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**REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE  
1 APRIL 2019 TO 31 MARCH 2020**

**(A) Core Principle**

**Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of Law**

**Sub Principle: A(1) Behaving with Integrity**

**We will:**

- (1) Embed in the way we work our organisational values of:
  - People matter – so we have a supported, empowered, respected workforce;
  - Performance matters – so we do what we say we will do and do it well;
  - Communities matter – so we take a positive approach and work with communities;
  - Every day matters – each day offers an opportunity to do something positive.
- (2) Ensure that standards of conduct and personal behaviour expected of Members and Officers is defined, communicated (internally and externally) and monitored through codes of conduct, protocols and advice.
- (3) Ensure that our decision making processes are open, transparent and free from bias and conflicts of interest.
- (4) Have in place a framework of policies and processes that support good governance in all that we do; we will review and improve these in response to feedback and evaluation of effectiveness.

**What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Codes of conduct for Members and Officers with conduct included in Members and Officer induction;
- Supplementary advice on behaviour of Members and Officers in Committee;
- Protocol on Development Control and Planning Policy in place;
- Registers of Members and Officer interests and guidance with annual review by Monitoring Officer;
- Member and Officer gifts & hospitality registers and guidance with annual review by Monitoring Officer;
- Members Standards included in matters referred to a meeting of the full Authority;
- Nolan Principles are incorporated into Members Code of Conduct;
- Procedures in place to consider code of conduct complaints against Members which are reported to Authority meetings as part of the quarterly performance report;
- Complaints policy in place and individual complaints are monitored and reported to Authority meetings quarterly with lessons learned;

- Declaration of Interests is a standing agenda item at meetings and Members are provided with a pro-forma to record interests as they prepare for the meeting. Minutes of meetings of the Authority and its Committees show that declarations of interest were sought and recorded;
- Due Diligence Panel established with Member Representation at Panel meetings and an Annual Report reviewed by Programmes & Resources Committee;
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Whistleblowing (Confidential Reporting) Policy in place with regular review against CIPFA code with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Authority advised of any allegations and the outcome of investigations. Our Contract Procedure Rules and standard terms and conditions for contracts refer to these policies;
- Information management policies framework (including E-Policy);
- Data Protection Charter with tools to ensure compliance.

## **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- The Authority received an update on how the Authority's ethical standards framework compares with the best practice recommendations included in a recent report from the Committee on Standards in Public Life and made minor changes to reflect the recommendations. Recent compulsory planning training included a reminder of the Nolan principles.
- During 2019/20 there were two Member Code of Conduct Complaints. One alleged that a Member had breached the Code of Conduct by not treating other Authority Members with respect, another claimed that a Member had failed to act impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias, had not been honest or truthful and had treated the complainant unfairly. Following an initial assessment involving one of the Authority's Independent Persons in both cases it was agreed that there was no evidence of a breach of the Code of Conduct.
- A summary of all complaints from members of the public are reported to the Authority in the quarterly performance report. The report includes information of the outcome of the complaint, management action taken and lessons learned from the complaint.
- Completed the Monitoring Officers annual review of Officers' and Members' Register of Interests and the registers of Gifts and Hospitality.
- Following the AGM in July 2019 all Authority Members were asked to review and update their entries in the Register of Interests.
- The annual report of the Due Diligence Panel has been received by Programmes and Resources Committee.
- In the 2018/19 AGS it was recognised that as the Authority worked towards achieving Investors in People (IIP) accreditation there could be issues around developing and embedding the new competency framework and delivering the IIP Action Plan.
- To support the Authority's aim to continuously improve and benchmark its performance against other organisations the Authority chose to be assessed against the latest Investors in People (IIP) standard and following an extensive assessment exercise, the Authority received notification in May 2019 that it had successfully met the IIP standard.
- Based on the recommendations in the Investors in People assessment report an IIP Draft Action Plan was developed during the summer of 2019. The Draft Plan was presented to the Senior Leadership Team on 15th August 2019, which was followed by wider consultation with Heads of Service, Unison and Staff Committee representatives. The consultation period closed on 9th September 2019 and the final IIP Action Plan was published in Quarter 3.
- Following a recommendation from the external IIP Assessor in May 2019, the development of the Authority's new competency framework was put on hold until the Authority's core values have been identified. A staff survey on values was undertaken and achieved a 67% response rate, indicating a very high level of employee engagement. A similar value based survey was subsequently sent to the Authority's Members and volunteers to gather their views.
- Following discussions at meetings of the IIP Delivery Group the Authority's values have been agreed as Care, Enjoy and Pioneer. These values are supported by a definition and a set of behaviours

## **Sub Principle: A(2) Demonstrating a strong commitment to ethical values**

### **We will:**

- (5) Embed our standards of behaviour and values underpinning the way we work in job descriptions, the competency framework and JPAR process.
- (6) Ensure our HR, governance and procurement policies and procedures promote and support our values and standards and use every opportunity to promote our standards of behaviour and the values underpinning the way we work through for example:
  - Organisational development programme;
  - Leadership group development;
  - Corporate Learning and development programme;
  - Communications strategy;
  - Member Learning and Development Programme.
- (7) Communicate to others who work with us our expectations for compliance with ethical standards through:
  - Service level agreements;
  - Contracts and procurement processes;
  - Partnership agreements;
  - Sponsorship agreements.

### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Checking ethical compliance at governing body level though promoting good behaviour and annual Monitoring Officer checks;
- In the Member Survey we ask a question to test awareness of ethical standards and how individual Members contribute to maintaining them. The next Member Survey will take place during 2020/21;
- The Chair of the Authority and the Senior Leadership Team are involved in preparing the Annual Governance Statement and it is considered and approved by the Authority following scrutiny by the External Auditors;
- Employee terms and conditions, competency framework and completed JPAR forms;
- Delivering an ongoing programme of ethical awareness training and including a session on standards and ethics in the annual compulsory planning training delivered to all Members;
- Resources Policies and Procedures;
- Member Learning and Development Plans;
- Joint Performance and Achievement Review Process;
- Corporate training programme and developing the Leadership Group;
- Procurement Strategy and Contract Procedure Rules;
- Conduct included within employee statement of terms and conditions;
- Tender and contract documentation including Standing Orders;
- Due Diligence Panel (DDP), chaired by the Monitoring Officer, looks at issues such as reputation and environmental impact when considering giving and sponsorship offers;
- Registers of in-kind and financial sponsorship and giving under £5,000 reviewed by the DDP every 6 months with offers over £5000 being considered on a case by case basis;
- Register for additional employment over grade H.

### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- In October 2014 The DDP was set up as part of the Authority's Policy on Working with Businesses, Organisations, Individuals and Groups of Individuals on Sponsorship, Philanthropy and Legacies. The 2018/19 annual report of the DDP has been considered by P&R. During 2019/20 the DDP met twice and

considered proposals to work with Breedon and Tarnac. [A(2)1]

- All decisions made below a £5000 threshold are recorded through the finance system where a financial transaction is made and recorded in a register where the transaction is an in-kind transaction or a staff benefit. The registers are reported to the DDP for review every six months. The Panel reviewed the financial and in-kind registers of sponsorships and donations in April and October 2019.
- Adopted a new Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Discretions Policy and Flexible Retirement Policy. [A(2)2]
- Every two years the Authority carries out a survey of Members to get feedback on the following areas:
  - Strategic and External Leadership
  - Governance and Scrutiny
  - Contribution and Development
  - Communication
  - Community Engagement
- The Members' survey was due to take place during 2018 but in light of the Member decision to carry out a review of governance arrangements the next survey will take place during 2020.
- The compulsory annual Member planning training events were held on 27 September 2019 and 25 October 2019. In the 2016 Members Survey 66% (15) of Members responding agreed that they were aware of the Authority's ethical framework and how they contribute to maintaining high ethical standards. 30% (7) Neither agreed nor disagreed and 4% (1) did not know.

### **Sub Principle: A(3) Respecting the rule of law**

#### **We will:**

- (8) Progress achievement of our Corporate Strategy through full use of our powers and in doing so:
  - identify any risks of legal challenge as appropriate;
  - ensure Members and Officers receive legal advice on case work and policy/procedure development as appropriate;
  - ensure appropriate Standing Orders are in place.
- (9) Support the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer roles through protocols, direct access to Members and the Chief Executive and involvement in key decision making processes.
- (10) Ensure both the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer have appropriate resources to fulfil their roles as required by the legislation.
- (11) Respond to any external or internal advice or comments received on the legality of our decisions, policies, processes and procedures including from the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer.
- (12) Respond to any allegations of corruption and misuse of power in accordance with our framework of policies.

#### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Standing Orders are regularly reviewed and updated;
- External scrutiny by external audit, internal audit, Local Government Ombudsman, Defra, HM Revenue and Customs, Department for Work and Pensions, Planning Inspectorate and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and Housing;
- Three statutory roles in place of:
  - Head of Paid Service;
  - Chief Finance Officer (also Member of RMM) (s114 Finance Act 1988);
  - Monitoring Officer (also Member of RMM) (Supported by Deputy Monitoring Officer role) (s5 Local Government and Housing Act 1989);
- Job descriptions and Learning and Development plans are in place for individuals holding the above

- roles;
- Compliance with CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in local government;
- CFO is actively involved in all material business decisions and strategy development;
- Monitoring Officer Protocol is in place;
- Job descriptions for the Chair and Authority Members along with guidance of the role of Authority Members
- Outside Body advice to Members appointed to an outside body;
- RMM procedures to make sure internal consultation takes place on proposals;
- Leadership approach with "voices round the table" making sure the relevant staff are involved e.g. Corporate Property Officer;
- Legal Team Work Programme in place to support the Corporate Strategy;
- Legal risks identified in delegated reports and reports to committees and Resources Management Meeting;
- Delegation to Officers indicates where delegated decisions need sign off from Legal Services;
- VfM Review on Legal Services;
- Arrangements in place to report to relevant bodies when issues arise e.g. Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Fraud and Corruption, Data Protection;
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Confidential Reporting policies in place and are regularly reviewed against the CIPFA code of practice on managing the risk of fraud and corruption;
- Examples of cases where policy has been tested;
- Standards Framework in place including the Authority's arrangements for considering complaints against Members.

#### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- Following implementation of the GDPR in May 2018 all staff have completed the Data Protection Awareness course on ELMS and the revised e-Policy survey based on our Information Management Policies Framework. All associated data protection policies have been embedded throughout the Authority and provision of advice and security incidents – both involving personal data and IT are logged. The Authority received substantial reassurance from the GDPR Internal Audit report in January 2019; weaknesses identified were that the Authority's CCTV policy had not been updated since 2015 and that the Authority did not appear to have a procedure in place to monitor adherence to the retention policy. Following the recruitment of a dedicated Facilities Manager in 2019 the policy has now been revised in line with the GDPR and Data Protection Act. Work is ongoing with our information asset register software to enable the Authority to monitor and manage data in relation to specified retention policies. The consolidation work is expected to be completed by end of April 2020 and the following financial year end should provide a good baseline for reporting and demonstrating the effectiveness of the applied retention policies.
- The Authority has a duty to keep its constitutional documents up to date. The Authority's Standing Orders and supporting documents are regularly reviewed and where appropriate updated to reflect organisational needs, best practice and changes to legislation.
- Received a positive unqualified opinion on the statement of accounts and a satisfactory conclusion on value for money from our External Auditors,
- Agreed the Internal Audit Plan for 2019/20 to include reports on Performance Management, Business Continuity, Main Accounting, Planning, Contract Management, Income Generation, and an Information Security Compliance check. The Authority responded to seven audit reports four of which were given a high level of assurance and three a substantial level of assurance. Managers have responded to 7 Priority 3 actions and 1 Priority 2 action.
- The 2019/20 annual assurance report from the Internal Auditor states: 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. 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. The opinion is however qualified, in light of the current coronavirus pandemic and the impact of this on the Authority. The opinion is based on internal audit work undertaken, and completed, prior to emergency measures being implemented as a result of the pandemic. These measures have resulted in a significant level of strain being placed on normal procedures and control arrangements. The level of impact is also changing as the situation develops. It is therefore not possible to quantify the additional risk arising from the current short term measures or the overall impact on the framework of governance, risk management and control.

- It has previously been decided that, in reviewing our performance against our Code of Corporate Governance, any area where the Authority has received a limited level (or no level) of assurance from the Internal Auditors will be identified in our Annual Governance Statement as an issue affecting effectiveness. During 2019/20 none of the internal audit reports fell into this category.
- Responded to complaints investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) reporting quarterly to members. For 2019/20: 1 decision has been received with evidence of maladministration due to the Authority having a policy of not accepting bookings and payments by phone for guided walks. The Authority agreed to apologise, offer 4 free places on a guided walk of their choice, complete an Equality Impact Assessment and amend our policy to create an exception procedure. There are 2 development management matters outstanding however due to the restrictions put in place due to COVID-19 the Ombudsman has currently suspended all investigations until further notice however the Authority is still dealing with complaints under the 2 stage complaints process and reporting quarterly.
- The Authority's arrangements for handling Member Code of Conduct complaints are in place and published Two complaints were received during 2019/20.
- In the 2018/19 AGS it was recognised that, although the recommendations arising from the Glover Review were unlikely to be published until the second half of 2019/20, depending upon the recommendations, there may be unexpected or unanticipated demands as Defra implement recommendations or consult on legislative changes needed to implement the findings. It was noted that if the final reports made reference to funding this may impact on priorities and preparations for developing the 2020/21 Budget.
- The Landscapes Review: Final Report to Government was published in September 2019 calling on national landscapes to work together to be happier, healthier, greener, more beautiful and open to everyone. We feel this sense of mission and share the ambitions particularly keenly in the Peak District. Our Corporate Strategy 2019-2024, and the National Park Management Plan 2018-23 are both largely aligned to these aspirations.
- We are working through National Parks England to take a lead in responding to these aspiration as a network, identifying four areas where we will collectively work together: being leaders in nature recovery; being national parks for everyone, shaping the future of farming and leading on the climate emergency. While we await the Government's formal response, we know they support the aims and outcomes sets out. What is unknown is the extent to which the proposed new ways of working will affect the Authority's operating model and our way of working within, and across, the protected landscapes network. We are, and will continue to, work with the government to ensure we have the necessary tools, skills, data and resources to support these outcomes. There may be new demands, new ways of working or different governance models recommended by Government, which if fundamentally different is likely to require consultation and legislation,
- The 2018/19 AGS acknowledged that uncertainty around the funding settlement from Defra following the end of the four year settlement. Through the auspices of National Parks England we have been working collectively across the National Parks network to inform Government and Defra of the importance of certainty and a strong settlement. This informing work continues. Government Departments were given a single year settlement in the Spending Review of September 2019
- Defra was given a real terms increase of 3.3%, over and above inflation for 2020-21. In September 2019 the government's Landscape Review was also published and stated that "at the very least we want to see existing budgets for National Parks secured in real terms and sustained for at least a further five year period, so they can plan ahead with confidence". On the basis of these messages we have set a budget on the assumption that the National Park Grant is to be inflation protected for the next Spending Review period, with an increase of 2% per annum assumed. Should this scenario not arise, we have identified up to £218k of saving ensure we have a balanced budget for 2020-21. Following setting the budget we received our settlement for 20/21 which was at the same level of funding as that received in 19/20 and so does not take into account inflationary pressures on our budget and means that we have to call on £152k of baseline budget reductions identified at the February Authority to achieve a balanced budget for 20/21.

**(B) Core Principle**  
**Making sure of openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement**

**Sub Principle: B(1) Openness**

**We will:**

- (1) Support our commitment to a culture of openness and transparency through:
  - Fulfilling our obligations under the Freedom of Information/Environmental Information legislation;
  - Publicising decisions and information through our website and through web broadcasting of our committees;
  - Be open and transparent in all our decision making except, where justified, the exemptions under Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act apply.
- (2) Document evidence for decisions by recording criteria, rationale and data relied upon - using processes proportionate to the impact and risk of the decisions being made.

**What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Annual Report and Business Plan published;
- Annual Monitoring Report on Local Plan;
- Monthly and Annual Head of Law Appeal Reports to Planning Committee;
- Creation of data protection policies, data protection staff training plan and rollout with appropriate tools and monitoring, robust processes where personal/sensitive data is created or used as part of wider operations;
- Use of robust data processor agreements where 3<sup>rd</sup> parties hold or process personal/sensitive data on the Authority's behalf;
- Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme and disclosure log;
- Appointment of Senior Information Risk Owner, Lead Information Asset Owner and departmental Information Asset Owners;
- Corporate Strategy 2019-2024;
- Financial information such as outturns, accounts and external audit reports published on our website;
- Local Government Transparency Code 2015 - information is published on the website includes spending over £250, credit card spending, tenders, income from parking, organisation structures and senior salaries, trade union facility time, pay multiples, land and property assets;
- Publish information under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duties) and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 to publish workforce profile information by "protected characteristics" "Gender, age, ethnicity, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation and pay grade);
- Publishing prescribed information about our gender pay gap results in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017;
- Standing Orders make sure that exempt items are kept to a minimum and where possible an open report is provided to summarise the decision to be made and allow public participation;
- Documents relating to meetings of the Authority and its Committees along with Key governance documents, such as Standing Orders are published on the Authority website;
- Provisions in place allowing reporting on meetings and providing an audio webcast of meetings of the Authority and its Committees;
- Publish work programmes for the Authority and its Committees;
- Committee Reports and Minutes;
- Resources Management Meeting business cases and minutes;
- Standing Orders (Delegation to Committees, Delegation to Officers, Financial Procedure Rules and Contract Procedure Rules);
- Corporate Report Templates that include headings for key areas that must be taken into account in writing reports such as Financial, HR and Legal advice;
- Service protocols on recording decisions/file notes e.g. site visit file notes, HR forms and decisions, tender book;
- Planning and other reports for recording delegated decisions.

**Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- Corporate Strategy 2019-24 in place. [B(1)3]
- The Authority has continued to provide a live audio webcast and listen again facility on the internet for all meetings of the Authority and its Committees. The recordings are retained and published for three years after the date of the meeting.

## **Sub Principle: B(2) Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders**

### **We will:**

- (3) Ensure the National Park Management Plan is a partnership Plan for the place with partners and stakeholders owning the delivery plan for the place.
- (4) Engage with constituent and surrounding councils and stakeholders through a programme of Chief Executive and Member meetings.
- (5) Engage with bodies representative of different voices inside and outside of the National Park.
- (6) Maximise our partnership approach to achieving more for the place through:
  - Strategic National Park Management Partnership Plan process and delivery
  - Operational delivery partnerships;
  - National NPA partnerships;
  - Sponsorship relationships;
  - Shared commissioning of evidence for Local Plans across the wider Peak District.
- (7) Review our relationship management framework.
- (8) Ensure appropriate due diligence, programme management and contractual processes are in place to support partnerships.
- (9) Implement a programme of surveys and research so we can connect more to people and respond to feedback from people who use the National Park and our services.
- (10) Consult and engage communities and stakeholders on the development of our policies and strategies.
- (11) Consult and engage with people on specific actions that might affect them.

### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- National Park Management Plan Delivery Plan;
- National Park Management Plan Advisory group and annual report;
- Programme of meetings between Chief Executive and other councils (both constituent authorities councils and the wider peak district authorities) sometimes including the Chair of the Authority and Leaders;
- Programme of meetings between Chief Executive and other key stakeholders;
- Local Access Forum;
- Annual Parishes Day and regular meetings with the Peak Park Parishes Forum (PPPF);
- Participation in meetings of combined authorities;
- Engagement with Defra and other Government departments;
- LEP Membership;
- Appointments to Outside Bodies and supporting guidance;
- National Park Authority draft Communication and Marketing Strategy;
- Partnership working when preparing bids and delivering externally funded projects;

- Examples of Partnerships such as Moors for the Future (Moorlife 2020) and SW Peak Partnership and Service Level Agreements e.g. Derbyshire County Council for payroll services;
- A range of studies delivered helping to shape Local Plan policies;
- Partnership Policy and Protocol;
- Due Diligence Panel and registers

### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- Approved the eighth Operational Plan from the Moors for the Future Partnership. The plan covered the commitments in the financial year 2020/21 and included a look forward, both at commitments for the following year (2021/22) and the expectations of business development during and beyond this time frame. [B(2)4]
- Approved an updated Partnerships Policy. The update makes the policy more effective in supporting the operations of the Authority's appointed representative by minimising the risks to the Authority present in partnership working. [B(2)5]
- Provided Members with monitoring information for the end of the first full year of the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23. [B(2)6]
- Made a bid to the Visit England Discover England Fund round 5 to further develop the English National Parks Experience Collection. [B(2)7]
- Facilitated the winding up of National Parks UK Limited, a company of which the Authority is a member and appoints a Director. [B(2)8]
- With support from the Authority, the Local Access Forum has continued to engage with our constituent Authorities to see how the Forum and the Authorities can work together on issues such as Green Lanes, reviewing Rights of Way Improvement Plans and other rights of way and access issues.
- Continued with programme of meetings between constituent councils and the Chief Executive and Chair.
- The Authority has observer status at any meetings of Derbyshire combined authorities' and has Officer and Member involvement in Sheffield City Region meetings.
- Business Peak District, Nature Peak District and Visit Peak District continue to work together as Enterprise Peak District to produce a package of interventions to attract investment from local Enterprise Partnerships
- Continued our programme of working with local authorities within and on the edges of the National Park at a strategic and operational level to help deepen understanding. This has includes a memorandum of understanding with Derbyshire authorities on the duty to cooperate in relation to planning.
- In the 2018/19 AGS it was noted that although the 2018-2023 National Park Management Plan had been approved and adopted by partners there were still risks around the delivery of certain elements due to limited engagement these include Climate Control and Events Management.
- This year has seen good partnership delivery of the National Park Management Plan across a number of areas. This is most notably on maintaining our focus on encouraging enjoyment with understanding. There is a new system for recording and advertising public events which provides a clear opportunity for event organisers to make their events as successful and compatible with the place as possible. Plus a promotional drive to breathe new life into the countryside code via the #PeakDistrictProud initiative. We are in the process of strengthening our climate change actions where there are emerging additional delivery actions on transport and land management.

### **Sub Principle: B(3) Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively**

#### **We will:**

- (12) Underpin our Corporate Strategy objective of enabling everyone to connect with the National Park with a sound evidence base including:
- Feedback from customers using our services;

- Research on best ways to engage with target audiences;
  - Formal consultation processes;
  - Feedback from bodies representative of different voices inside and outside of the National Park.
- (13) Update our communications and marketing strategy to support our new outreach programme and make sure it explains how we will feedback on 'you said' - 'we did'.
- (14) Develop an integrated approach to engaging with communities through our Policy and Communities service.
- (15) Continue to support Members in their community role.
- (16) Ensure our complaints procedures and reporting arrangements are accessible and transparent and monitor our response to complaints received to ensure the Authority learns from that feedback.
- (17) Ensure our long term National Park Management Plan (supported by the Local Plan) gives direction to short term decision making processes so that our aspirations for the condition of the special qualities of the National Park into the future can be achieved.

### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Surveys (Residents, Visitors, Bus Users, Planning, Customer feedback and the Service User Survey (Includes Customer and Business Support, learning and discovery, visitor centres, cycle hire, conservation volunteers and ranger guided walks);
- Use of Park Life, press releases, website and social media to promote current consultations/issue/campaigns;
- Consultation page on Authority Website listing active consultation and how to participate;
- Summary of consultation responses in Committee reports;
- Public Participation at meetings;
- User Groups (e.g. Stanage Forum' Local Access Forum);
- Work with lobbying partners such as CPRE/Friends of the Peak District, National Parks UK, Campaign for National Parks;
- Learning and development programme;
- Outside bodies appointments;
- Evidence of community and stakeholder meetings;
- Collect data for our corporate indicator); Peak District National Park connection is increased by 20%, Peak District National Park Authority awareness is increased by 30%, Peak District National Park audience reach that is 30% closer to demographics of those within an hour's travel time of the National Park
- Role descriptions in place for Chair, Members and Member Representative Roles;
- Consultation Area of Website;
- Officer Delegation for Planning – Parish Objection brings an application to Committee;
- Statutory duty to consult (e.g Traffic Regulation Orders);
- Responding to consultation from Government and partners;
- Evidenced in Committee reports which includes sustainability heading in the report template;
- National Park Management Plan;
- Communicating in Plain English;

### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- The P&R Committee received information on the works undertaken during September 2019 on the Wetton Hills route by Staffordshire County Council, as the Highway Authority, Members are asked to consider whether these have an effect on the decision made in September 2018 to proceed to make a permanent traffic regulation order (TRO) on the Wetton Hills route. [B(3)9]
- We undertook a residents survey in 2019. The results indicate that the Peak District National Park is perceived to be a good place to live by the majority of residents, and generally positive feedback about the Authority was been received.

**(C) Core Principle**

**Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.**

**Sub Principle: C(1) Defining Outcomes****We will:**

- (1) Clearly communicate the vision and outcomes for the National Park through the National Park Management Plan supported by the Local Plan and the Landscape Strategy and Action Plan providing the strategic direction for the Authority's Corporate Strategy.
- (2) Clearly communicate our five year Corporate Strategy, our medium term financial plan and our one year Performance and Business plan actions and priorities to the public, stakeholders and partners.
- (3) Ensure our five year Corporate Strategy and medium term financial planning processes are aligned and reviewed annually and quarterly in year.
- (4) Put arrangements in place to implement our risk policy and strategy at all levels in the Authority so that informed decisions can be made on what level of risk to accept and what mitigating action needs to be in place to reduce or remove the risk to achieving outcomes.
- (5) Communicate our priorities internally and externally through the three year corporate strategy and Annual Performance/Business Plan.
- (6) Be clear about standards of service to be provided within resources available.

**What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Corporate Strategy and Medium term (3-5 years) strategic and financial planning strategy;
- National Park Management Plan (NPMP), National Park Strategies and Action Plans and Annual Monitoring Report supported by National Park Management Plan Advisory Group – includes performance against targets;
- Local Plan (Core Strategy and Development Management Policies) and supporting documents including: Annual Monitoring Reports, Local Development Scheme, Statement of Community Involvement and Supplementary Planning Guidance;
- Annual Performance and Business Plan includes performance against targets;
- Partnership Policy and Protocol and Review;
- Participation in local area forums and local partnerships eg Local Nature Partnership;
- Service Plans including risk registers;
- People and Park connected strategy and action plan;
- Sustainability heading included in report templates;
- Environmental Management Policy and Carbon Management Plan of Action with progress reports;
- Risk Management Policy and Strategy;
- Corporate Risk Register and monitoring;
- Risk based Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan;
- Information Technology Disaster Recovery Plan;
- Business Continuity Plan including Crisis Management Procedures;
- Health and Safety Policy, support and annual report to Leadership Team and Local Joint Committee
- Insurance Policies;
- Building security systems;
- Annual Performance and Business Plan;

- Annual Statement of Accounts.

### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- The Authority has adopted the Development Management Policies and Policies Map to become part 2 of the adopted Local Plan for the National Park replacing the 2001 saved Local Plan policies in their entirety and noted the current status of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) confirming that the 2003 Affordable Housing SPD will be replaced by the DM Policies DPD<sup>[C(1)10]</sup>
- The Authority also amended the standard S106 agreement for locally needed affordable homes to allow for the insertion of a “Mortgagee in Possession” clause, on terms to be agreed by the Head of Law in consultation with the Director of Conservation and Planning.
- Agreed the arrangements for the National Park Authority to sign up to and agree Statements of Common Ground with constituent authorities and other relevant bodies as part of the duty to cooperate in producing Local Plans. <sup>[C(1)11]</sup>
- Considered the proposed strategic interventions that will be undertaken during the second year (2020/21) of our five-year Corporate Strategy (2019-24). <sup>[C(1)12]</sup>
- Adopted a Local Validation Checklist for Planning Applications. <sup>[C(1)13]</sup>
- Approved a lawful development certificate checklist. <sup>[C(1)14]</sup>

### **Sub Principle: C(2) Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits**

#### **We will:**

- (7) Ensure our strategic and financial planning delivers:
- Our purposes and socio economic duty balancing environmental, social and economic impact;
  - Consideration of conflicting interests informed by our consultation processes;
  - Long term financial sustainability of the Authority through diversifying our sources of funding, supported by a sustainable capital programme;
  - An approximate forecast for short term service and financial decision making.
- (8) Implement our Equalities Policy to ensure fair access to services.

#### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Capital Programme;
- Capital Investment Strategy;
- Asset Management Plan;
- Sustainability heading included in report templates;
- Record of decision making and supporting materials;
- Consultation embodied in reports to Committee and delegated decisions;
- Following statutory guidance;
- Customer Service Standards;
- Equalities Impact Assessment of our plans eg Development Management Policies document;
- Performance indicators and success measures for National Park Management Plan, Corporate Strategy and service actions;
- Customer Satisfaction Surveys;
- Complaints procedure and quarterly/annual reports;
- Service and corporate improvement plans.

## **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- Approved delegation to the Chief Executive to determine whether an appropriate assessment is required under regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and where required carry out the assessment. .<sup>[C(2)15]</sup>
- Considered a record of housing delivery and policy monitoring in the National Park in 2018/19 and over the full plan period from 2006 – 2019. .<sup>[C(2)16]</sup>
- Approved the appointment of contractors to carry out work on the trails structures, as identified by specialist surveyors in the Trails Structures Survey 2015. .<sup>[C(2)17]</sup>
- Received an update on progress made developing the new Corporate Property Asset Management Plan. .<sup>[C(2)18]</sup>
- Established a Programmes and Resources Committee -Climate Change Member Task Group, agreed the Group's Draft Terms of Reference and appointed Members to the Group. .<sup>[C(2)19]</sup>
- The Authority facilitated a Working Towards a Zero Carbon National Park Climate Change Summit as part of the National Park Authority's and partners response to the threat of climate change. The Summit sought to identify potential partnership actions which could make a significant impact on the emission of greenhouse gases in the Peak District National Park. Authority Members received an account of the purpose, organisation and outcome of the Summit along with proposals to update of the National Park Management Plan delivery plan to reflect the agreed actions.
- Progress on the agreed plan will be reported back to Members as part of the National Park Management Plan Annual Monitoring Report presented to the May 2020 Authority Meeting. .<sup>[C(2)21]</sup>
- Considered a report back on the work of the National Park England's Health and Wellbeing strategic steering group setting out how the Authority could support the future work programme and contribute to the three themes of ; prevent, restore, excel. .<sup>[C(2)22]</sup>
- Approved the restoration of a field barn on the Warslow Moors Estate at Knowle House Farm, Reapsmoor. .<sup>[C(2)23]</sup>
- Completed a Countryside Stewardship agreement with Natural England and accepted an offer of capital grant aid of over £200,000. .<sup>[C(2)24]</sup>
- Updated Members on the operation of the Hope Valley Explorer in 2019 and the plans for 2020 and agreed an approach of a strengthening partnership model as we develop the service over the next two years. .<sup>[C(2)25]</sup>
- Approved a bid by the Moors for the Future Partnership following an invitation to apply for Investment Readiness funding from Esmee Fairburn Foundation, Defra and the Environment Agency. .<sup>[C(2)26]</sup>
- The Authority has contributed to and endorsed the National Parks England Climate Change Position Statement. .<sup>[C(2)27]</sup>
- Accepted a grant offer from the RDPE Growth Programme in relation to restoration of the Millers Dale Station goods shed. .<sup>[C(2)28]</sup>
- Applied for external funding of up to £90,000 of Defra funding for the delivery of Environmental Land Management System (ELMS) Tests and Trials. .<sup>[C(2)29]</sup>
- During 2019/20 the Resources Management Meeting considered a number of climate change issues including:
  - Local Plan Core Strategy Review (focus on climate change policies)
  - Carbon Management Plan 2
  - Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment
  - Carbon Targets
  - Electric Vehicle Charging
  - Warslow Carbon Project
  - Sustainable Farming

### **(D) Core Principle**

**Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.**

### **Sub Principle: D(1) Determining interventions**

## We will:

- (1) Deliver our five year Corporate Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan through:
  - Using research and data to inform recommendations on interventions to achieve our strategy;
  - Seeking and responding to feedback from customers and stakeholders on our services;
  - Agreeing annual priority actions that are key interventions for the forthcoming year;
  - Funded service plan actions flowing from priority interventions agreed;
  - Business case options appraisals.
- (2) Work with partners in delivering the NPMP priority ambitions for the special qualities of the National Park.
- (3) Work with communities through neighbourhood planning and other community planning processes and achieve our ambitions for special qualities.

## What evidence/assurance is in place?

- Agenda Planning Meetings and Committee work programmes;
- Contract Procedure Rules and Procurement Strategy;
- Effective procurement processes along with examples of smarter procurement and collaboration;
- Programme of value for money reviews;
- National Park benchmarking;
- External Audit value for money conclusion;
- Annual service and budgeting planning process identifying efficiency savings and different ways of doing things;
- Disposal Guidance;
- Resource Management Team business case process;
- Financial Strategy;
- Consultation results summarised in reports to decision makers;
- Public Participation Scheme for all meetings of the Authority and its Committees.

## Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness

- Planning Committee receives reports on planning service performance including
  - The speed of determining applications for major development;
  - The quality of decisions made by the authority on applications for major development;
  - The speed of determining applications for non-major development;
  - The quality of decisions made by the authority on applications for non-major development. . [D(1)30] [D(1)31]
- Carried out the annual review of the minerals & legal finance plan. [D(1)32]
- Designated that part of Hayfield parish that is within the Peak District National Park Authority boundary as a neighbourhood area under Schedule 9 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. [D(1)33] [D(1)34]
- Planning Committee adopted the Peak District National Park Transport Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) as part of the Authority's suite of Development Management Documents. [D(1)35]
- Work Programmes published for meetings of the Authority and its Committees.
- Continued to facilitate a large number of speakers at Authority and Committee meetings through our Public Participation Scheme.

## **Sub Principle: D(2) Planning Interventions**

### **We will:**

- (1) Implement our strategic and financial planning cycle for development, review and monitoring of:
  - National Park Management Plan;
  - Local Plan;
  - Corporate Strategy;
  - Medium Term Financial Plan;
  - Performance and Business Plan;
  - Service Plans.
- (2) Engage with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered through:
  - NPMP partnership;
  - Planning policy consultation;
  - Landscape scale partnerships;
  - Operational partnerships;
  - Regular communication with bodies representative of the different 'voices' inside and outside of the National Park.
- (3) Ensure our risk management policy, strategy and processes cover risk management for partnerships.
- (4) Make sure that our Procurement Strategy and Contract Procedure Rules are robust but provide additional flexibility when needed.
- (5) Implement a performance management system with:
  - identified measures of success/indicators and targets which cascade into service plans and individual objectives;
  - quarterly monitoring and annual repointing of performance;
  - identified leads for data owners and data collectors with appropriate checks on quality of information.
- (6) Support achievement of our Medium Term Financial Plan for revenue and capital expenditure with annual financial planning processes culminating in an Annual Budget being recommended to the Authority in March.

### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Service Plans to include plans and timescales for reviewing key plans and policies;
- A work programme is maintained and published for meetings of the Authority and its Committees;
- Communications and Marketing Strategy;
- Media protocol;
- Evidence base for National Park Management Plan, Strategies, Local Plan;
- Residents and Service User Surveys;
- Constituent Council and Parish Council liaison meetings;
- National Park Management Plan focus and targets agreed with partners and stakeholders. Progress monitored by Advisory Group with an independent chair;
- Partnership Policy and Protocols;
- Risk Management Policy and Strategy with Corporate Risk Register and Service level Risk Registers
- Procurement Strategy and Contract Procedure Rules;
- Performance Management Framework including monitoring and reporting on performance quarterly and year end;
- NPMP, Local Plan, Corporate, National Park Family and service indicators;
- Annual Performance and Business Plan;

- Grant Memorandum and Vision Statement agreed with Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs);
- Medium Term (3-4 years) Strategic and Financial Planning Strategy;
- Corporate Strategy;
- Defra 8 Point Plan for National Parks.

### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- Planning Committee considered a summary of the work carried out by the Monitoring & Enforcement Team over the year April 2018 – March 2019. The Committee also received quarterly performance reports setting out details of breaches that had been resolved in that quarter. The majority of breaches of planning control were resolved voluntarily or through negotiation with the landowner (or other relevant persons) without resorting to formal enforcement action. [D(2)36] [D(2)37] [D(2)38] [D(2)39]
- Approved the work plan for the Programmes and Resources Committee for 2019-2020. [D(2)40]
- Authorised the service of a Tree Replacement Notice on land at Froggatt Edge, Derbyshire. [D(2)43]
- The Strategic Leadership Team and Heads of Service have continued to meet monthly to discuss performance and identify ways of working together to address issues whether performance targets may be off target.
- 

### **Sub Principle: D(3) Optimising achievement of intended outcomes**

#### **We will:**

- (7) Implement our Medium Term Financial Plan by:
  - ;
  - Implementing a programme of reducing input costs to those areas given strategic certainty;
  - Managing the three year capital programme;
  - Being clear on the full cost of operations;
  - Increasing our income from giving;
  - Achieving our commercial programme income targets;
  - Developing/establishing sponsorship relations;
  - Securing external funding for major programme and partnership delivery;
  - Make sure the budgeting process is all inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operation over the medium and longer term.
- (8) Make sure that the Medium Term Financial Strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage.
- (9) Maximise the social value/return to the public on every pound spent through:
  - Delivering eco system services;
  - Procuring services and goods well;
  - Reducing the Authority's carbon footprint;
  - Planning gain.

#### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Feedback surveys and exit/decommissioning strategies with evidence of changes as a result;
- Budgeting guidance and protocols;

- Member Budget Workshops;
- Quarterly Budget Monitoring meetings with Members;
- Quarterly budget monitoring report considered by officer performance monitoring group;
- Medium Term (3-5 years) Strategic and Financial Planning Strategy;
- National Park Purposes;
- Corporate Strategy;
- Social Value in contracts above the EU threshold;
- Contract Procedure Rules;
- Section 106 Register of Legal Agreements.

### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- The Programme and Resources Committee received an operational and financial update on the Peak District National Park Foundation. Regular reports on performance of the Foundation will be included in the quarterly performance targets considered at meetings of the Authority. [D(3)44]
- Members continued to be involved in preparing the 2020/21 Budget through Strategic Financial Workshops held in October and November 2019.
- The 2017/18 AGS identified a remaining risk/concern in relation to meeting the corporate objective of diversifying and growing income. Specifically there remained a risk to the scale and speed of diversification and growth. There was a need for the Strategic Commercial and Outreach Development Plan to set out the process, activities, skills and investment required to deliver the Corporate Strategy plus the potential returns (scale and timeframe) from the implementation of the Plan.
- In the 2018/19 it was recognised that there still remained issues around the culture of the Authority and its ability to deliver commercial ambitions.
- While the issue remains solid progress has been made on a number of fronts. Work has progressed with Heads of Service to encourage more significant partnership grant applications with success in particular for Moors for the Future; Millers Dale goods shed and Discover England. New avenues of strategic funding are being actively explored with PDNPA as a partner via D2N2; LEP; Universities bordering The Peak District and major infrastructure projects e.g. A628 upgrade.
- Our charitable foundation is now established and raising income through visitor giving, donations and sponsorship. This is helping to change mindsets amongst volunteers, employees and Members but there remains some way to go. Finally relationships with a selection of major industries are being nurtured to develop a collective investment fund which will sustain delivery of nature and carbon outcomes at a landscape scale.
- Members approved the Authority's Revenue Budget for 2020/21 on the 14th February 2020 and the Budget report included a forward look in terms of the Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). When the report was approved no one could have foreseen the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and at an appropriate time it will be necessary to review the impact on the planned Strategic Outcomes for 2019/24 and the assumptions in the Authority's MTFP.

### **(E) Core Principle**

**Developing the Authority's capacity including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it**

#### **Sub Principle: E(1) Developing the Authority's capacity**

##### **We will:**

- (1) Maximise the impact of our three roles of regulatory, influencing and doing by:
  - Providing value for money in achieving our outputs and outcomes through service and performance reviews. This will include benchmarking and looking for opportunities for business process improvement, smarter procurement and reduction in input costs;
  - implementation of our Information Management Strategy and Asset Management Plan;

- working with others to seek opportunities to work more effectively together, understanding the relationship between what we do and what others do to avoid duplication of effort.
- (2) Use performance data and trend analysis to guide decision making.
- (3) Use research data and benchmarking information in Service Planning.
- (4) Ensure the effective operation of partnerships to deliver agreed outcome and the methodology used to assess outcomes and effectiveness.
- (5) Empower and develop staff to maximise their potential to achieve for the Place and the Authority through:
- Agreeing organisational capabilities and design principles and putting in place an organisation structure within the three directorates;
  - Developing and implementing a workforce plan;
  - Developing and implementing an organisational development programme.

### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Regular reviews of activities, outputs and planned outcomes;
- Member Scrutiny Process and scrutiny reports;
- Programme of Value for money reviews;
- Internal Audit Programme;
- Member Representatives involved in reviewing activities;
- Evidence of performance data and trend analysis informing decision making;
- Evidence of research data and benchmarking information being used to inform service planning;
- Monitoring of effective operation of partnerships to deliver agreed outcome and the methodology used to assess outcomes and effectiveness;
- Reports from the National Park Management Plan Advisory Group;
- Authority Members appointed to Outside Bodies;
- Learning and Development Policy for Staff;
- Annual identification of corporate needs and reports to the Leadership Team;
- Staff annual learning and development and induction programmes;
- Individual Staff Learning and Development Plans;
- Retainment of Investors in People Accreditation.

### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- A two year pay award was agreed at national level in April 2018. The first stage of the pay award did not necessitate any modifications to our pay scales, and the percentage increases were implemented from April 2018. The second stage of the pay award (effective from April 2019) was more complex as it involved a reconfiguration and renumbering of the National Pay Spine. [E(1)<sup>45</sup>]
- To implement the pay award in April 2019 we had to decide how to match the new National Pay Spine to our locally determined pay grade structure. RMM considered costs and forecasts determined by pay modelling on the two methods available for implementation of the national pay award and selecting the preferred model.
- Following a request from a Member the Programmes and Resources Committee has established a Micro Scrutiny Panel to review the process used to progress the disposal of 7 minor properties. The report of the Panel will be reported back to the Committee in May 2020. [E(1)<sup>46</sup>]
- Approved a new Corporate Property Asset Management Plan (2020-2024) [E(1)<sup>47</sup>]
- The responses from the staff survey were analysed with an Officer Working Group set up to develop and agree an action plan. Performance against the action plan is being monitored.

## **Sub Principle: E(2) Developing the capability of the Authority's leadership and other individuals**

### **We will:**

- (6) Develop the capability of the membership through:
  - Ensuring our committee structure and decision making processes are efficient and effective with the different roles of Member and Officers being clear and understood;
  - Having in place appropriate systems and guidance to support such structures and ensure effective communication between Members and staff in their respective roles;
  - Ensure role descriptions for Members, Chairs and Special Responsibility Roles are clearly understood;
  - Having structures in place which enable Members to utilise their skills and experience including through scrutiny to help achieve outcomes;
  - Conduct a survey of Members every two years and respond to feedback if required.
- (7) Agree the extent of delegation from Members to Officers and periodically review the effectiveness of this.
- (8) Appoint appropriately qualified and experienced people to the three statutory roles of:
  - Head of Paid Service
  - Chief Finance Officer
  - Monitoring Officerand put in place appropriate Protocols and Policies to support these roles including in the Chair's job description a responsibility for appraisal of the Chief Executive.
- (7) Ensure we have an effective executive leadership group in place with appropriate skills and experience, working coherently to achieve high levels of confidence in the NPA internally and externally.
- (8) Identify learning and development needs of Members through the introduction of member personal development plans and meet these needs through an annual programme and through development tailored to the needs of individuals.
- (9) Identify learning and development needs for Officer at an individual, service and corporate levels providing ways of meeting these through a variety of means as described in our Learning and Development Policy including an annual corporate programme and leadership development.
- (10) Use our skills and experience matrix for different Member Roles and the Member Development Plan process to help Members self-assess and develop appropriate skills to carry out their work.
- (11) Implement the appraisal process for Secretary of State Members.
- (12) Use our Joint Performance and Achievement Review process to appraise the performance of individual staff and maximise the contribution of staff through individual objectives and development plans.
- (13) Ensure a suitable set of employment policies and practices are in place to support staff as our most valued asset.

### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Job descriptions for Chief Executive, Authority Chair, Members and Member Representative Roles;
- Regular meetings with Chief Executive, Chair and Deputy Chair;
- Regular meetings with Chief Executive, all Chairs and Deputy/Vice Chairs;
- Chief Executive's appraisal process led by Chair of Authority;

- Scheme of delegation reviewed at least annually in light of legal and organisational changes;
- Standing orders and financial regulations are reviewed on a regular basis;
- Clear statement of respective roles and responsibilities and how they will be put into practice;
- Leadership Development Programme;
- Member Training and Development Framework including annual Member Learning and Development

## **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- Continued to provide a learning and development programme for Members. The Member participation rate for essential training/briefing events for 2018/19 is 57% and for participation in formal meetings is 81%. During 2019/20 27% of Members have personal development plans and 30% completed a self-assessment. [E(2)48]
- As Defra and other appointing Authorities regularly request information on the attendance levels of their appointees the Authority has previously agreed to publish attendance figures annually based upon the financial year. (1 April to 31 March) the target is 75%. The 2018/19 figures were reported to the Annual Meeting in July 2019 when the overall attendance level was 81%. The 2019/20 attendance figures for individual members will be reported to the 2020 Annual Meeting but overall the attendance level remains at 81%. [E(2)49]
- At the 2019 AGM appointed a new Chair of Planning Committee and managed the transition. [E(2)50]
- The Authority has established a Panel to oversee the process for making appointments to key positions at the Annual Meeting each year. [E(2)51]
- Agreed recommendations arising from discussions at meetings of the Governance Review Working Group including:
  - The Role of Members
  - The Structure of Authority Agendas:
    - Reports from Chair and Chief Executive
    - Feedback from Outside Bodies and Conferences
    - Member Questions and Motions
    - Performance Monitoring
    - Standing Committee Minutes
  - Committee Structures and Delegation
  - Community Engagement
  - Member Representative Roles
  - Member Scrutiny [E(2)52] [E(2)53]
- All planning applications which are not directly connected with, or necessary for, the conservation management of a habitat site, require consideration of whether the proposed development is likely to have significant effects on that site. This consideration – typically referred to as the ‘Habitats Regulations Assessment screening’. The Authority has amended the scheme of delegation so the decision on whether an assessment is needed and carrying out the assessment is delegated to officers. [E(2)54]
- There were three Secretary of State Member vacancies advertised during 2019/20. Defra, working with the Cabinet Office, have promoted the vacancies and managed the recruitment process for all the English National Parks, however the Authority has contributed to the campaign by circulating details of Member vacancies widely using a number of contacts including MOSAIC, using social media and issuing a press release and has responded to enquiries from individuals wishing to be considered for the Peak District vacancies. At the end of the process the Minister made three appointments.
- Defra has commenced the process for appointing to the one vacancy arising in 2020.
- Continued to assist the Chair in carrying out appraisals for Secretary of State Members and submitting business cases to Defra for the reappointment of exiting Secretary of State Members at the end of their term of office.
- In the 2018/19 AGS it was acknowledged that while the Authority had appointed a number of apprentices during the year there were still risks that the Authority would not meet its targets on providing apprentice opportunities resulting in the amounts paid into the apprenticeship levy exceeding the amounts withdrawn. There also remained an issue about the Authority’s ability to provide relevant longer term employment opportunities at the end of apprenticeships and reap the benefits of utilising the skills experience and knowledge acquired.
- At the start of 2019/20, the Authority had four designated apprentices. All four apprentices have subsequently obtained employment. A further three new apprentices were appointed in January 2020 and a fourth apprenticeship opportunity has been successfully advertised and the position has been

offered but the appointment is delayed due to Covid-19. In addition, four of the Authority's existing employees have already begun or will begin shortly apprenticeships in the following areas :

- Chartered Town Planner Degree – Level 7
- HR Consultant/Partner – Level 5
- Management – Institute of Leadership and Management – Level 3
- Management – Institute of Leadership and Management – Level 5.

The Authority will therefore exceed its 2019/20 target of six apprenticeships.

- In the 2018/19 AGS it was noted that as there would be District, Borough and Parish Council elections in May 2019 it was anticipated that there will be a turnover of Authority Members which would result in a loss of experience and knowledge. Also because of the appointment timetable set by Defra it was anticipated that the Authority will have three Secretary of State Member vacancies for the first 4 to 5 months of 2019/20.
- At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 5th July 2019, eleven new Members were welcomed to the Authority. The initial induction for all new Members was completed during Quarter 2 of 2019/20.

## **(F) Core Principle**

**Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.**

### **Sub Principle: F(1) Managing Risk**

#### **We will:**

- (1) Implement our Risk Management Policy and Strategy throughout all levels of the Authority and regularly review its effectiveness including through regular reviews and scrutiny by Internal Audit.
- (2) Implement robust and integrated risk management arrangements and make sure that they are working effectively.
- (3) Making sure that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated.

#### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Risk Management Policy and Strategy;
- Corporate Risk Register and monitoring;
- Service Plan – Risk Register and monitoring;
- Risk based Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan;
- Information Technology Disaster Recovery Plan;
- Business Continuity Plan including Crisis Management Procedures;
- Health and Safety Policy, support and annual report to Leadership Team and Local Joint Committee
- Insurance Policies;
- Building security systems.

#### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- During 2019/20 Members reviewed the year end position for the Corporate Risk Register and approved the proposed Corporate Risk Register for the year. [F(1)<sup>55</sup>]
- The Corporate Risk Register for 2019/20 was developed by the Leadership Team by:
  - Reviewing the 2018/19 corporate risk register year end position.
  - Considering risks that might prevent the achievement of the corporate strategy.
  - Considering risks in service plans that need to be escalated and monitored at a corporate level.

- Considering the external environment that we operate in.
- The Programme and Resources Committee received a report providing evidence that health and safety performance was satisfactory and continuously improving. The report included:
  - An overall appraisal of health and safety performance for the PDNPA for the previous year
  - Reference to improving competencies, particularly through training
  - Accident and incident data and analysis for the year ending December 2018 for staff and visitors
  - A report on services provided to other National Parks and other third parties
  - Recommendations for further action through 2019/20<sup>[F(1)56]</sup>
- The Authority recognises the need to have appropriate insurance cover in place for the Authority's operations, arising from statutory requirements and for risk management purposes. <sup>[F(1)57]</sup>
- The Authority has given Officers the Authority needed for insurance contracts to be let for the 2020-25 period. <sup>[F(1)58]</sup>

## **Sub Principle: F(2) Managing Performance**

### **We will:**

- (4) Implement a robust Performance Management Framework with quarterly and annual monitoring and reporting to Managers and Members.
- (5) Ensure our decision making processes are sound through:
  - evidenced based reports following a prescribed format to ensure relevant information and risks are included;
  - expert advice being available to report authors and to Managers and members at decision making meetings;
  - committee and meeting processes.
- (6) Implement our scrutiny process and monitor its success as an effective challenge and performance improvement tool.
- (7) Monitor and review activities and report on progress made.
- (8) Ensure our Financial Regulations, Standing Orders and Budget Monitoring support reporting of financial performance.

### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Annual Performance and Business Plan includes performance against targets;
- Using research data and benchmarking information in Service Planning;
- Quarterly Performance Reports to Audit Resources and Performance Committee and since the AGM in July to Authority meetings;
- Quarterly Performance Review meetings involving Managers;
- Employee performance against targets is formally reviewed twice a year as part of the JPAR process;
- Annual Planning Policy Review – provides analysis on how planning policies are working;
- Ongoing discussion between Members and Officers on the information needs of Members to support decision making and questions in biennial Member Survey;
- Publication of agendas and minutes of meetings;
- Report templates include heading to make sure that risks and other implications are considered;
- Agreement on the information that will be needed and timescales;
- Although not required to have Scrutiny Committees we have a tried and tested framework for Member involvement in scrutiny;
- Evidence of improvements arising from Member Scrutiny;
- Value for money reviews to Audit Resources and Performance Committee and going forward to

- Programmes & Resources Committee;
- Member motions to full Authority allow Members to raise and discuss areas of concern;
- Every year the annual Member Learning and Development programme include workshops relating to Strategic Business and Financial Planning;
- Record of decision making and supporting materials;
- Our Standing Orders include Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Regulations;
- The Budget Monitoring Group involving Members meets quarterly to discuss financial arrangements and assess the effectiveness of the control measures in place.

### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- During 2018/19 Members of the Audit Resources and Performance Committee continued to receive and discuss quarterly performance reports including a review of performance against the Corporate Plan); monitoring of the corporate risk register; monitoring of Freedom of Information Requests and monitoring of complaints. From the 2019 Annual Meeting these reports are to be considered at meetings of the Authority. [F(2)59] [F(2)60] [F(2)61] [F(2)62]
- Approved the performance review element of the Performance and Business Plan. [F(2)63]
- The quarterly budget monitoring meeting involving Authority Members has continued to meet.
- In the 2016 Members' Survey 87% (20) respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had appropriate performance data so that I know how well the Authority is delivering against its approved policies and plans. 13% (3) neither agreed nor disagreed and none disagreed.

### **Sub Principle: F(3) Robust Internal Controls**

#### **We will:**

- ((9)) Ensure there is a system of internal control in place which is reviewed in light of experience and feedback on its effectiveness from auditors and others.
- (10) Evaluate and monitor risk management and internal control on a regular basis.
- (11) Ensure our Confidential Reporting Policy ('whistle blowing' policy) and Anti- Fraud and Corruption Policy are clearly accessible on our website, intranet and to all Officers as part of the material given to them during their induction.
- (12) Ensure that effective Internal and External Auditors are appointed and that they have direct contact with the Audit Resources and Performance Committee (and from the AGM in July 2019 the Authority meeting).
- (13) Ensure that the Audit Resources and Performance Committee (and from the AGM in July 2019 the Authority meeting is supported in its audit, scrutiny and standards roles.

#### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Risk Management Policy and Strategy formally approved and adopted and is reviewed and updated on a regular basis;
- Risk Management Policy and Strategy;
- Risk based internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan;
- Audit reports and management actions reported to Audit Resources and Performance Committee and from the AGM in July 2019 to the Authority meeting;
- Compliance with the Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption;

- Confidential Reporting Policy in place and promoted;
- Audit reports and management actions reported to Audit Resources and Performance Committee and from the AGM in July 2019 to the Authority meeting;
- Annual assurance and summary of activities reported to Audit Resources and Performance Committee and from the AGM in July 2019 to the Authority meeting and included in Annual Governance Statement;
- The terms of reference for Audit Resources and Performance Committee and from the AGM in July 2019 the terms of reference of the Authority includes Internal and External Audit matters and matters relating to the Authority's Corporate Governance Framework including the Annual Governance Statement and the Annual Governance Report;
- The Budget Monitoring Group involving Members meets quarterly to discuss financial arrangements and assess the effectiveness of the control measures in place.

### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- The Audit Resources and Performance Committee received the 2018/19 Internal Audit Annual Report. The overall opinion of the Head of Internal Audit on the framework of governance, risk management and control operating in the Authority was that it provides Substantial Assurance. There were no qualifications to this opinion and no reliance was placed on the work of other assurance bodies in reaching that opinion. There were also 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. [F(3)64]
- Out of 7 areas reviewed in 2019/20 4 were given a high level of assurance and 3 a substantial level of assurance. Managers have responded to 7 Priority 3 actions and 1 Priority 2 action. [F(2)65]
- Audit Resources and Performance Committee approved the Internal Audit Plan for 2019/20. [F(2)66]
- The Authority meeting received the Internal Audit Reports and recommendations and proposed management action to address the issues raised. [F(2)67] [F(2)68]
- The Risk Management Policy and Strategy has been approved and adopted and is reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Risk is monitored quarterly by the Authority.
- The Authority has a risk based Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan agreed by the Audit Resources and Performance Committee (In future it will be the Authority). Audit report findings and details of action taken in response are considered by the Authority with the Internal Auditor present to address any questions and/or concerns.
- Both the Internal and External Auditors have direct access to Members.

### **Sub Principle: F(4) Managing Data**

#### **We will:**

- (14) Implement our Information Management Strategy led by our designated Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) and supported by a network of Information Asset Owners.
- (15) Develop and roll out our Data Protection charter which will include guidance on arrangements for sharing data.
- (16) Ensure our data is accurate and clean through:
  - The measures outlined in the information management strategy;
  - The performance management processes

#### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme and disclosure log;
- Appointment of Senior Information Risk Owner, Lead Information Asset Owner and departmental

- Information Asset Owners;
- Guidance available to Officers and Members on data protection issues;
- Creation of data protection policies, data protection staff training plan and rollout with appropriate tools and monitoring, robust processes where personal/sensitive data is created or used as part of wider operations;
- Use of robust data processor agreements where 3<sup>rd</sup> parties hold or process personal/sensitive data on the Authority's behalf;
- Data Protection Statement;
- Quality and accuracy of data considered in preparing quarterly performance reports;
- Growth of datasets/types published online.

### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- In accordance with the recommendation in the Freedom of Information Act the Authority maintains and publishes a disclosure log which contains information relating to requests that we have received and responded to within the quarter. The log is in summary format which provides details of the request, whether we have disclosed the information and whether we have responded within the time period defined by the Information Commissioners Office.
- On-going measures to improve data capture and data quality will continue in order to properly assess the direction of travel for the performance of planning policy and planning decisions over the coming years
- In accordance with the Information Management Strategy (IMS2) we continued with our action to 'clean' data as it is the key to being able to improve the quality of our data and make it more accessible from one single source to officers and the public.
- Collected survey data to inform performance assessments and design of services in a number of areas including: planning, cycle hire, visitor centres, guided walks, volunteers and residents
- The Authority has a number of privacy statements in place and published on the Authority website.
- Continued implementation of the 'Infrastructure as a Service' (IaaS) model as part of a refresh of the core IT Infrastructure funded through the ICT capital programme. This approach allows the Authority to renew its infrastructure while increasing its capability, reducing risks of failure and increasing security, backup and disaster recovery provisions

### **Sub Principle: F(5) Strong public financial management**

#### **We will:**

- (17) Put in place a Medium Term Financial Plan supported by an annual review and budget setting process aligned to the corporate strategy.
- (18) Ensure our financial management includes forward planning of expenditure and resources, budget consultation, budget setting and monitoring and final accounts. The aim is to ensure that these are accurate, include information relevant to the user and are completed to agreed timescales. Financial Regulations further support the above by setting our policies and procedures that are to be adhered to.
- (19) Ensure the Chief Finance Officer has independent reporting as necessary to the Chief Executive, Resource Management team and Members even though the post holder sits in the Corporate Strategy and Development Directorate.

#### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Financial Management Arrangements and reporting;

- Budget Monitoring reports;
- Budget Monitoring meetings involving Members.

## **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- Received an unqualified External Audit Opinion for 2018/19 for the final accounts and a satisfactory conclusion on value for money. [F(5)69]
- The Treasury Management Policy Statement and Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy was agreed by the Authority in March 2020. [F(5)70]
- ARP considered the outturn for 2018/19, approved the necessary appropriations to or from reserves and agreed unspent funds and overspends to be carried forward into the 2019/20 financial year. [F(5)71]
- Developed Budget Proposals for 2020/21 to reflect the delivery of the new Corporate Strategy presented to Members on 7th December 2018, and workshops during the year. As the Defra settlement had not been confirmed The Authority prepared a budget based on the assumption that funding would be inflation protected for the next Spending Review period, with an increase of 2% per annum. Because of this uncertainty the Authority also agreed contingency proposals which have been shared with Members during the November workshops, and identified possible savings. This proved to be prudent as the final settlement was not inflation protected.
- Based on these proposals we agreed and implemented a balanced budget for 2020/21. [F(5)72]
- Defra advised the Authority that it intends to update the existing mechanisms for review and oversight of National Park Grant. As part of the new arrangements, the standing Financial Grant Memorandum, dated 1st April 2008, was be replaced by a new National Park Grant Funding Agreement, common to all National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Authority signed the Agreement for signature so that it was operative for the National Park Grant (2019-20). Defra intend and they will re-issue the Agreement to cover future settlements. [F(5)73]
- RMM carried out a mid year review of the 2019/20 Budget and agreed a Medium Term Finance Strategy 2020/21 to 2023-24. [F(5)74] , [F(5)75]
- In the 2018/19 AGS it was also recognised that there were still uncertainties around the implications of Brexit.
- The key risk here is around the future of farming in a post Brexit world. We are working directly with Defra in trialling the new Environmental Land Management Scheme, and through National Parks England have set out our vision for what the future of farming in protected landscapes.
- The 2017/18 AGS identified the risks around a failure to influence the transposing of EU laws and legislation for landscape and the environment into UK law after Article 50 and area of NP land safeguarded in agri-environment schemes reducing because of Brexit uncertainty and continuing issues with Countryside Stewardship.
- In the 2018/19 AGS the area of land within agri-environment schemes remained a concern, but it was recognised that this was not within the Authority's control. Although the Authority was working with other English National Parks (through NPE) and with DEFRA to influence the design of future Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS) and had submitted a pilot for the White Peak area, which has been approved in principle by DEFRA.
- Over the last year, we have seen continued uncertainty around a future system of agricultural support. Officers have been working closely with other English national park authorities, National Parks England and Defra to shape and influence the design of a future environmental land management scheme (ELMS) and have been developing tests and trials for a new system. A draft position statement for the Future of Regulation and Enforcement for Farming & Land Management in the English national parks has been drafted by the NPAs' England Agriculture and Rural Development Group
- The Defra contract for the delivery of the White Peak ELMS Phase 1 Test has been signed. This will focus on testing whether National Character Area assessments can be used as a way of prioritising the public goods to be delivered under ELMS and how farmers and land managers can develop land management plans to deliver those public goods. There is continued evidence that land managers are finding the current support system difficult and this is impacting on how the land is managed, despite advice and support from the Authority.

**(G) Core Principle**

**Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit, to deliver effective accountability.**

**Sub Principle: G(1) Implementing good practice in transparency**

**We will:**

- (1) Increase accessibility to information and to engaging with the Authority through a variety of ways and access channels including through improvements to digital communications.
- (2) Hold all meetings in public unless there are good reasons for confidentiality and implement a public participation scheme for all committee.

**What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Key governance documents, including Standing Orders, are published on website using modern.gov;
- Publishing operational data through our website;
- Documents relating to meetings of the Authority and its Committees are published on the Authority website;
- Provisions in place allowing reporting on meetings and providing an audio webcast of meetings of the Authority and its Committees;
- Publish work programmes for the Authority and its Committees;
- Committee reports containing exempt information are kept to a minimum and where possible an open report is provided to summarise the decision to be made and allow public participation.

**Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- Key governance documents, such as Standing Orders are published on the Authority website and available through the modern.gov app.
- Continued to publish documents relating to meetings of the Authority and its Committees on the website. In addition members of the public can use self service functionality to register to receive automated email alerts for specific topics or meetings. Documents are also published through the modern.gov app available for IOS, Android, Blackberry, Kindle Fire and Windows 10 users.
- Audio webcasting of meetings of the Authority and its Committees continues with recordings being held and published for 3 years after the meeting.
- Although we are not required by law to publish a forward plan of decisions, in the spirit of openness and transparency we continue to compile and publish work programmes for the Authority and its Committees to allow members of the public to be aware of forthcoming decisions.

**Sub Principle: G(2) Implementing good practice in reporting**

**We will:**

- (3) Prepare, approve and publish annual performance monitoring reports for our:

- National Park Management Plan
  - Performance and Business Plan
  - Local Plan
- (4) Prepare and publish an Annual Governance Statement which assesses performance against our Code of Corporate Governance and identifies actions for continuous improvement.
- (5) Ensure our Monitoring Officer has independent reporting as necessary to the Chief Executive, Senior Leadership Team and Members even though the post holder sits in the Corporate Strategy and Development directorate.
- (6) Prepare and publish our annual financial statements in accordance with guidance and good practice.

### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Authority approval of year end performance reports and annual accounts;
- Prepare and publish Annual Governance Statement and financial statements in accordance with guidance and best practice;
- Monitoring Officer Protocol.

### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- Members reviewed and approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2018/19. [G(2)76]

### **Sub Principle: G(3) Assurance and effective accountability**

#### **We will:**

- (7) Proactively work with Internal and External Auditors to ensure the good governance of the Authority through:
- Regular liaison meetings;
  - Forward audit plans based on risk;
  - Responding to all recommendations in a timely way.
- (8) Ensure the Internal and External Auditors have direct and unrestricted access to Senior Officers and Members.
- (9) Consider and respond to assurances sought and received on our performance including:
- External audit letter;
  - Internal audit reports;
  - Feedback from those charged with governance including Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer, Chief Executive and Chair of the Authority;
  - Local Government Ombudsman;
  - Planning appeals and inspector reports;
  - Complaints and Freedom of Information/ Environmental Information Regulations enquires;
  - Investors in People assessors;
  - Legal proceedings;
  - National Park peer reviews;
  - Self-assessment processes e.g. against CIPFA's code of practice on managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption.

- (10) Ensure our risk management policy processes are applied to partnerships and delivery service level agreements.

### **What evidence/assurance is in place?**

- Evidence of positive improvement;
- Compliance with CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit;
- Compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards;
- Evidence in Annual Governance Statement;
- Community Strategy;
- People and Park connected strategy and action plan;
- Audit Plans agreed by Members at ARP and since the AGM in July Authority;
- Assurances included in the Annual Governance Statement.
- Self Assessment against the CIPFA Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption

### **Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness**

- Committee received and noted the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) Annual Review letter for 2018/19. [G(3)77]
- Members considered the 2018/19 Annual Audit Letter which confirmed:
  - An unqualified conclusion on the Authority's arrangements to secure value for money.
  - An unqualified opinion on the financial statements. This means that they believe the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority and its expenditure and income for the year.
  - The Statement of Accounts was prepared in a timely manner with high quality supporting work papers. There were no uncorrected audit adjustments at the end of the audit process.
  - The External Auditor had reviewed the Annual Governance Statement and concluded that there are no matters to report and that it was consistent with their understanding. [G(3)78]
- Members considered the External Auditors' (Mazars) 2018/19 annual report. [G(3)79]
- Members considered the 2019/20 External Audit Strategy Memorandum from our External Auditors, Mazars. [G(3)80]
- Received a report summarising the work carried out on planning appeals from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019. In 2019/20 56 new planning appeals were received of which 23 were still in hand. 45 appeals have been determined, but decision notices were only received in 40 cases; 3 were withdrawn, 1 was invalid and 1 was submitted outside the prescribed time limits. Of the 40 appeals determined 37% were allowed and 63% were dismissed. The percentage of appeals dismissed in the year 2019/20 is 1% higher than in the previous year but again it should be noted that on such low numbers currently one appeal decision can change the percentages by 2.5%. [G(3)81]