

APPENDIX 1

Peak District National Park Authority Review of Scrutiny

Chief Executive's Report

Recommendations agreed

a) The Authority should continue to include scrutiny as a formal part of its governance, led by members and reporting to the Audit and Performance Committee. It is scrutiny by us, of us and for us. This should be treated by officers as a serious part of the Authority's work programme and central to our governance and commitment to performance improvement.

b) Only one formal scrutiny topic should be examined at any one time and selection of topics should be as required rather than following any particular timetable. As a rule, the terms of reference should be agreed by the Audit and Performance Committee on a recommendation from the group and that this should be tested against the questions:

- Does the issue relate to a significant corporate area, e.g. related to achievement of the Performance Improvement Plan, National Park Management Plan or similar corporate plan?
- Is there a significant performance issue evidenced by data, auditor's report or significant customer feedback?
- Does that performance issue relate to poor performance or risks related to high achievement?
- Is there a need for the voice and concerns of communities to be heard?

c) Scrutiny groups should reflect the breadth of member backgrounds and skills and all members of the Authority should be considered and not just members of Audit and Performance Committee. Care should be taken to ensure that skills reflect the topics chosen. Co-opted members can be added to supplement skills and bring an external and/or expert perspective.

d) For each scrutiny group a Director (or Chief Executive) will agree a programme of officer support with RMT and the Chair of the scrutiny group, including potentially specialist officer support, a seconded member of staff, corporate support and/or consultants. This should, follow project management style and be clear about the specific support needed by the team.

e) The scrutiny process should begin with a clear discussion and agreed plan that identifies how evidence will be gathered, how it will be weighed up and what sort of consultation will be engaged in. This will be reflected in the project plan. Techniques that allow for evidence-based investigations and that include non-aggressive environments and styles (active listening, sympathetic questioning, more open sharing of information) will be developed.

f) Scrutiny reports will, generally, be short (no more than 10 pages) with few (no more than 5) recommendations. These will, as necessary, be discussed and agreed by the group and subsequently discussed with the Management Team. The report will include an agreed timeline for the Management Team response to be provided and this will include clear responsibilities for action and resources.

g) 'Micro-scrutiny' inquiries (where officers meet members for a briefing and discussion of topics, perhaps only once) should be used more frequently, particularly

to re-assure members of topics which may not necessarily be suitable for scrutiny, but do raise concerns. These should be commissioned by any Committee but will report back to the next Audit and Performance Committee meeting.

h) Scrutiny is a part of the Authority's governance and accountability and so should be more visible. Greater effort should be made to engage communities in the work of scrutiny by publicising the work more, engaging the public in the work of scrutiny, integrating the work into the Authority's programme of engagement with communities and making the analysis and results more visible on the website.