

YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the special meeting held at Yoredale, Bainbridge on Monday, 15 January 2007.

Present:

J Blackie, Mrs A Brooks (in the Chair), SHK Butcher, W Fenten, C Lis, Mrs D Millward, Mrs FG Ramsbottom and W Weston.

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

1/07

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No notifications of public questions or of the intention to make a statement had been received.

2/07

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED –

That pursuant to Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of Item No 7 on the agenda on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

3/07

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from RA Bird, C Hammond, TRN Harrison-Topham and D Ireton.

4/07

**DECLARATIONS OF THE EXISTENCE AND NATURE
OF PERSONAL INTERESTS**

Mrs D Millward and A Osborne declared personal non-prejudicial interests in Agenda Item No 6, the former having a professional involvement in the Limestone Country Project and the latter being an employee of Defra.

5/07

DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING

No declarations of lobbying were made at the meeting.

6/07

BUDGET 2007/08

CONSIDERED – the report of the Senior Finance Officer and the Head of Finance and Resources.

[Note: J Blackie declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in the item, particularly in relation to staff pensions, being a member of North Yorkshire County Council's Pension Fund Committee.]

Members discussed the report and recommendations in detail, raising a number of issues, including:

- in endorsing the proposed budget for 2007/08, suggesting that opportunities for accessing additional income be pursued, including through the Authority's retail operation
- accepting, for 2008/09 onwards, the recommendation to 'round up' to 70% the limit of staff costs as a percentage of the Authority's core Defra grant, whilst requesting some comparisons with other Authorities
- supporting the need to give preliminary consideration to reviewing staffing costs, including the following areas – pension scheme contributions; staff benefits and contract additions; freezes on salary progression and staff numbers.

RESOLVED –

That:

- (a) the report be noted and the 2007/08 budget, as presented, be supported and recommended to the Authority for approval;
- (b) the projections for the 2008/09 and 2009/10 financial years be noted;
- (c) the proposal to limit staff costs to 70% of the DEFRA Grant from 2008/09 be approved;
- (d) officers be instructed to report further to the Committee on options for reducing staff costs, including the examination of:
 - Pension scheme contributions
 - Staff benefits and contract 'additions'
 - Freezes on salary progression
 - Staffing levels

with these issues to be considered in the light of comparative information from other National Park Authorities and any similar appropriate organisations.

The remainder of business was considered in private.

7/07

NORTHERN OFFICE UPDATE

CONSIDERED - the Committee considered a report, circulated at the meeting, that had been considered and endorsed by the Northern Office Sub-Committee. The report addressed the outcome of discussions with the contractor and recommended settlement of the final contract cost.

RESOLVED –

That the recommendation of the Northern Office Sub-Committee be endorsed and the Chief Executive instructed to advise the contractor accordingly and seek conclusion of the outstanding contractual matters.