



REVIEW OF PROGRESS AGAINST ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN 2022/23 AGS FOR FEEDING INTO THE 2023/24 REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

(A) Core Principle

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

Issues Identified	Action/progress
<p>1. The impact of the delivery of the IIP Action Plan.</p>	<p>The Authority has been Investors in People accredited since 2013. In April we were delighted to have received Silver in our latest assessment. Silver is a fantastic achievement and something that only 15% of organisations that are assessed, achieve. Investors in People measure organisations using a four-stage performance model. At our last assessment in 2019, we were accredited at the Developed level, or Bronze. Despite how challenging the last three years have been, we have progressed to the Established level, or Silver. Our ambition over the next three years is to reach the Advanced level, or Gold.</p> <p>An action plan has been created based on recommendations from the assessor’s report. Progress will be monitored at meetings of the Investors in People Delivery Group which is chaired by the CEO.</p> <p>We will meet with the assessor after 12 months to discuss our progress, and will be reassessed in no more than 3 years.</p>
<p>2. Uncertainties around the impact of the recommendations arising from the National Landscapes Review consultation on structures and funding and the timescales in which they are to be implemented.</p>	<p>The Government has made a response to the consultation on the National Landscapes Review. The Government’s proposals included a strengthened biodiversity duty in the 2021 Environment Act, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act requiring management plans of Protected Landscapes to contribute to national environmental targets and Protected Landscapes having a key role in the development and delivery of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. A collaborative Protected Landscapes partnership will consider nature recovery and climate change leadership as well as how to remove barriers to access and promote respect for nature. Boosted funding will be made via projects including FiPL, Access for All, Landscape Recovery and Water in Protected Landscapes.</p>

(B) Core Principle Making sure of openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement	
Issues Identified	Action/progress
3. Risk that partners do not deliver the objectives in the approved National Park Management Plan.	The National Park Management Plan 2023-28 was adopted by the Authority on 2 December 2022. We had the most engagement from partners when reviewing the National Park Management Plan than any previous Plan. It is thought that this is partially down to the ease of attending online events rather than ones in person. Therefore, we have gained a lot of support from partners for the National Park Management Plan, as they have helped us to co-create the vision, aims, objectives and actions in the delivery plan.
(C) Core Principle Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.	
Issues Identified	Action/progress
4. The social and economic impact of COVID-19 will continue to have a significant and still fully unknown impact on the Authority and its ability to achieve its statutory purposes and corporate strategy targets as we have to continue to adapt our ways of operating. Other factors will also have an impact including inflation, the cost of living and labour market.	The obvious impacts of the pandemic have reduced significantly, in that income generation is no longer directly impacted by lockdown's and enforced closures as the Covid-19 virus now becomes something that the country has to live with.
(D) Core Principle Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.	
Issues Identified	Action/progress
5. The Authority's ability to achieve revenue income targets through trading and fundraising including external grant bids made by the Authority, corporate fundraising, major & individual donor fundraising by the Authority and corporate partnerships led by NPP.	The Authority continues to follow the Commercial strategy which was approved by Authority on 14 th March 2021 Appendix 1 - Final Formatted Commercialisation strategy_final.pdf (peakdistrict.gov.uk) Clear income targets are incorporated in the MTFP and monitored as part of existing quarterly monitoring procedures. In our Authority plan we have a target to set and deliver net income targets by March 2024. New procedures to prioritise areas to focus fundraising on are being developed with both the Authority and PDNP Foundation. We are looking to improve how we successfully horizon scan for possible grants and other sources of funding and improve monitoring and reporting procedures. The need for a grants officer to oversee this work has been identified.

	<p>The majority of the £1.3m wages budget and all of the capital funding invested by the Moors for the Future Partnership is external funding. A growing proportion of this is from private business and public giving. This increasing success is largely due to the employment of a Business Development manager and a Project Creation officer following a grant from Esmee Fairbairn Foundation.</p> <p>We are working to finalise new terms with the PDNP Foundation to support them become increasingly financially independent. The new agreements will set out the annual contribution of cash and resource (office accommodation only) for a five-year period. This will see the foundation employing their own staff team, giving a greater agility and independence from the formality and rigidity that comes with the current interconnections with the Authority.</p>
<p>6. The impact of the non-inflationary 3-year funding settlement from Defra on delivery targets in 2022/23 and the following 2 years.</p>	<p>The majority of the Authority's annual income comes from the National Park Grant (NPG) provided by Defra. This grant currently stands at £6.7 million per year. The NPG has been at this level since the 2019/20 financial year. The three-year grant agreement from Defra gave an indication that the grant will be baselined through to 2024/25.</p> <p>The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) assumes that the NPG will continue to be at the same level through to 2026/27.</p> <p>The Authority is starting a period of organisational change and one of the aims of the project is to ensure that the Authority has a period of financial sustainability that is able to meet the financial challenges of the next few financial years.</p>
<p>(E) Core Principle Developing the Authority's capacity including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it</p>	
<p>Issues Identified</p>	<p>Action/progress</p>
<p>7. In the context of the Organisational Review the ability of the Authority to deal with workforce and succession planning issues and retention of key Officers whilst experiencing high levels of sickness absence and turnover of employees in comparison to previous years.</p>	<p>A successful recruitment campaign saw Phil Mulligan join the Authority as Chief Executive in September 2022.</p> <p>37 new staff have been appointed this year however retention continues to be an issue and 37 staff have left the Authority. In addition, it is difficult to recruit to senior professional roles in the Planning and Legal Service which is mirrored across the sector. The Authority is looking to address this</p>

		<p>through recalibrating the pay scales in light of regional public sector rates which are currently higher.</p> <p>Covid continues to impact on our workforce being the top reason for absence with the cumulative days lost per FTE due to sickness being 3.49 days in the first 6 months of the year. If this level of absence was to continue over the next 2 quarters the target of under 6 days lost through sickness per FTE would not be met.</p>
8.	<p>As there will be District, Borough and Parish Council elections in May 2023 and a change in the Secretary of State directly appointed Members it is anticipated that there will be a turnover of Authority Members which will result in a loss of experience and knowledge.</p>	<p>As expected there was a high turnover of Members during 2023 with the Secretary of State appointing 2 directly appointed Members and 2 new Parish appointed Members. There were also 6 new appointments from our constituent Councils making 10 new Members in total. They were all appointed between May and July and there was a period of 4 – 6 months when all new Members were completing their inductions; learning about the Authority's policies and strategies and our governance procedures for decision making. Feedback from them has been taken on board with regard to information provided for the annual Authority meeting and the Governance Review Working Group is looking at ways to help Members better understand audit and budget reports. All new Members are being ably supported by the other Members and Officers to ensure they have the relevant information to enable them to function in their Authority Member role.</p> <p>A much lower turnover of Members is expected during 2024-25 so this should not be an issue to cause concern.</p>
9.	<p>The public sector apprenticeship target ended on 31 March 2022. The amount the Authority pays into the apprenticeship levy continues to exceed the amounts with-drawn. In addition, the Authority is often unable to provide relevant longer term employment opportunities at the end of apprenticeships meaning we do not reap the benefits of utilising the skills, experience and knowledge acquired.</p>	<p>In 2023/24 a career grade, level 2 apprentice Customer and Democratic Support Team (CDST) adviser post was created. This is a permanent post, once the apprenticeship is completed the post holder will move into the CDST adviser post.</p> <p>In 2024/24 the Authority will have four level 7 planning apprentices. All four apprentices are in permanent posts, giving the Authority the opportunity to retain their skills and experience.</p>
<p>(F) Core Principle Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management</p>		
Issues Identified		Action/progress
10	<p>Failure to implement the effective delivery of Year 3 of the four-year Farming in Protected Landscape Fund (FiPL) and the reputational risk to the Authority if the programme is not a success.</p>	<p>The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme has continued to be well supported by partners, farmers and land managers. Project fund allocation, spend,</p>

	<p>outputs and outcomes are closely monitored by the FiPL team and reported monthly to Defra and at Local Assessment Panel meetings. The £1.15 million project fund has been allocated but many projects will not be completed or claimed until March 2023. The Authority is deliberately over allocating by up to 30% to mitigate the risk of some projects not being completed by the 31 March 2023 deadline based on previous experience of delivering such programmes.</p> <p>FiPL has achieved a positive reputation both in the Peak District, in other Protected Landscapes and nationally. A one-year extension from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 is being sought which if achieved would provide more opportunities for farmers and land managers deliver more public goods (climate, nature, people and place) during the transition to the new Environmental Land Management schemes and approach.</p>
<p>11 Notification received that the Authority may be liable for designation into special measures due to its performance around the determination of non-major planning applications.</p>	<p>Officers have been able to demonstrate sustained performance above the 70% threshold, following greater success with recruitment, improved communications and by use of extension of time agreements with applicants. Government have written in March 2024 to confirm that the Authority will not be designated and that they wish to support our ongoing improvement.</p> <p>Officers have retained the support of the Planning Advisory Service to maintain a commitment to performance and service improvements.</p>
<p>12. The impact of the suspension of the development management pre-application advice service on decision making and the impacts of the high turnover of staff within the Planning Service.</p>	<p>The reintroduction of pre-application advice is dependent upon a stable officer capacity that can undertake planning decisions at a sustainable rate that allows the capacity to undertake non-statutory additional work, such as pre-app.</p> <p>We have 3 key strands of work which is helping us to understand and reach a more sustainable place:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A review of the service led by a Business Change Manager through 2022. This has enabled around 30 interviews to be conducted to help managers understand the end to end processes and the reasons why the workforce has become less stable and less resilient; 2. An approach by DLUHC based on our performance against national standards for timely decision making. With support from the Planning Advisory Service we are interrogating our data to understand how we fare

	<p>on the determination of non-major applications; and</p> <p>3. We are beginning an Audit of the Planning function which is also focused on end to end process (e.g. validation through to decision making and processes in between). This is to test our own governance processes to check we have a sound foundation to work from.</p> <p>We can have confidence that all these processes now shine a light on both staffing and performance issues which will allow positive steps to be made during 2023 to create a more stable service which will allow the reintroduction of pre-app advice which will also assist the underpinning budgetary resources to maintain a positive and stable planning function going forward.</p>
<p>13. The Business Continuity Plan needs to be reviewed and all Internal Audit recommendations are completed including a desk top simulation exercise undertaken by the Management Team</p>	<p>The Business Continuity Plan has been updated where there have been structure and staff changes in 2023/24. As the Management Team structure and individuals have changed as part of the Organisational Review Program, the Internal Audit recommendations haven't been implemented, as we are awaiting recruitment to the final new Head of Service. Once all the key posts are filled, the Audit recommendations will be implemented.</p> <p>This will continue to be an issue for 2024/5, as that is when we plan to review the Business Continuity Plan.</p>
<p>(G) Core Principle Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit, to deliver effective accountability.</p>	
<p>No issues identified.</p>	