



**REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE
 1 APRIL 2023 TO 31 MARCH 2024**

(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, adopted in 2020, of:
 - Care – we care for the Peak District National Park, the people we work with and all those we serve. It's at the heart of everything we do;
 - Enjoy – we take pride in what we do and feel good about our contribution;
 - Pioneer – We were born of pioneers. We will continue to explore opportunities to inspire future generations;
- (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 Member 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 and hospitality register and guidance with annual review by Monitoring Officer;
- Member Standards included in the Authority Meeting Terms of Reference;
- Nolan Principles are incorporated into Member Code of Conduct;
- Procedures in place to consider code of conduct complaints against Members which were reported to the Authority Meeting as part of bi-annual report on complaints. Performance reporting procedures changed during 2023/24 with the last bi-annual report on complaints in May 2023 and this will become annual reporting in 2024/25;
- The Ombudsman's annual review of the Authority is reported annually.
- Complaints policy in place and individual complaints are monitored and reported to the Authority meeting with lessons learned. Reported bi-annually from 2020/21 to 2023/24 and to be reported annually from 2024/25;
- Declaration of Interests is a standing agenda item at meetings and Members are provided with a form 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 Annual Report reviewed by Programmes & Resources Committee (P&R);
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Whistleblowing (Confidential Reporting) Policy in place with regular review against CIPFA code with the Chair and the 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

- During 2023/24 there was 1 Member Code of Conduct Complaint received.
- A summary of all complaints from members of the public were reported to the Authority in the bi-annual performance report up to May 2023. The report included information of the outcome of the complaint, management action taken and lessons learned from the complaint. This report will become an annual report in 2024/25.
- 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 2023 all Authority Members were asked to review and update their entries in the Register of Interests.
- The annual report of the Due Diligence Panel was received by Programmes and Resources Committee in December 2023.
- 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 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 had 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 were agreed as Care, Enjoy and Pioneer. These values are supported by a definition and a set of behaviours.
- Received positive feedback in the Investors in People report, May 2022 with our achievement being described as fantastic given how challenging the previous three years had been and everyone should be proud.
- Adopted the new values and behaviours into person specifications to be used in our recruitment and selection process replacing the competency framework
- The Joint Performance Appraisal Review process was replaced with Performance Management Appraisal (PMA) process in line with 'keep it simple' behaviour of our core values, with streamlined the guidance and forms. The PMA process includes Pioneer conversations (objective setting), Enjoy conversations (look back at what has been achieved), and Care conversations (to support employees be the best person that can be in the job they are in).

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, through recruitment and selection, and the performance management (appraisal) 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 Member Survey for 2022/23 was issued in December 2022, due to the impacts of the organisational change and the impacts of the high turnover in Members during 2023 the analysis of the survey results is only just being completed.
- The Chair of the Authority and the Statutory Officers, the Management Team and DSM are involved in preparing the Annual Governance Statement and it is considered and approved by the Authority meeting following scrutiny by the External Auditors;
- Employee terms and conditions, values based set of behaviours and completed appraisal 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;
- Performance Management (appraisal) process;
- Corporate training programme and developing the Management Team;
- Procurement Strategy and Contract Procedure Rules;
- Conduct included within revised 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 and register of One Team (staff and Members) benefits 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

- 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 following the Member decision to carry out a review of governance arrangements the next survey was deferred until the end of 2022.
- The Member Survey for 2022/23 was issued in December 2022 with an extension of time for completion, to enable all Members to participate, being given to March 2023. Due to the impacts of the organisational change and the impacts of the high turnover in Members during 2023 the analysis of the survey results is currently being completed.
- The compulsory annual Member planning training events were held on 20 October and 24 November 2023. In the 2022/23 Members Survey 96% (26) of Members responding agreed that they were aware of the Authority's ethical framework and how they contribute to maintaining high ethical standards. 4% (2) Neither agreed nor disagreed.

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 & Social Care Ombudsman, Defra, HM Revenue and Customs, Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Communities and Local Government and Housing Act;
- 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 and 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 CIPFAs 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;
- 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 Legal Team Work Programme in place to support the Authority Plan;
- Legal risks identified in delegated reports and reports to Authority and Standing Committees and Resource Management Meeting;
- Delegation to Officers indicates where delegated decisions need sign off from the Legal Team;
- 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

- The Authority's certification programme includes a combined Information Security/Data Protection course. This ensures that staff undertake refresher training every two years. 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 2021 and ensuring the clear desk policy is maintained is a priority as staff have returned and office space is now at a premium. Work is still continuing with the information asset register and the application of retention policies. Following the pandemic, it is expected that consolidation work will continue into 2024, when we should be able to provide a good baseline for reporting and demonstrating the effectiveness of the applied retention in 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. Standing Orders are currently being reviewed by the Governance Review Working Group.
- 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 2023/24 to include reports on Planning Enforcement, Performance Management, Project Management, Vehicles, Appraisals follow up, Creditors, Main Accounting and Management (including follow up).
- Responded to three internal audit reports on Project Management, Performance Management and Planning Enforcement. Project Management was given a Substantial level of assurance with one priority 3 action reported. Performance Management was given a Substantial level of assurance with no priority actions. Planning Enforcement was given reasonable assurance with two priority 2 actions and one priority 3 action. Management have responded to all priority actions.
- The 2023/24 annual assurance report from the Internal Auditor is not expected until June 2024.
- 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 2023/24 none of the Internal Audit reports fell into this category.
- Responded to complaints investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) reporting six monthly to Members. For 2023/24 two decisions have been received; the Ombudsman declined to investigate both complaints as one did not fall within its remit and one was closed after initial enquiries with no further action.
- The Authority's arrangements for handling Member Code of Conduct complaints are in place and published. One complaint was received towards the end of 2023/24 and is being dealt with in accordance with the agreed process.
- 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 worked 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 November 2020.
- The NPG grant is static for 24/25 at £6,698,847, however it has been confirmed we will receive a supplementary grant of £500K to be split equally between capital and revenue expenditure. We received the Biodiversity Net Gain grant again for £27K. We also received an additional capital grant of £523,500 for the purchase of land at Boarsgrove and additional funding from FiPL of £614K.

(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?

- Performance and Business Plan published;
- Monthly and Annual Authority Solicitor 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 3rd 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 and Authority Plan 2023 - 2028;
- Financial information including outturns, Statement of 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 or audio visual webcast of meetings of the Authority and its Committees;
- Publish work programmes for the Authority and its Committees;
- Committee Reports and Minutes;
- Resource 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, Equality and Legal advice, Climate Change considerations;
- 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 and Authority Plan 2023 - 2028 in place.
- The Authority audio visually broadcasts its Authority and Committee meetings via YouTube and offers a watch again facility on the internet. 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;
 - Sign up to agreed Statements of Common Ground on cross boundary planning policy issues
- (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 Partnership and Delivery Groups and annual report;
- In December 2022 the Authority adopted the National Park Management Plan 2023-28 and Authority Plan 2023-28 to commence from 1st April 2023.
- 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 by the CEO with the meetings of Derbyshire Chief Executives and of South Yorkshire Combined Authority Chief Executives
- Engagement with Defra and other Government departments;
- LEP Membership;
- Engagement with Business Peak District, Nature Peak District and Visit Peak District and Derbyshire;
- Peak District Land Managers' Forum
- Appointments to Outside Bodies and supporting guidance;
- National Park Authority draft internal and external communications plans;
- Partnership working when preparing bids and delivering externally funded projects;
- Examples of Partnerships such as Moors for the Future, Generation Green Coalition and Service Level Agreements e.g. Derbyshire County Council for payroll services;
- The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme Local Assessment Panel including key stakeholder organisation, farmer and land manager representatives;

- A range of studies delivered helping to shape Local Plan policies;
- Partnership Policy and Protocol;
- Due Diligence Panel and registers
- Engagement with Heads of Planning Groups (e.g. Derbyshire, South Yorkshire, English National Parks)
- Trails Steering Group
- Trans Pennine Trail Partnership
- Stange Forum

Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness

- Approved the new reporting process for the Moors for the Future Partnership for a Business Strategy to 2030 and an Annual Business Plan. The plan included the commitments in the financial year 2023/24 and the Strategy allowed for planning for the future to 2028.
- National Park Authorities work together and have service level agreements for communications and provision of new Member inductions.
- 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 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 observer involvement in South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority meetings.
- Business Peak District, Nature Peak District and Visit Peak District and Derbyshire continue to work together 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 includes a memorandum of understanding with Derbyshire authorities on the duty to cooperate in relation to planning.
- Moors for the Future Partnership continues to deliver landscape scale conservation, science and communications in 2024, with circa £3m of peatland restoration work planned in the 2024-25 financial year. Water company Asset Management Period 7 (AMP7 2020-2025) has seen MFFP successfully evolve our funding base from a proportionately high reliance on grant funding (EU LIFE et al), through the two previous water company investment periods (AMPs 5 & 6). The present funding mix remains blended as in previous AMP periods, but where grant funds account for circa one third of the total funding commitments. The remainder has been secured from private sector partner funding and other direct funding (including Green Finance) from our partner base. This has increased the diversity of funding in the programme intentionally, and as a result the financial operating resilience of the team is improved, and both the pace and scale of the work continue to grow year on year. In tandem with our ongoing programme of delivery, in 2024-25 the partnership will be agreeing the collaborative work for the period 2025-30 (AMP8), where significant further investment is expected to maintain strong progress toward the partnership vision of a resilient and sustainable peatland landscape.
- Ongoing partnership working with user groups and residents to develop management plans in relation to the most-visited estates/assets, namely North Lees and the Trails.

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

We will:

- (12) Underpin our Corporate Strategy outcome 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 plan to support our 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 new Engagement Service and existing Policy and Communities functions.
- (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.
- (18) Ensure the work to transform the most degraded upland landscape across Europe, The Dark Peak and South Pennines, continues on its present positive trajectory through the Moors for the Future Partnership.

What evidence/assurance is in place?

- Surveys (Residents, Visitors, Bus Users, Planning, Customer feedback and the Service User Survey (Includes Customer and Democratic 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;
- National Park Authority draft internal and external communications plans;
- 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;
- Role descriptions in place for Chair, Members and Member Champion 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;
- Parish bulletins

Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness

- We have reviewed our service users survey to ensure relevant data is captured and developed online versions to appeal to all visitors and service users.
- Parishes newsletter sent out regularly to all Parish Councils and Meetings within National Park Boundary
- Local Plan questionnaires and surveys
- Community Engagement - We have a page on our website which details how the Authority can help Communities including neighbourhood and village plans and developing community led projects. A communities small grant scheme is also available.
- Regular Chief Executive update reports to Authority meetings
- Role description for Members and role of Member Champions being reviewed by the Governance Review Working Group.
- Started regular Chief Executive Roadshows around the National Park giving the public chance to raise issues directly with the Chief Executive.

<p>(C) Core Principle Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.</p>
<p>Sub Principle: C(1) Defining Outcomes</p>
<p>We will:</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Clearly communicate the vision and outcomes for the National Park through the National Park Management Plan supported by the Authority Plan, Local Plan and the Landscape Strategy and Action Plan providing the strategic direction for the Authority. (2) Clearly communicate our five-year Authority Plan, 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 Authority Plan and medium term financial planning processes are aligned and reviewed annually and bi-annually. (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 five-year Authority Plan and Annual Performance & Business Plan. (6) Be clear about standards of service to be provided within resources available.
<p>What evidence/assurance is in place?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority Plan and Medium term (3-5 years) strategic and financial planning strategy; • National Park Management Plan (NPMP), and Annual Monitoring Report supported by National Park Management Plan Partnership and Delivery Groups – 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; • New National Park Management Plan 2023-28 adopted. • Service Plans including risk registers; • 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 Management Team and Programmes and Resources Committee • Insurance Policies; • Building security systems; • Annual Performance and Business Plan; • Annual Statement of Accounts.
<p>Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authority adopted the Development Management Policies and Policies Map in May 2019 to form part 2 of the adopted Local Plan for the National Park. • 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.

- Spatial outcomes in Local Plan to be reviewed through comprehensive review and engagement process.
- Work has continued to develop the One Nature Recovery Plan for the place with partners with a final version to be shared with Authority members for formal adoption in April 2024. The National Park Authority’s role in the development of the six constituent authority’s Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) is as a supporting authority. The Peak District Nature Recovery Plan will be used to support and influence the six LNRS’s. as well as the National Park Management Plan and Local Plan.
- 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.
- Adopted a Local Validation Checklist for Planning Applications.
- Approved a lawful development certificate checklist.
- Pre-application planning advice service recommenced

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 to 2027/28 – reviewed and approved by the Authority in March 2023;
- 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, Authority Plan and service actions;
- Customer Satisfaction Surveys;
- Complaints procedure and bi-annual/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.
- Undertake updates of housing delivery through annual monitoring and topic reporting as part of Local Plan review from 2021 through to summer 2025.
- Asset Management Plan approved by Authority.
- The Programmes and Resources Committee - Climate Change Member Task Group established in

2019, it was later agreed to change this to a Steering Group with amended Terms of Reference and Members will be appointed annually at the Authority AGM. The Steering Group ended on 31st March as it had successfully embedded climate change into the new National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan.

- The Authority has contributed to and endorsed the National Parks England Climate Change Position Statement.
- The Authority was commissioned to carry out a further Environmental Land Management (ELM) Test and Trail on National Park Authorities role as local convenor and in local delivery on behalf the English National Park Authorities. The test will look at five areas - spatial prioritisation; bringing national, regional and local strategies, plans and priorities together into one comprehensive ask of farmers and land managers; how to access and blend national funds with private and green finance; National Park Authorities working with arm's length bodies; and developing an adviser network. Phase 1 of the test started in September 2023 and will be completed by September 2024.
- The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme has funded £1.9m of farmer/land manager led projects delivering for climate, nature, people and place.
- A legislative constitutional framework has been introduced which creates a new category of Retained EU Law (now known as Assimilated Law) to avoid uncertainty and gaps in UK law after 31st December 2020, when EU law ceased to apply in the UK. This retains many of the EU laws which were in force and applicable prior to Brexit, effectively incorporating them into UK law, distinguishing them from EU law and allowing them to develop differently in the future.
- During 2022/23 the Resources Management Meeting considered a Carbon Management Plan progress report and this was also reported to the Programmes and Resources Committee.
- The Climate Change overview was reported to the Programmes and Resources Committee in September 2023 and the Landscape and Nature Recovery overview in January 2024.
- Joint Working Group on Housing with Derbyshire Dales District Council started in March 2024.
- Monthly enforcement meetings held with Chief Executive, Head of Planning and Principle Enforcement Planner.

(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 Authority Plan 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
- Authority Plan updates highlight actions and interventions with communities (including grants and progress on neighbourhood plans)
- Reporting on progress with the NPMP through the Delivery Group with annual report to members.

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.
- Carried out the annual review of the minerals & local finance plan.
- 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.
- 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.
- Adoption of Supplementary Planning Document for Residential Annexes in 2021.
- Adoption of Supplementary Planning Document for conversion of historic buildings in January 2022.
- 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.
- The Public Participation Scheme is being reviewed by the Governance Review Working Group.

Sub Principle: D(2) Planning Interventions

We will:

- (4) Implement our strategic and financial planning cycle for development, review and monitoring of:
 - NPMP;
 - Local Plan;
 - Corporate Strategy;
 - Medium Term Financial Plan;
 - Performance and Business Plan;
 - Service Plans.
- (5) 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.
- (6) Ensure our risk management policy, strategy and processes cover risk management for partnerships.
- (7) Make sure that our Procurement Strategy and Contract Procedure Rules are robust but provide additional flexibility when needed.
- (8) Implement a performance management system with:
 - identified measures of success/indicators and targets which cascade into service plans and individual objectives;
 - half yearly monitoring and annual reporting of performance;
 - identified leads for data owners and data collectors with appropriate checks on quality of

information.

- (9) 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 by 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;
- Internal Communications Plan;
- Media protocol;
- Evidence base for National Park Management Plan, Strategies, Local Plan;
- Residents and Service User Surveys;
- Constituent Council and Parish Council liaison meetings;
- New National Park Management Plan 2023-28 agreed by the Authority on 2nd December 2022. Supported by NPMP Partnership Group to oversee and review delivery.
- 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 biannually 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;
- Authority Plan;
- 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 2023 – March 2024. 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.
- Approved the work plan for the Programmes and Resources Committee for 2023-2024.
- The Management Team of the Chief Executive and Heads of Service have continued to meet monthly to discuss performance and identify ways of working together to address issues where performance targets may be off target.

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

We will:

- (10) Implement our Medium Term Financial Plan by:
- Implementing a programme of reducing input costs to those areas given strategic certainty;
 - Managing the 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.
- (11) 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.

(12) 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;
- Budget Monitoring meetings with Members (Q2, Q3 and outturn);
- Budget monitoring report considered by officer performance monitoring group (Q2, Q3 and outturn);
- Medium Term (3-5 years) Strategic and Financial Planning Strategy;
- National Park Purposes;
- Authority Plan;
- 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

- Members continued to be involved in preparing the 2024/25 Budget through Strategic Financial Workshops held in October, and November 2023.
- 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 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 AGS 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, Discover England and Generation Green project. 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.
- The Peak District National Park is one of forty-four Protected Landscapes receiving Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme funding. Originally for three years from 2021/22 through to 2023/24 the programme has been well received and has received additional funding for 2023/24 and for a fourth year. The funding for the Peak District National Park was increased from £1.3M to £1.9M for 2023/24 and £2.6M for 2024/25. These increases were announced as part of the agricultural transition funding in the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan. Further work is on-going to explore the future of the programme beyond 31 March 2025.
- Our charitable foundation is now launched and raising income through visitor giving, donations and sponsorship. This is helping to change mindsets amongst volunteers, employees and Members. 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 2023/24 on the 2nd February 2024 and the Budget report included a forward look in terms of the Authority's Medium Term Financial Plan (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
 - 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 Champions 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 Delivery Group;
- Authority Members appointed to Outside Bodies;
- Learning and Development Policy for Staff;
- Investors in People Delivery Group in conjunction with Staff Survey results identify corporate learning needs ;
- Staff annual learning and development and induction programmes;
- Individual staff learning and development opportunities;
- Retainment of Investors in People Accreditation.

Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness

- The Tool Kit for the Disposal of Assets was amended in 2020 following a scrutiny review by Members.
- Approved a new Asset Management Plan (2020-2024)
- The responses from the Investors in People online questionnaire were analysed with an Investors in People Delivery Group set up to develop and agree an action plan. Performance against the action plan is being monitored.
- The Investors in People Delivery group identified three priority areas and created sub working groups to deliver agreed actions. The areas are 1. Communicating our values group 2. Building recognition and

- reward awareness, and 3. Enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion in our workplace.
- After achieving IIP Silver level of 'We invest in Wellbeing' award, the Wellbeing agenda and action plan has been incorporated into the Health and Safety Committee which meets quarterly.
- Major organisational changes proposed by Chief Executive in February 2023 were implemented during the period October to December 2023.

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 Officer
 and 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.
- (9) Ensure we have an effective Management Team in place with appropriate skills and experience, working coherently to achieve high levels of confidence in the NPA internally and externally.
- (10) 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.
- (11) Identify learning and development needs for Officers 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.
- (12) 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.
- (13) Implement the appraisal process for Secretary of State Members.
- (14) Use our appraisal process to appraise the performance of individual staff and maximise the contribution of staff through individual objectives and development plans.
- (15) 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 Champion 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;
- Management 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 2022/23 was 57% and for participation in formal meetings was 74%. During 2022/23, 30% of Members had personal development plans and 73% completed a self-assessment.
- 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 figures are reported annually to the Annual Meeting in July. In 2019 the overall attendance level was 81%, with 72.4% in 2019/20, 85% in 2020/21, 64% in 2021/22. The 2022/23 figure was 74% and this was reported to the Authority on 7 July 2023.
- The Authority has established a Panel to oversee the process for making appointments in key positions at the Annual Meeting each year. This was reviewed by the Governance Working Group in May 2020 and the conclusion was that the Appointment Process Panel did make a significant contribution to the smooth running of the Annual Meeting and should therefore continue.
- 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.
- Following the local government elections held in May 2023 6 new Members were appointed to the Authority,
- In 2023 the four yearly Parish Member elections were held and these resulted in 3 existing Parish Members re-elected and 3 new Parish Members elected.
- There were 2 Secretary of State Members appointed by Defra to existing vacancies in early 2023/24, Defra also re-appointed 3 existing Secretary of State Members for a further term of office following business cases submitted by the Authority. A Secretary of State Member resigned in December 2023, so a vacancy was carried until April 2024.
- All new Members appointed in 2023 went through an induction process.
- 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 (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.
- In 2023/24 a career grade, level 2 apprentice Customer and Democratic Support Team (CDST) adviser post was created, Once the apprenticeship is completed the post holder will move into the CDST adviser post. Looking forward the Authority will have four level 7 planning apprentices in 2024/25.
- Apprenticeships/trainees/career grades will be considered for all vacant posts.
- The Authority has created a training academy, in addition to apprentices, this will also encourage the use of traineeships, student placement etc. So far in 2024/25 the Authority has employed two trainees, in wellbeing and practical conservation.
- Management Team development programme supporting greater awareness of strengths of the team and creation of a Team Charter highlighting the behaviours we aim to exemplify as a management team

(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 Management Team and Programmes and Resources Committee
- Insurance Policies;
- Building security systems.

Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness

- During 2023/24 Members reviewed the year end position for the Corporate Risk Register and approved the proposed Corporate Risk Register for the year.
- The Corporate Risk Register for 2023/24 was developed by the Management Team by:
 - Reviewing the 2022/23 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 Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) performance for the PDNPA for the previous year with particular reference to corporate initiatives, making further significant improvements and to performance indicators
 - Accident and incident data and analysis for the year 2022/23 for staff and visitors including near-miss reporting
 - A report on OSH services provided to other National Parks
 - Recommended priorities and actions for 2023/24 and beyond.
- 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.
- The Authority has given Officers the authority needed and insurance contracts have been let for the 2020-25 period.

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;
- Bi-annual Performance Reports to Authority Meetings from 2020, previously reported quarterly;
- Bi-annual Performance Review meetings involving Managers from 2020, previously held quarterly;
- Employee performance against objectives is formally reviewed during the Enjoy conversation once a year in Q1 as part of the Performance Management (appraisal) 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 Programmes and 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 includes 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 regularly 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. Since the 2019 Annual Meeting these reports have been considered at meetings of the Authority and from 2020 the reports have been bi-annual.
- Approved the performance review element of the Performance and Business Plan.
- The six monthly budget monitoring meeting involving Authority Members has continued to meet.
- In the 2022/23 Members’ Survey 65% (15) respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had “appropriate performance data so that I know how well the Authority is delivering against its approve policies and plans”. 26% (6) neither agreed nor disagreed and none disagreed, 4% (1) disagreed and 4% (1) did not know.

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 staff during their induction.
- (12) Ensure that effective Internal and External Auditors are appointed and that they have direct contact with the Authority Meeting.

<p>(13) Ensure that the Authority Meeting is supported in its audit, scrutiny and standards roles.</p>
<p>What evidence/assurance is in place?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 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 the Authority Meeting; • Annual assurance and summary of activities reported to the Authority Meeting and included in Annual Governance Statement; • The terms of reference for the Authority Meeting include 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 regularly to discuss financial arrangements and assess the effectiveness of the control measures in place.
<p>Review of action and assurances indicating maintenance/improvement to effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authority Meeting received the 2022/23 Internal Audit Annual Report in May 2023. 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. 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. • Out of 7 areas reviewed in 2022/23 6 were given a substantial level of assurance and 1 was given a reasonable level of assurance. • The Authority Meeting in July 2023 approved the Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24. • The Authority meeting received the Internal Audit Reports and recommendations and proposed management action to address the issues raised. • 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 Authority Meeting. 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.
<p>Sub Principle: F(4) Managing Data</p>
<p>We will:</p>
<p>(14) Implement our Information Management Strategy led by our designated Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) and supported by a network of Information Asset Owners.</p> <p>(15) Develop and roll out our Data Protection charter which will include guidance on arrangements for sharing data.</p> <p>(16) Ensure our data is accurate and clean through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The measures outlined in the information management strategy; • The performance management processes
<p>What evidence/assurance is in place?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 3rd 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, moved to bi-annual reporting from 2020;
- Growth of datasets/types published online.
- On-line Data Protection training rolled out to Members in 2022.

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 Meeting and Members.

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 2022/23 for the final accounts and a satisfactory conclusion on value for money.
- Members approved the Treasury Management Policy Statement and Annual Treasury Management and

Investment Strategy at the Authority meeting in March 2024.

- The Authority considered the outturn for 2022/23 in July 2023 and approved the necessary appropriations to or from reserves and agreed unspent funds and overspends to be carried forward into the 2023/24 financial year.
- Developed Budget Proposals for 2023/24. The Government set a three-year spending review for 2022/23 to 2024/25 and based on these proposals we agreed and implemented a balanced budget for 2023/24.
- Defra have confirmed that our baseline funding for 2024/25 will remain static at £6,698,847K.
- The budget monitoring group met at Q2, Q3 and Outturn to review the budget. The Medium Term Financial Plan for 2024/25 to 2027/28 was presented to Members as part of the 2024/25 budget. This was set on the basis that the NPG for 2024/25 would be as based on the NPG agreement set in March 2021 which had given indicative values for 2023/24 and 2024/25, any changes to this would be reported back to Members as soon as practicable.
- The National Park Authority continues to work at a national level on behalf of the English National Park Authorities to influence further improvements to the existing Countryside Stewardship Scheme and the design of the new Environmental Land Management schemes (Sustainable Farm Incentive, Countryside Stewardship/Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery). Uncertainty and complexity remain about the future of farming and land management as the full details of and particularly payment levels for ELM are not yet known, multiple new support programmes have been announced and the reductions in the Basic Payment Scheme really begin to impact on businesses. We have worked directly with Defra in testing and trialling the new Environmental Land Management approach, and through National Parks England have set out our vision for the future of farming in protected landscapes and are establishing a Nature Recovery Team.
- The 2017/18 AGS identified risk around a failure to influence the transposing of EU laws and legislation for landscape and the environment into UK law after Article 50 remained until 2021. Progress has been made with for example hedgerow protection, although the legal process will not be completed until later in 2024/25. However, concerns remain particularly for dry stone wall protection now that cross compliance has ended.
- The area of land within the National Park in an agri-environment scheme land management option remained a concern, but it was recognised that this was not within the Authority's control. The Authority has continued to work with other English National Parks (through NPE) increasingly with other Protected Landscape organisations and with DEFRA to influence the design of future Environmental Land Management (ELM) approach. The learnings from the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme continue to be shared with various Defra teams to help inform successful design and delivery of ELM in Protected Landscapes.

(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 committees.

What evidence/assurance is in place?

- Key governance documents, including Standing Orders, are published on the Authority's 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 and visual 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.
- 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, Management Team and Members. Following the re-structure in 2023 the Authority Solicitor is also the Monitoring Officer.
- (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 2022/23 in February 2024.
- Final progress report on National Park Management Plan 2018-23 to the Authority in April 2023
- Year end performance report, 2022/23 Performance and Business Plan and 2023/24 Corporate Risk Register reported to the Authority in May 2023.
- Revised Risk Management Policy approved by the Authority in November 2023.
- Decile 1 Progress Report of the Authority Plan reported to the Authority in November 2023.
- Authority Plan 2023-28 Update and Year 2 Look Forward (2024/25 Decile 3 & 4) reported to the Authority in February 2024

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 & Social Care 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 Authority Meetings;
- 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

- The Authority received and noted the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) Annual Review letter for 2022/23.
- Members considered the 2022/23 Annual External Audit Report in February 2024 which gave:
 - 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.
 - 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.
- The 2022/23 External Audit Strategy Memorandum from our External Auditors, Mazars was reported to Members in May 2023.
- Received a report summarising the work carried out on planning appeals from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. In 2023/24 36 new planning appeals were received of which 17 were still in hand. 31 appeals had been determined, of these 35% were allowed and 65% were dismissed. The percentage of appeals dismissed is 6% higher than in the previous year but it should be noted that on such low numbers currently one appeal decision can change the percentages by 2.5%.