Bakewell and Bradwell (in the neighbourhood plan) have development boundaries. We need to decide whether development boundaries (and the associated policies) are still useful, and if so which settlements should have them.

Option 1

Retain current policy

We retain a development boundary for Bakewell. Any other parish council wishing to set a development boundary for other settlements can do so in a neighbourhood plan.

If this is the preferred option, we would consult again on detail and location, taking into account identified housing need (see Chapter 7 Issue 28) and any sites that may come forward for development (see Chapter 2 Issue 5).

Option 2

No development boundaries

No development boundaries are set in the local plan. Any parish or town council wishing to set a development boundary can do so in a neighbourhood plan.

Option 3

Change current policy - establish development boundaries for other key settlements

We extend the use of development boundaries so that as well as Bakewell, they are established for other key settlements.

If this is the preferred option, we would consult again on which settlements (linking to Issue 4) and on detail and location, taking into account identified housing need and any sites that may come forward for development (linking to Issue 5).

Question 6

- a. Which is your preferred option?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 7

Spatial Strategy: protected open space and local green space

Development on green field sites is restricted overall in the Peak District but is allowed in order to keep communities thriving and sustainable. The greatest need is for affordable homes but community facilities and small-scale retail and business are also allowed.

How do we decide which open spaces to develop, and which should remain open? We can approach the issue by indicating where development can take place (see Chapter 2 Issues 5 and 6). We can also set out in policy those sites that have a greater degree of protection. We already protect community recreation sites, sport facilities, and important open spaces in a conservation area. We need to decide whether to also designate local green spaces (LGS).

LGS designation does not necessarily prevent development from taking place but it is the best way for a community to have its say about valued spaces and for this to be formally recognised in plan-making and decision-taking. Government Guidance says that 'if land is already protected by designation (for example it is in a protected landscape), then consideration should be given to whether any additional local benefit would be gained by designation as Local Green Space.' (Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 37-011-20140306.)

If we decide there is 'additional local benefit' to be gained by designating Local Green Space in the new Local Plan we will work with local residents to draw up a candidate list for future consultation.

Question 7

- a. Do you think that there is 'additional local benefit' to be gained by designating Local Green Space in and on the edge of Peak District settlements?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 8

Spatial Strategy: sustainable travel

Other planning policies will ensure that new affordable homes, businesses and community services are well located to reduce the need to travel and make sustainable travel more likely. We need an aspirational transport policy to complement this approach. Currently this is Core Strategy T1 (above). Much has changed since this was written and it needs updating.

Conserving and enhancing the National Park's Special Qualities will always be our primary consideration but what else should we consider?

Question 8

Thinking about current policy T1 (above), is there anything else we should include in an aspirational sustainable transport land-use policy?

Issue 9

Landscape, biodiversity and nature recovery: proposed Local Plan spatial objectives

To manage development through close consideration of special qualities, valued landscape character and nature recovery.

To significantly enhance biodiversity in accordance with the Lawton Principles³ and the statutory nature recovery strategies.

To protect the remoteness, wildness, open character and tranquillity of the hills, moorlands and dales.

To protect the distinctive and valued historic character of the settled agricultural landscapes.

To protect the Natural Zone and to enhance/extend in accordance with the nature recovery strategies.

To maintain and improve the darkness of night skies seen in the National Park.

To promote nature-based solutions to mitigate and that will permit adaptation to climate change and flooding.

To promote healthy soil, and clean air and water.

Question 9

- a. Do you agree with the proposed spatial objectives for landscape, biodiversity and nature recovery?
- b. What is the reason for your answer?

³ Lawton Report (more and bigger habitat that is in better condition and linked across the wider countryside)

Issue 10

Landscape and nature recovery

We think that new policy should:

- conserve and enhance special qualities
- maximise the potential for all development, even at the smallest scale, to contribute to nature's recovery.
- clearly set out the requirements for development falling outside mandatory BNG. It will set out the ecological information to be provided, and any mitigation or enhancement required.
- make clear that proposals should align to local priorities and strategies so that the right habitat is created in the right place.
- make clear that any enhancement should also help achieve nutrient neutrality (in applicable catchments), mitigate flood risk and contribute to the delivery of natural capital and green infrastructure strategies, including cross-boundary strategies.

Please note that statutory BNG is covered in the next section.

Question 10

- a. Do you agree with the proposed policy approach to nature recovery?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 11

Biodiversity net gain

Our statutory purpose is to conserve and enhance wildlife. For this reason, we think new planning policy for biodiversity net gain should go beyond the 10% mandatory requirement. We will work with partners to establish a locally specific evidence base for this.

Question 11

- a. Do you agree that new planning policies for biodiversity net gain should go beyond the 10% mandatory requirement?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 12

Development in the Natural Zone

We need to decide whether the 'exceptional circumstances' that justify development in the Natural Zone, as set out in current policy DMC2 above, are still correct.

Question 12

- a. Do you think that current policy (DMC2 above) correctly sets out the exceptional circumstances for development in the Natural Zone?
- b. What is the reason for your answer?

Issue 13

Whole estate plans

We need to decide whether the new local plan should have a policy for whole estate plans (WEPs). A WEP policy would give positive regard to development proposals that are part of a WEP that is endorsed by the Authority, and that align with other policies in the local plan.

(Separate to the local plan, the Authority would publish guidance to set out the criteria for endorsing the plans. This would cover for example, the standards of public consultation.)

Question 13

- a. Do you think the new local plan should have a policy for whole estate plans?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 14

Proposed Local Plan spatial objectives for cultural heritage and the built environment

To manage development through consideration of landscape character, cultural heritage, the distinctive character of settlements and the Peak District National Park's special qualities.

To conserve and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets, including conservation areas, listed buildings and their setting and historic farmsteads and their setting.

To identify opportunities for, and seek to deliver, significant enhancement.

To conserve and enhance cultural heritage in the transition to a low carbon future.

Question 14

- a. Do you agree with the proposed Local Plan spatial objectives for cultural heritage?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 15

Heritage assets

The new local plan will clearly set out the methodology for deciding (i) whether a building is a non-designated heritage asset, and (ii) the significance of that asset.

Question 15

Please tell us about any issues or concerns you have about our approach to heritage assets.

Issue 16

Local list

The new local plan will clearly set out the methodology we use to determine whether a building is a non-designated heritage asset and its significance. We need to decide whether to create a Local List to supplement this. Page 134

A Local List is a register of non-designated heritage assets whose significance should be considered in development proposals. We would draft and agree selection criteria for inclusion on the list in consultation with local people.

However, a List is not conclusive and is resource intensive to draw up. It will provide a degree of certainty for heritage assets on the list but does not preclude other assets being identified at a future date.

Question 16

- a. Do you think that we should have a Local List of non-designated heritage assets?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 17

The conversion of isolated traditional buildings

We are receiving an increased number of applications to convert isolated traditional buildings. This is partly because well-located redundant buildings - those that are in or on the edge of existing settlements - have already been converted.

Although conversions are acceptable in principle anywhere 'in the open countryside', this must be balanced by consideration of the harm that would be caused. Isolated barns and the open landscapes in which they sit are particularly susceptible to harmful change.

Current planning policy considers all heritage assets in the same way. We need to decide whether the new local plan should contain a specific policy on isolated traditional buildings to clearly set out the parameters for conversion and what uses may be acceptable.

Question 17

- a. Do you think the new local plan should contain a specific policy relating to isolated traditional buildings?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 18

Proposed Local Plan spatial objectives for climate change and sustainable building

To support the positive management of landscape change and adaptation to the changing climate, in a way that is responsive to the landscape's distinctive cultural character and special qualities.

To contribute to nature recovery, carbon sequestration and flood prevention.

To protect open skylines, long views and semi-natural moorland expanses.

To support work to create and manage floodplain landscapes.

To support work to protect and enhance peat.

To support design, construction and adaptation that enables transition to a low carbon future and respects the built tradition and character of settlements.

To support sensitively-sited, small-scale renewable energy infrastructure.

Question 18

- a. Do you agree with the proposed Local Plan spatial objectives for climate change and sustainable building?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 19

Replacement dwellings

Current policy Core Strategy CC1 aligns with the requirement to promote a radical reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources. However current policy DMH 9 does not. DMH 9 allows dwellings to be replaced after considering only whether or not the original makes a 'positive contribution' to landscape or built environment character.

We need to decide whether new policy on replacement dwellings should be changed to take into account embodied carbon and the benefits of retaining smaller, non-traditional dwellings.

Question 19

- a. Do you agree that embodied carbon should be considered as part of the requirement for high sustainability standards?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
 - c. Do you think the criteria in current policy DMH9A (above) are correct?
 - d. What is the reason for your answer?
 - e. Should new policy specifically address the loss of smaller homes?
 - f. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 20

Avoiding carbon emissions in development

The National Park Management Plan says that the National Park should be 'net zero by 2040' and that one way to achieve this is to 'adopt Local Plan policies that strengthen carbon reduction in new buildings and refurbishment of existing buildings.' The general nature of the existing policy requirement is insufficient to deliver this ambition. Therefore we need to determine whether new policy should set out the sustainability measures we expect for different types of development. For example, new or extended:

- homes
- farm buildings
- business development

Question 20

- a. Do you think that the new local plan should set out in policy the sustainability measures we expect for different types of development?
- b. What specific measure are most appropriate for homes?
- c. What specific measure are most appropriate for farm buildings?
- d. What specific measure are most appropriate for business development?

- e. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 21

Low carbon and renewable energy development

New policy will continue to require that low carbon and renewable energy development does not adversely affect landscape character, cultural heritage assets, special qualities or other established uses of the area. We need to decide whether new policy could give greater clarity by defining 'small scale' and mapping areas where renewable energy development is more or less likely to be acceptable.

Question 21

What criteria could we use to identify areas (on a policy map) where renewable energy development is more likely to be acceptable?

Issue 22

Carbon capture and storage

CCS proposals affecting the National Park may come forward during the next plan period. The National Park Authority would not make the decision, but would be consulted. We need to decide whether to set out our agreed position on CCS in the new local plan and, if supportive in principle, to set out other policy criteria that should be met.

Question 22

- a. Do you think that the new local plan should set out in principle policy support for Carbon Capture and Storage?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 23

Proposed Local Plan spatial objectives for recreation and tourism

To direct recreation development towards settlements and certain existing recreation attractions and hubs.⁴ At these places development will be focussed on new or improved facilities that promote understanding and enjoyment of the National Park, sustainable travel and significant enhancement of the National Park's special qualities.

To support the change of use of traditional buildings (heritage assets) for visitor accommodation, primarily on farmsteads.

To support temporary overnight tourist accommodation that is well-suited to its location.

To support work that maintains and enhances the rights of way network.

To safeguard the multi-user recreational trails, and to expand this network.

⁴ Recreation attractions are the sites or features that are the focus of the public's enjoyment of the National Park. They may include walking and cycling trails and sites of cultural heritage interest. Recreation hubs are sites at popular locations from which people access the open countryside for recreational purposes. Some places can be both.

Question 23

- a. Do you agree with the proposed Local Plan spatial objectives for recreation and tourism?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 24

Recreation attractions and hubs

Recreation attractions and hubs are visited by millions of people each year. This can create an adverse impact (for example on local communities and on the environment) and lead to pressure for development (for example for visitor facilities), often in remote and sensitive locations. Stakeholders want us to be clearer about the kind of development that is or is not acceptable. We can do this by defining areas on a map where the recreation and visitor pressure is most acute, alongside planning policies specific for each area.

This approach would enable us to ensure that planning policy and area management work together, for example by supporting sustainable transport solutions.

This issue should be considered alongside any new approach to visitor car parking (see Chapter 12 Issue 41).

Question 24

- a. Do you think that the new local plan should define 'Recreation Attractions' and 'Recreation Hubs' on a map and develop specific planning policies for those areas?
 - b. Which areas/sites do you consider to be Recreation Attractions and Hubs?
-

Issue 25

Temporary camp sites

New policy will continue to support small touring camping and caravan sites. We need to decide whether to apply for an 'Article 4 Direction' to remove permitted development rights (whether to remove entirely or to revert to 28 days) for temporary camping and caravan sites, and if so, for which area or areas.

Question 25

- a. Do you think that we should apply for an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for temporary camping and caravan sites?
 - b. If yes:
 - Should the permitted development right be removed entirely or revert to 28 days as previously?
 - What areas should they be removed from?
 - c. What problems are being caused by the 60-day permitted development right?
-

Issue 26

Touring camping and caravan sites

We support the provision of new touring camping and caravan sites but think that there should be some restrictions because:

- the landscape impact of tents and caravans is greater in winter months
- communities may welcome the 'respite' from visitor pressure
- sites are not suitable for full-time residential use.

Current policy sets out the requirement for occupancy restrictions on touring camping and caravan sites, but it does not set out seasonal restrictions. We need to decide whether new policy should set out seasonal and occupancy restrictions, taking into account business need and wider considerations such as landscape impact.

Question 26

- a. Do you agree that operation of touring camping and caravan sites should be restricted to certain months of the year in order to address the increased landscape impact in the winter months?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
 - c. Do you agree that touring camping and caravan sites should be restricted to no more than 28 days per calendar year by any one person?
 - d. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 27

Static caravans, lodges and other permanent structures

New policy will retain a restrictive approach to all types of permanent structures used as holiday accommodation. This is the only approach that aligns with national park purposes.

We need to decide whether new policy should clarify the exceptions to this principle, taking into account the following issues and questions.

- Other non-traditional permanent structures are already on the market (such as 'yurts'), or may come onto the market. Shepherd's huts and camping pods are not traditional in the Peak District so we need to be clear about the rationale for making an exception just for these. Could (for example) yurts or other structures be acceptable 'close to the facilities of a farmstead' and 'in woodland locations'?
- 'Small and simple' is not defined in policy. We could include that there should be no associated development, as stated in the supporting text to Policy DMR1.
- There may be other locations, as well as farmsteads and woodlands, where they are acceptable.
- If the harm/impact is negligible, is it reasonable to restrict structures 'close to the facilities of a farmstead' to one in number?

Question 27

- a. Do you agree that new policy should restrict static caravans, chalets, lodges and other large, permanent structures used as holiday accommodation?
- b. What exceptions should we make to this principle?
- c. What criteria should we use to ensure that the structures permitted as an exception to this principle, do not harm the National Park's special qualities?
- d. What is the reason for your answer?

Issue 28

Proposed Local Plan Spatial Objectives for housing

In the whole National Park, to support the provision of between 960 and 2000* new homes by 2045, distributed across the 3 landscape areas as follows**:

- between 625 and 1,302 in the White Peak (Derbyshire Dales)
- between 199 and 414 in the Dark Peak (mostly High Peak which has by far the biggest population, but also including Barnsley, Kirklees, North East Derbyshire, Oldham, Sheffield)
- between 136 and 284 in the South West Peak (Staffordshire Moorlands, Cheshire East)

To support new uses for valued vernacular and listed buildings, and other buildings that are heritage assets, primarily in settlements and farmsteads.

To support the development of new-build affordable local needs homes in the best locations, taking into account the Peak District's landscape character and special qualities, housing authority boundaries, settlement pattern, settlement population, access to services and the potential for public transport and active travel.

*The rationale for this is:

- The lower figure is enough to reverse the population and labour force decline but has least impact on the National Park's special qualities. It is based on Scenario I (dwelling-led, 48 dwellings per annum over a 20-year plan period) of the Population Projection and Housing Needs Assessment.⁵
- The higher figure aligns with the Government's Standard Methodology.
- It is compatible with past delivery rates. Past delivery rate averaged 72 dwellings per year. Proposal is for between 48 and 100 per year.

**This is an indicative spread based on existing population and may change depending on the preferred spatial strategy.

⁵ This was undertaken by consultants (Nathaniel Litchfield & Partners) based on prescribed Government methodologies but in addition using 'dwelling-led' scenarios to determine the effect on population of different levels of house building. The proposed range for public consultation was discussed and agreed by the local Plan Review Member Steering Group and presented to the Authority Forum.

SPATIAL AREA	CONSTITUENT LOCAL AUTHORITY	% OF POPULATION	INDICATIVE LEVEL OF HOUSING DELIVERY TO 2045 (TOTAL NUMBER)	INDICATIVE LEVEL OF HOUSING DELIVERY TO 2045 (DWELLINGS PER ANNUM OVER 20 YEAR PLAN PERIOD)
Peak District		100%	960 - 2000	48-100
White Peak	Derbyshire Dales	65.1	625 - 1,302	31-65
Dark Peak	Barnsley High Peak Kirklees NE Derbyshire Oldham Sheffield	20.7	199 - 414	10-20
South West Peak	Cheshire East Staffordshire Moorlands	14.2	136 - 284	1-4

It is important to note that these figures include conversions as well as new-build homes. Over a thousand (1,237) new homes have been built in the Peak District since 2006; around two-thirds (66%) of these are converted buildings and a quarter (22%) are new-build local needs homes on green field sites. In the next plan period our policies will continue to support conversions and new-builds.

Question 28

- Do you agree with the proposed spatial objectives?
- What is the reason for your answer?

Issue 29

Holiday homes and permanent homes

Many visitors stay in holiday homes to explore the National Park. They can be a source of income and a form of farm diversification. However, it is widely acknowledged that where there are high concentrations of holiday homes there is an adverse impact on the availability and affordability of homes to buy or to rent for local people and on the sustainability of communities more broadly.

To address concerns about the number of holiday homes in the National Park we could impose a permanent residence clause on new residential properties located within or on the edge of settlements. Their sole use would be for permanent residential use, preventing them from being used as holiday homes.

We think the issue relates specifically to properties within or near to settlements. Properties in the open countryside may be more suitable as holiday homes because the use is less intensive and there are not the same amenity requirements. For example, there is less need for formal gardens and outdoor residential paraphernalia.

This issue refers only to new open-market dwellings as all affordable dwellings are already restricted using permanent residency clauses in S106 agreements.

Option 1

No policy change

Any open-market dwelling can be either a permanent home (as long as it is suitable to be a permanent home) or a holiday home.

Option 2

Policy change - Park-wide permanent residence clause

We impose a permanent residence clause on new residential properties located within, on the edge of, or close to settlements. Their sole use would be for permanent residential use, preventing them from being used as holiday homes.

This does not apply to holiday homes that support farm diversification, converted buildings that are not suitable as a permanent residence, and some buildings that are located in the open countryside.

Option 3

Policy change - permanent residence clause applied to specific settlements

We impose a permanent residence clause on new residential properties located within, on the edge of, or close to those settlements where the concentration of holiday homes is high (percentage to be determined). Their sole use would be for permanent residential use, preventing them from being used as holiday homes.

This does not apply to holiday homes that support farm diversification, converted buildings that are not suitable as a permanent residence, and some buildings that are located in the open countryside.

Question 29

- a. Which is your preferred option?
- b. What is the reason for your answer?

Issue 30

Affordable housing eligibility

Current policy allows new affordable homes to be occupied by:

- local people currently living in accommodation which is overcrowded or otherwise unsatisfactory (including young people and others forming a household for the first time)
- non-residents with local roots wishing to return to the Peak District (as long as they are in housing need, ie their current accommodation is overcrowded or unsatisfactory)
- people with an essential need to care for a local person.

We need to decide whether this is still the right approach. Are there other local circumstances that should be taken into account? If we change the approach, should it apply to both RSL and private development?

For example, we could consider people currently living in housing need (ie currently in accommodation which is overcrowded or otherwise unsatisfactory) who:

- work in the National Park. This could be employment generally, or employment that responds to a specific role for example, the emergency services or a care provider. It would be subject to conditions such as, but not restricted to: a permanent contract; number of hours in work; length of time already spent in the role.
- have an immediate family connection. This could be parents or children who can demonstrate they have lived within the National Park for a certain period of time.

Widening eligibility criteria will contribute to our management plan aim to support sustainable communities⁶ and increase the pressure to build on green field sites.

Question 30

- a. Do you think that the eligibility criteria for occupation of RSL managed affordable housing (as set out in Policy DMH2) should be widened?
- b. What is the reason for your answer?
- c. Do you think that the eligibility criteria for privately owned and managed affordable homes (as set out in Policy DMH2) should be widened?
- d. What is the reason for your answer?
- e. Do you think we should explore new policy on tied accommodation?⁷
- f. What is the reason for your answer?

⁶ Objective 10: To support sustainable communities by improving opportunities for affordable housing and connection to services

⁷ Tied accommodation is provided by an employer. Tenants have different rights depending on whether occupation is a condition of employment.

Issue 31

Affordable housing - local connection

Please note, this issue applies specifically to new-build affordable homes built predominantly on green field sites.

Imposing a local connection for first, second and subsequent occupants is essential, otherwise affordable homes would be lost to the open market. The local connection requirement is currently:

- minimum period of 10 years permanent residence in the parish or adjoining parish
- not now resident in the parish but having lived for at least 10 years out of the last 20 years in the parish or an adjoining parish

We need to decide whether to change the local connection definition, and if so, whether to apply the changes to just to RSL development, or to include people wishing to build their own homes.

Widening local connection criteria will contribute to our management plan aim to support sustainable communities⁸ and increase the pressure to build on green field sites.

Question 21

Please note, these questions apply specifically to new-build affordable homes built predominantly on green field sites.

- a. Do you think we should retain or reduce the 10-year local connection requirement for first occupation of RSL homes?
- b. What is the reason for your answer?
- c. Do you think we should retain or reduce the 10-year local connection for private developers, including people building their own homes?
- d. What is the reason for your answer?
- e. Do you think we should redefine 'local connection' for people wishing to return to the Peak District? If so, what criteria should we use?
- f. Do you think there should be any exception to the requirement for a local connection? (For example, no local connection is needed for new homes that are needed to support farming, forestry and other rural enterprises.)

Issue 32

Affordable housing - house size

Current policy restricts the size of affordable homes because this is one way of making them more affordable in the long term. We need to decide whether this principle should be retained in the new local plan, and if so what thresholds should apply. We also need to consider whether a different approach is needed for local people building their own home.

⁸ Objective 10: To support sustainable communities by improving opportunities for affordable housing and connection to services

Question 32

Do you think that the new Local Plan should retain a size restriction on new affordable homes?

- a. What is the reason for your answer?
 - b. Should the same standards be applied to RSL and privately developed homes?
-

Issue 33

Proposed spatial objectives for shops, services and community facilities

To support businesses and the provision and retention of community services and facilities in locations that support thriving and sustainable communities, reduce the need to travel and enable travel by sustainable means (low carbon, public transport and active travel.)

Question 33

- a. Do you agree with the proposed spatial objectives?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 34

The retention of shops, services, community facilities and businesses

We need to protect, to the extent that it is possible within planning policy, the services and businesses that are valued by communities. Applicants seeking to change any of these uses would need to demonstrate that it was no longer needed, available elsewhere in the settlement, or no longer viable. Policy would also require that wherever possible the new use should meet another community need and that any market dwellings should be permanent homes (in accordance with any new policy on permanent homes - see Chapter 7 Issue 29). We need to decide whether to expand the current list of uses we seek to retain to also include:

- shops (in addition to local convenience shops)
- cafes/restaurants
- offices and light industry (suitable for residential areas).

Question 34

- a. Do you agree with our proposal to expand the list of protected community services and facilities as described above?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 35

Protection of Bakewell's special character and setting

The new local plan will list the special quality key features of the whole national park alongside new planning policy requiring their conservation and enhancement. We need to ensure that the individual qualities that make up Bakewell's special character are properly included in the new list. There are questions about this in Chapter 1 Issue 3.

We need to decide whether the new Local Plan should include a Bakewell specific policy on landscape setting and special character or whether this can be adequately conserved by general policies that apply to the whole National Park.

Question 35

- a. Should the new local plan include a Bakewell specific chapter that would include policy on landscape setting and special character?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
 - c. Are the qualities that make up Bakewell's special character properly included in the list of Special Quality Key Features shown in Appendix 2?
 - d. If not, what else should be included?
-

Issue 36

Proposed spatial objectives for the rural economy

To support business development that conserves and enhances the Peak District's Special Qualities through:

- farm diversification
- the re-use of traditional buildings (heritage assets)
- new development in or on the edge of key settlements.

To support businesses that enhance Bakewell's role as an agricultural market town and tourist hub.

To protect existing employment sites that are well-located, and enable them to expand.

Question 36

- a. Do you agree with the proposed spatial objectives?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 37

Extensions to existing businesses

Piecemeal business development in the open countryside can harm the National Park's landscape and special qualities. This has happened in some places. We need to decide whether policy should set clearer limits to piecemeal business development, especially in the open countryside, and if so how best to do this.

This issue does not relate to business expansion on safeguarded employment sites where there is capacity to do so.

Question 37

- a. What other tests (other than those listed in current policy DME7 B above) should we apply to ensure that the piecemeal expansion of businesses does not harm the landscape and the special qualities of the National Park?
- b. What is the reason for your answer?

Issue 38

Conversion of whole farmsteads to new uses

As a result of changes in farming practices we are starting to see whole farmsteads coming out of farming use. Without maintenance and appropriate new uses they may disappear from the landscape. But equally, poor conversion can pose a threat to the landscape character and special qualities of the National Park.

Business use and residential use may be acceptable in principle on whole farmsteads in or on the edge of settlements or in locations that are physically well related to a settlement or can be made more sustainable, with direct and close access to a main road.

For isolated whole farmsteads low intensity uses that do not impact on the landscape character and special qualities of the National Park, for example holiday accommodation or low intensity recreational use may be acceptable.

For all applications to convert whole farmsteads to new uses we will continue to seek enhancement, including the removal of existing modern agricultural buildings.

Question 38

- a. Do you agree that the conversion of whole farmsteads (that are no longer in farming use) for business or residential use should only take place if the farmstead is:
 - in or on the edge of settlements
 - physically well related to a settlement
 - in a sustainable location with direct and close access to a main road?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
 - c. Do you agree that the conversion of whole farmsteads (that are no longer in farming use) that are located in the open countryside and away from settlements, is only acceptable for low intensity uses, for example holiday accommodation?
 - d. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 39

Primary business

Current policy requires the primary land management business (usually a farm business) to retain ownership and control of a site and building when redundant farm buildings are converted for business use.

We need to decide whether this is still appropriate in all circumstances.

Question 39

- a. Do you think we should continue to require in all circumstances the primary business to retain ownership and control of the site and building when redundant farm buildings are converted for business use?
- b. What is the reason for your answer?
- c. If we decide that a stand-alone business is acceptable, what are the risks associated with this?
- d. If we decide that a stand-alone business is acceptable, what constraints should be applied?

Issue 40

Proposed spatial objectives for travel and transport

To deliver a pattern of development for homes, businesses and community facilities that reduces the need to travel and enables travel by sustainable means (public transport and active travel).

To resist proposals, including for new roads, that would lead to an increase in cross-park traffic.

To support facilities and infrastructure for the switch to low/zero carbon transport.

To safeguard and extend the existing strategic multi-user trails.

To protect existing, and create new routes for walking, cycling, wheeling and horse-riding.

At recreation attractions and hubs, to work with highway authorities, landowners and residents to facilitate the delivery of comprehensive travel and transport solutions so that traffic, and the consequent impact on Special Qualities, is reduced.

Question 40

- a. Do you agree with the proposed spatial objectives?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 41

Visitor car parking

New planning policy for visitor parking will:

- continue to require that there is a demonstrable need for new car parking
- ensure that provision would not adversely affect the special qualities of the National Park
- align to any new approach for designated recreation attractions and hubs.

In this context we need to decide whether overall, policy for visitor parking should be more restrictive than it is currently, less restrictive, or stay the same? We can do this by redefining 'demonstrable need' and whether to consider new and enlarged car parks, or just enlarged car parks.

- Current policy supports new or enlarged car parks so long as there is 'demonstrable need, delivering local benefit'. Local benefit means for example improving amenity for residents, or enhancing the built environment of a settlement.
- A more restrictive policy would allow existing car parks to be expanded, but would not allow any new car parks.
- A less restrictive policy would allow new or enlarged car parks as long as there was a 'demonstrable need, delivering local benefit or wider environmental benefit'. Wider environmental benefit means for example on landscape, visitor management and the safe and efficient operation of the highway.

Option 1

Retain current policy

Current policy supports new or enlarged car parks so long as there is 'demonstrable need, delivering local benefit'. Local benefit means for example improving amenity for residents, or enhancing the built environment of a settlement.

Option 2

More restrictive policy

A more restrictive policy would allow existing car parks to be expanded, but would not allow any new car parks.

Option 3

Less restrictive policy

A less restrictive policy would allow new or enlarged car parks as long as there was a 'demonstrable need, delivering local benefit or wider environmental benefit'. Local benefit means for example improving amenity for residents, or enhancing the built environment of a settlement. Wider environmental benefit means for example on landscape, visitor management and the safe and efficient operation of the highway.

Question 41

- a. Which option do you prefer?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 42

Safeguarding and protecting multi-user trails on former railway routes

The Manifold, Tissington and High Peak Trails, and other long-distance routes, are protected from development that conflicts with their purpose (Current Policy Core Strategy T6). We need to decide whether the Monsal and Longdendale Trails should be similarly protected, or whether to continue a 'safeguarding' policy for future rail use.

It is important to note that the effect of these different approaches is the same (protection from prejudicial development) but the current safeguarding policy implies support for future rail use. It is highly unlikely that we would support future rail use on either of these routes because it is major development and contrary to national park purposes.

Option 1

New policy will continue to safeguard the Monsal and Longdendale Trails for future rail use

Option 2

New policy will protect the Monsal and Longdendale Trails from development that conflicts with their current purpose as recreational routes.

Question 42

- a. What is your preferred option?
- b. What is the reason for your answer?

Issue 43

Road building schemes

New planning policy will continue to:

- support road building when it is needed for new business or housing development, road safety and road maintenance
- resist new roads and major alterations to existing roads for cross-Park travel unless there are exceptional circumstances as set out in Policy DMT1 (shown above).

We need to decide whether new policy should support schemes where the primary purpose is local capacity enhancement. Local schemes would also potentially be major development and therefore could only be supported if there were exceptional circumstances. But these may be different to the exceptional circumstances set out in Policy DMT1 (shown above.)

Question 43

- a. Do you think new policy should support road-building schemes where the primary purpose is local capacity enhancement?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
 - c. What are the exceptional circumstances that might justify this?
-

Issue 44

Overnight parking for campervans

We need to decide whether we should create new policy to support the use of certain car parks for overnight stays in campervans and/or holiday homes. The new policy would not apply to small car parks in remote or environmentally sensitive locations.

Question 44

- a. Do you think we should create new policy to support the use of certain car parks for overnight stays in campervans and/or holiday homes?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 45

Air transport

Current policy does not permit aircraft take-off and landing sites, including for drones. Within the plan period it is possible that commercial drones could be used to deliver goods to the Peak District. We need to decide whether new policy should be changed to permit this.

Drones may fly across the Peak District whether or not we permit take-off and landing. Therefore we may also wish to map no-fly zones to protect environmentally sensitive areas, for example the Natural Zone where there are important nesting sites.

We may wish to allow for a bespoke take-off and landing sites for emergency helicopters to operate from whilst on stand-by.

Options 1

Aircraft take-off and landing sites will not normally be permitted.

Option 2

Aircraft take-off and landing sites will not normally be permitted, with the exception of commercial drones and stand-by sites for emergency helicopters.

Question 45

- a. What is your preferred option?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
 - c. Do you think that the National Park Authority should map 'no-fly' zones for commercial drones to protect the environmentally sensitive areas of the National Park (these are likely to encompass the Natural Zone?
-

Issue 46

Proposed spatial objectives for utilities

That new or upgraded utilities infrastructure does not adversely affect the Peak District's Special Qualities.

Question 46

- a. Do you agree with the proposed local plan spatial objective for utilities?
- b. What is the reason for your answer?

Issue 47

New or expanded reservoirs

We need to decide whether the new local plan should contain a new policy to say that no new reservoirs will be permitted.

Options 1

Continue with our current approach. National policy would determine whether or not a new reservoir should be built. Local plan policies would be used to consider issues such as landscape, cultural heritage, biodiversity and recreation.

Option 2

Write a new policy that says no new reservoirs will be permitted. National policy would still determine whether or not a new reservoir should be built. However a new policy would clearly set out our agreed position and would be used alongside other local plan policies that considered landscape, cultural heritage, biodiversity and recreation.

Question 47

- a. What is your preferred option?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 48

Local plan spatial objectives for minerals and waste

To resist further proposals for the working of: aggregates; limestone and shale for cement manufacture; large scale roofing and building stone; and limestone for industrial and chemical products so that there is a continued gradual reduction.

To allow small-scale building and roofing stone quarries.

To require site restoration that delivers significant long-term landscape enhancement (from current position) and makes a major contribution to nature recovery.

To resist large scale waste management facilities.

To allow small-scale waste facilities that serve local communities.

Question 48

- a. Do you agree with the proposed local plan spatial objectives for minerals and waste?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 49

Limestone quarries - extending beyond the 'end date'

The Peak District National Park Authority's estimated landbank for crushed rock aggregates is 29 years. This means that in the next plan period (to 2045) no new permissions are necessary to satisfy the legal requirements. All quarries have an agreed end date, or an 'imposed' end date of 21st February 2042. Reserves may be exhausted before end dates at some quarries; at others the reserve will exceed the volume that can be extracted in the period available. Therefore we may receive applications for extensions of time. In effect we need to decide whether quarrying should continue at existing sites beyond the current end date.

In making this decision we need to consider that:

- active sites with viable reserves form part of the regional and national landbank that ensures a steady and adequate supply of minerals to meet the country's needs.
- landscape harm would not increase, but would perpetuate, and restoration would be delayed.
- it would constitute major development, which is not permitted in national parks except in exceptional circumstances.

Question 49

- a. Should mineral extraction at existing quarries with remaining reserves be allowed to continue beyond the agreed or imposed end dates?
 - b. Should this apply to specific quarries? If so, which ones?
 - c. What are the exceptional circumstances that would justify extensions of time for mineral extraction (as this would constitute major development in a national park)?
-

Issue 50

Limestone industrial uses

Proposals for quarrying limestone for industrial purposes may be capable of satisfying the strict tests that apply to major development in a national park. However there are permitted reserves in Derbyshire within and outside the National Park. Those outside the National Park are substantial, with long-life permissions. All the reserves use the same geological resource and therefore have the same required 97% purity. There is therefore no requirement in the forthcoming plan period for additional sites inside the National Park to meet the need for limestone for industrial and chemical purposes.

We need to consider whether this principle (that there is no requirement for industrial-use limestone to be supplied from inside the National Park) is set out as a policy in the new local plan or whether instead to seek a memorandum of understanding with neighbouring authorities.

Question 50

- a. Do you agree with the principle that that the future supply of industrial limestone should come from outside the National Park?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 51

The future of the Hope site

When we are more certain about the date of closure, we will work with the landowner, stakeholders and the local community to develop a Supplementary Plan for the future of the site. This will set out which areas are to be restored in accordance with any extant consents, and define brownfield areas that could be redeveloped.

Before then, the new local plan should state the broad policy principles for restoration and redevelopment. These principles must deliver:

- national park purposes for landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage
- national park purposes for the public's enjoyment and understanding
- our duty to foster the economic and social wellbeing local communities.

Question 51

Taking into account national park purposes, what broad policy principles should be set out in the new local plan, to guide restoration and redevelopment at Hope Cement Works?

Issue 52

Stone for building and roofing

Current policy for building stone only applies to small-scale sites where end-use of the product is restricted. Unlike the approach to the provision of construction aggregates, there is currently no agreement with other Mineral Planning Authorities to provide building stone.

We need to decide whether to change our approach, and if so whether any new policy should include defined areas of search.

Option 1

Retain current building stone policy MIN3

We retain current policy MIN3 (see above) so that end use of the stone is restricted for use in buildings and structures within the National Park.

This may make the National Park vulnerable to speculative applications, including for large sites, if a national need can be demonstrated and cannot be met elsewhere. It also means that the supply of stone for local use is more vulnerable, including stone used for the conservation and enhancement of the National Park's special qualities.

Option 2

No separate building stone policy (delete MIN3)

We could choose not to have a separate policy for building stone quarries. This would mean that building stone applications are dealt with in the same way as applications for limestone aggregates and limestone industrial uses. Proposals would not be permitted other than in exceptional circumstances set out in national policy. The major development test for national parks is set out in paragraph 183 and footnote 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of: (i) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy, (ii) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; (iii) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

As with Option 1, Option 2 may make the National Park vulnerable to speculative applications, including for large sites, if a national need can be demonstrated and cannot be met elsewhere. It also means that the supply of stone for local use is more vulnerable, including stone used for the conservation and enhancement of the National Park's special qualities.

Option 3

New building stone policy (re-write MIN3)

A new building stone policy would be similar to current policy MIN3 (see above) but the reference to 'small-scale' and the requirement for within-Park end-use would be removed.

National planning policy and guidance suggests that Mineral Planning Authorities should recognise the small-scale nature and impact of building and roofing stone sites. It does not differentiate between building stone sites permitted to supply the open market and those that serve only a local need. Option 3 would bring our policy in line with the National position.

Option 4

New building stone policy (re-write MIN3) with allocated areas of search

As Option 3, and in addition we would allocate areas of search or preferred areas. The market would dictate if sites/applications are proposed but we could designate areas of search or preferred areas, for example where the landscape impact was less, and the stone most suitable for the National Park's buildings.

Question 52

- a. Which option do you prefer?
 - b. What is the reason for your answer?
-

Issue 53

Ancillary minerals development

We need to consider whether active quarries with ancillary processing facilities should be able to import stone from other quarries inside the National Park for processing.

Question 53

- a. Should sites with ancillary processing in the National Park be able to import stone from other quarries in the National Park for processing?
 - b. Are there other appropriate locations for the small-scale processing of stone won and worked in the National Park?
-

Issue 54

Restoration and aftercare

We need to decide whether new policy on restoration and aftercare should have a stronger focus on nature recovery. Should we require more than the 10% mandatory BNG for Mineral proposals/sites that have potential to achieve greater outcomes?

Question 54

- a. Should new policy on restoration and aftercare have a stronger focus on nature recovery?
- b. Should we require more than the 10% mandatory BNG for Mineral proposals/sites that have potential to achieve greater outcomes?
- c. What is the reason for your answer?

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13. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

1. Purpose

To recommend the appointment of two Independent Persons to fulfil the Authority's arrangements and to support the Monitoring Officer in promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct amongst all Members.

2. Context

2.1 The Authority's arrangements for dealing with complaints against Members and disciplinary action against Statutory Officers and Heads of Service require the appointment of two Independent Persons.

2.2 In relation to Member complaints, an Independent Person will be consulted by the Monitoring Officer and their views will be taken into consideration before a decision is made. The subject Member, against whom an allegation has been made, will also be given the opportunity to consult an Independent Person.

2.3 In relation to disciplinary action against Statutory Officers and Heads of Service where dismissal is proposed, two Independent Persons are required to sit on the Independent Panel which reviews the proposal and prepares the report to the Authority for final decision.

2.4 At the Authority AGM on the 5th July 2024, the term of appointment of the Authority's Independent Persons, Mr Philip Sunderland and Mrs Jean Walker, came to an end.

2.5 The Authority undertook a recruitment exercise during April and May 2024, which generated a good level of interest and applications from high quality candidates were received. On 20th June 2024, the Chair of the Authority and the Monitoring Officer interviewed three shortlisted applicants for the two roles available.

3. Proposals

3.1 That the two highest scoring applicants from the interview process, namely Wendy Amis and Ian Orford, be appointed as the Independent Persons for the Authority for a term of office of four years ending at the Authority AGM in 2028.

4. Recommendation

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.

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011, the Authority must have arrangements in place for the appointment of at least one Independent Person whose views must be sought and taken into consideration before a decision is made on a Member complaint following an investigation, and whose views may be sought in relation to any other Member complaint generally.

Pursuant to Regulation 6 and Schedule 3 of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001, the Authority must appoint at least two Independent Persons to the panel composed for the purposes of advising the Authority on the dismissal of relevant officers.

b. Financial

There will be a call on existing resources for the training and induction of those appointed as Independent Persons. In addition, a fixed allowance of £1,341.00 per annum is payable to each Independent Person together with reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses. These expenses will be covered by existing budgets.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

The Authority Plan includes Objective F (Governance) - to have best practice governance arrangements in place. The Authority also has a statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct for its elected, appointed and co-opted Members. Appointing the Independent Persons supports this and ensures good governance.

d. Risk Management

The Independent Persons will require ongoing support to be able to respond in their consultative capacity; this will be provided by the Monitoring Officer.

e. Net Zero

No adverse implications.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None.

7. Appendices

None.

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Angela Edwards, Monitoring Officer, 18 July 2024.

Responsible Officer, Job Title

Angela Edwards, Monitoring Officer.

14. MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Purpose

For Members to approve the new Member Training and Development Framework and training programme for 2025.

2. Context

- 2.1 Provision of learning and development opportunities for Members assists them to improve their effectiveness and fulfil their role as a Member.
- 2.2 The Governance Review Working Group were tasked with reviewing Member learning and development. As part of their review they have considered the current Member learning and development framework and annual programme and have proposed some improvements.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 The proposed framework is set out in Appendix 1 and the proposed programme is set out in Appendix 2. The new Member induction programme has been increased to cover more topics and until the induction is complete Members will be unable to participate in any Committee. Compulsory training is also included for all Members, which will remain fairly static, with advisory training being flexible.
- 3.2 We will use the business planning workshops in the autumn for staff and Members to propose areas of training. The programme of training will be reported to the Authority in February each year, after the autumn workshops, at the same time as the Authority Plan and the Budget are agreed to ensure they are all aligned.
- 3.3 The proposal also includes changing reference from Member 'learning and development' to 'training and development' and the reference to 'essential' training has been changed to 'compulsory' with other training referred to as 'advisory'.

4. Recommendations

- 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.**

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to section 27(1) of the Localism Act 2011, the Authority must promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members. Having an effective training programme, which includes compulsory induction training on the Code of Conduct and Members' legal responsibilities, will assist in demonstrating compliance with this duty.

In addition, compulsory training for Members sitting on the Planning Committee and the Audit, Budget and Project Risk Monitoring Group will assist Members to make fully informed and defensible decisions that are robust in the event of legal challenge.

b. Financial

Member training and development funding is accommodated in the baseline budget. There are no additional resource implications arising out of the report. Members may claim travel and subsistence for attendance at training and development events and these costs are included in the annual budget.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

The Authority Plan includes Objective F (Governance) - to have best practice governance arrangements in place. Providing training and development opportunities for Members supports them to fulfil their roles effectively and contribute to good governance.

d. Risk Management

The main risk is failure to enable Members to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and behaviours to improve effectiveness and fulfil their role. The Authority has provided development opportunities for Members for many years. The proposals in this report are part of continuous improvement in our approach but proportionate to the resources available.

e. Net Zero

The proposals in this report do not contribute to net zero, however the training programme will include topics as necessary to ensure Members are up to date with net zero issues.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 –Member Training and Development Framework

Appendix 2 –Programme of Training and Development 2025

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Ruth Crowder, Customer and Democratic Support Manager, 18 July 2024.

Responsible Officer, Job Title

Emily Fox, Head of Resources.

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

1. Introduction

The Peak District National Park Authority (“the Authority”) is committed to investing in lifelong learning and development for all its Members. The Authority acknowledges that providing individually tailored training programmes for Members will ensure they have the key skills and knowledge required to fulfil their roles effectively.

Members are required to contribute to the leadership, scrutiny and direction of the Authority in furthering the National Park statutory purposes together with the aims and objectives of the Peak District National Park Management Plan and the Authority Plan. It is of the utmost importance to the Authority that good governance flows through the entire organisation to ensure that delivery of the above purposes, aims and objectives is underpinned with mechanisms for control and management of risk. As Members are key decision-makers, the Authority recognises that effective Member training is essential to achieving this.

2. Aims and Objectives

This Framework seeks to achieve the following:-

- That Member contributions support good governance throughout the Authority;
- That Members make lawful, balanced and informed decisions;
- That Members are motivated, confident and appropriately skilled to fulfil their roles;
- To encourage respectful and effective Member and Officer relationships;
- To provide a consistent approach to member training;
- To provide equality of opportunity for all Members.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Members of the Authority are diverse and they bring a wide variety of knowledge, experience and skills to benefit the Peak District National Park. The Authority is committed to working together with Members to provide the individual learning and development required in line with the roles and responsibilities outlined below.

Members

All Members should:

- Identify their own development needs and proactively seek out development opportunities to meet those needs;
- Attend initial induction training, mandatory training and advisory training in core areas;
- Provide feedback for the training attended to ensure continuous improvement;
- Help other Members to develop through sharing learning and encourage the development of a continuous learning culture.

Officers

Officers of the Authority should:

- Identify key strategic areas that require development of Members;
- Provide training sessions and update briefings to Members in key areas as required;
- Work collaboratively to facilitate training delivery in a range of formats to reflect individual learning needs.

4. Annual Self-Assessment

It is a current requirement of the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs that the performance of all Nationally Appointed Secretary of State Members is measured and that those Members complete a self-assessment.

The Authority recognises the value of this and encourages all Members to undertake this exercise annually to evaluate completed learning and development and identify future needs.

5. Training and Development Programme Arrangements

The Member training and development programme for each year will be considered annually before being finalised and reported for approval to an Authority Meeting each year. In order to agree the programme, Members and Officers will have the opportunity to discuss and propose specific topics to be included on the programme for the following year.

The programme includes mandatory training that Members must complete before participating at committee meetings and also advisory training that Officers/Members consider would be beneficial. The programme is intended to be flexible to allow new/topical issues to be included as needed.

New Member Induction Compulsory		
Topic	Details	Lead Officer
Introduction to the Authority	Meeting with Chief Executive and Chair of the Authority	Chief Executive
Getting started as a Member	Role of Authority, Code of Conduct, duty of care, constitution and information governance	Authority Solicitor
	Introduction to Committee procedures, protocols and processes	Customer and Democratic Support Manager
	Introduction to IT systems and equipment	Customer and Democratic Support Manager and IT Support Officer
Introduction to key Authority policy and strategy	Local Plan, National Park Management Plan, Authority Plan and Landscape Strategy	Planning Policy Manager and Information Manager
Finance and audit introduction	Introduction to Authority finance, budgets and internal and external audit	Finance Manager
Equality and diversity	Undertake ELMs module Equality Act 2010	ELMs
Planning training for Planning Committee Members Any other Members can request this	Introduction to planning policy and planning decision making	Head of Planning and Authority Solicitor
New Member Induction Advisory		
National Parks UK New Members Induction	An annual two day event hosted by different National Park Authorities	Customer and Democratic Support Manager

Note: New Members will not be able to participate at any Committee, including voting, until all new Member compulsory training has been completed. They can view the meetings before the compulsory training is complete.

Compulsory Training and Development			
Topic	Details	Lead Officer	Date Where Known
Planning training for Planning Committee Members. Any other Member can attend	Briefings on updates/changes to planning policy and planning decisions	Head of Planning and Authority Solicitor	20 September and 18 October 2024 19 September and 17 October 2025
Annual Members Tour	A day to see highlights of delivery in the National Park and explore current issues and opportunities	Customer and Democratic Support Manager	20 June 2025
Business Planning Workshops x 2 in autumn	Authority Plan delivery for forthcoming year Budget People	Head of Resources, Finance Manager, People Manager and Strategy and Performance Manager	4 October and 22 November 2024 24 October and 21 November 2025
IT Security Training	Periodic emails sent from provider KnowBe4	IT Manager	Ad hoc when required

Advisory Training and Development			
Topic	Details	Lead Officer	Date Where Known
IT – Modern.gov and iPad	To help Members use the system and equipment	Customer and Democratic Support Manager and IT Manager	6 September 2024
Biodiversity Net Gain	To introduce biodiversity net gain and what it means for planning	Head of Planning and Head of Assets and Enterprise	To be agreed
Article 4 planning	To brief Members on article 4 permitted development rights	Head of Planning	To be agreed
Audit, Budget and Risk Management – compulsory for new group members	Introductory training for the new group	Head of Resources, Finance Manager and Strategy and Performance Manager	Date to be agreed in September 2024
Climate change	What climate change means for the National Park	Senior Strategy and Performance Officer	To be agreed

Short training modules on our online learning platform, ELMs, are available at any time for Members. There are modules on personal development, wellbeing, equity, health and safety, information management, management development and National Park induction. Modules that may be of interest to Members are facilitation skills, local government introduction, meeting skills, questioning techniques, Equality Act and climate change.

In addition to more formal training, Members can request a briefing on any topic of interest or area they would like to know more about at any time. Please contact the relevant Head of Service and they will coordinate the briefing. Previously requested topics have been climate change, local plan, transport, Moors for the Future, managing our assets, land management and nature recovery, cultural heritage, diverse audiences, affordable housing, access and rights of way, communities, finance and volunteering.

15. NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN - PROGRESS REPORT 2023-24

1. Purpose

- 1.1 For Members to the digital Progress Report for the first year of the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2023-28. This report is published online at <https://reports.peakdistrict.gov.uk/npmppprogress/>

2. Context

- 2.1 The Peak District National Park Management Plan 2023-28 was adopted by the Authority at the meeting on the 2nd December 2022 (minute reference 98/22). The Management Plan is structured around four aims:

1. Climate Change
2. Landscape & Nature Recovery
3. Welcoming Place
4. Thriving Communities

Eleven objectives underpin these aims, and 49 cascading actions create a five year partnership work programme, each with specific critical success factors, which as completed, will move the delivery partners closer to achieving the action. This is a digital format report which captures the first year of partnership progress against the National Park Management Plan 23-28 delivery actions. This report will be produced annually and will build to create a central repository for all National Park Management Plan partnership work over the five year plan period.

3. Proposals

3.1 Engagement Process

The process by which partner organisations are engaged with for this NPMP has been refreshed and for the first time all delivery partners were given an opportunity to provide updates for this report with the aim of increasing partner engagement with the plan and reporting process. All responsible partners and delivery partners were asked for updates on relevant actions and about third of partners responded including: Derbyshire Dales District Council, Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Natural England, RSPB, Yorkshire Water and United Utilities.

The process by which partners organisations meet has also been refreshed. Three groups have been identified which will allow for more effective management of projects across the very wide range of stakeholders which are involved in the NPMP:

- Partnership Group - brings together leaders and senior representatives of our most significant strategic partners to provide high level strategic support, focus and guidance on achieving the 5 year aims and the shared 20-year vision for the National Park. This group met in April 24 and have agreed to meet every six months in future going forward.
- Delivery Group – brings together representatives from the delivery partners who are leading or collaborating on delivery of the plan. This group meets quarterly to discuss on the ground delivery and problem solve tactical issues.
- Stakeholder Forum – brings together all partner and stakeholder organisations (circa 70+) that are involved in the NPMP and aims to allow for wider discussions, thought leadership and facilitate opportunities for organisations to collaborate and exchange information/data on projects. This group did not meet in year one however it is expected that this group will come together by the end of the calendar year, most likely in an online capacity.

3.2 Delivery Progress

Each action has a RAG status which provides an indication of progress against the five year partnership work programme, as follows:

- **Red** - Little or no progress
- **Amber** – Some progress
- **Light Green** – On course
- **Dark Green** – Achieved
- **Grey** - Information not available

The introduction page of the Progress Report provides a dashboard overview of the actions which sit under each aim. Progress can easily be viewed and links facilitate deep dives into the specific action updates. However, the overview of progress for each aim is as follows:

Aim	Number of Actions under Aim	On Course	Some Progress	Little or no progress
1. Climate Change	15	8/15 (53%)	4/15 (27%)	3/15 (20%)
2. Landscape & Nature Recovery	13	7/13 (54%)	2/13 (15%)	4/13 (31%)
3. Welcoming Place	12	3/12 (25%)	8/12 (67%)	1/12 (8%)
4. Thriving Communities	9	2/9 (22%)	3/9 (33%)	4/9 (45%)

There have been some excellent examples of partnership working in the first year of this plan and there are many successful projects which are starting to gain traction and / or forging ahead. However, this is a partnership plan and there continues to be significant budgetary and capacity issues in many of the governmental departments, agencies and local authorities as well as the Authority which has an impact on overall progress.

4. Recommendations

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

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to sections 5 and 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the Authority must deliver to the statutory purposes and statutory duty, respectively, when carrying out its work. Monitoring the Authority's progress against the aims and objectives set out in the National Park Management Plan will enable appropriate scrutiny and safeguard legal compliance.

The National Park Management Plan is compliant with the Authority's duties in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. Specific projects undertaken in pursuance of delivery of the aims and objectives will individually identify and address any adverse equality impacts on a case by case basis for consideration prior to approval.

b. Financial

There are no financial implications associated with the proposals outlined in this report. All expenditure associated with the National Park Management Plan is allocated through setting the 2024-25 budget and specific approvals outside of this report.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

This is an annual progress report to monitor partnership delivery against the National Park Management Plan.

d. Risk Management

The greatest risk to the delivery of the NPMP is the engagement and ongoing support from partner organisations, especially the elements of the delivery plan where their contributions are essential. The refreshed engagement process attempts to mitigate this risk. The National Park Authority is the Responsible Partner on 30 out of the 49 Actions and Moors for the Future are responsible for a further four actions. Therefore 15 actions are led by external bodies and all the delivery actions require the cooperation of multiple partners to be successful.

e. Net Zero

This report doesn't directly contribute to meeting net zero. However, Climate Change is one of the four aims of the National Park Management Plan, so it provides Members with further information on what is being delivered to achieve net zero for the National Park.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None.

7. Appendices

None.

Responsible Officer, Job Title and Publication Date

Emily Fox, Head of Resources, 18th July 2024

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

Sarah Rowley, Data, Strategy & Performance Officer, 18th July 2024
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16. PROGRAMME AND RESOURCES PROGRAMMES 2024-25

1. Purpose

- 1.1 For Members to approve the programme themes for the Programmes and Resources Committee for 2024-25.

2. Context

- 2.1 The Programmes and Resources Committee was established on 5 July 2019 where it was agreed that it will have an oversight of 3-4 programmes for the year that help deliver the actions of the Authority (minute reference 30/19). The specific purpose is to monitor the development and implementation of key programmes and projects identified annually by the Authority. This includes approving any decisions in relation to these programmes and projects in accordance with the financial values set out in Standing Orders. Members have approved the themes and work programme for the Programmes and Resources Committee on an annual basis at Authority since July 2019.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 As agreed at the September 2023 Authority meeting, each of the National Park Management Plan aims has been presented at a Programmes and Resources Committee. The covering reports can be accessed using the following links.

- [Climate Change](#)
- [Landscape and Nature Recovery](#)
- [Welcoming Place](#)
- [Thriving Communities](#)

- 3.2 The proposal is to present the four National Park Management Plan aims to Programmes and Resources Committee in the same order as the previous year. This will enable a full year's progress on delivery to each aim to be presented. Therefore, the proposed order of programmes for the Committee for 2024-25 is as follows.

- Climate Change - September 2024
- Landscape and Nature Recovery - December 2024
- Welcoming Place - January 2025
- Thriving communities - April 2025

4. Recommendations

1. **The approved themes of Programmes and Resources align to the National Park Management Plan aims.**
2. **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**

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Pursuant to sections 5 and 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the Authority must deliver to the statutory purposes and statutory duty, respectively, when carrying out its work. Monitoring the Authority's progress against the aims and objectives set out in the National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan will enable appropriate scrutiny and safeguard legal compliance.

The National Park Management Plan and the Authority Plan are compliant with the Authority's duties in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. Specific projects presented to the Programmes and Resources Committee will identify and address any adverse equality impacts on a case by case basis for consideration prior to approval.

b. Financial

There are no financial implications associated with the proposals outlined in this report. All expenditure associated with the four programmes is allocated through setting the 2024-25 budget and specific approvals outside of this report.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

The programme themes are fully aligned to the National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan aims. The reports presented to Programmes and Resources Committee provides Members with further information on delivery to each of the aims.

d. Risk Management

There are no risks associated with the proposals outlined in this report.

e. Net Zero

This report doesn't directly contribute to meeting net zero. However, climate change is one of the four aims of the National Park Management Plan, so it would provide Members with further information on what we are delivering to achieve net zero for the Authority and National Park.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

None.

7. Appendices

None.

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