Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
Finance and Resources Committee **Item 2**

Minutes of the meeting held at Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Officers, Yoredale, Bainbridge, Leyburn DL8 3EL, on Tuesday, 25 February 2025.

Members Present:

Libby Bateman, Richard Foster, Michael Hanley, Neil Heseltine, Julie Hutton (Chair), Peter Jackson, Simon Myers, David Noland, Stuart Parsons, Jenny Purcell, Karin Sedgwick, Derek Twine

Co-opted Members: Zachary Anderson, Katie Norgate

Copies of all Documents considered are in the Minute Book

51/24 Apologies

No Apologies were received.

52/24 Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2024, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

53/24 Public Questions / Statements

No public questions or statements had been received.

54/24 Declarations of Lobbying

There were no declarations of lobbying.

55/24 Audit Report and letter of representation (Late Item)

The External Auditor from Forviz Mazars provided the context and difficulties faced nationally producing delayed Audits. Guidance had still not been issued about how to rebuild assurance for previous years audits. He thanked the Head of Finance and staff for their hard work.

The Committee **Considered** the report of the Head of Finance.

Resolved – To note the Audit Completion Report and approve that the Chair of the Finance and Resources committee sign the revised Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24.

56/24 Draft Budget 2025/26 including Medium Term Strategy

The Committee **Considered** and **Noted** the report of the Head of Finance

Members' attention was drawn to :

- A balanced budget for 2025/26
- The use of £250k from the General reserve and £161k of earmarked reserves (primarily B4RN shares and legacies).
- An increase in internally generated income targets by £189k and a number of programme cuts totalling £128k to balance the budget.
- A significant cut to the Sustainable Development Fund of £55k. This will require Members to approve a decrease in the target from 15 to 10 schemes in 2025/26.
- The assumed core revenue grant from Defra is a flat settlement of £5.2m, effectively a cut in the core grant we received in 2024/25.

Resolved – To approve the draft budget for 2025/26 and indicative budgets for 2026/27 and 2027/28 (**Appendix 1**), and the Reserves Strategy (**Appendix 5**), for submission to the full Authority for final approval.

57/24 Local Government Pension Scheme Employer Discretions Policy

The Committee **Considered** and **Noted** the report of the Director of Corporate Services.

Resolved –To adopt the revised Local Government Pension Scheme Employer Discretions Policy and amendments to the Flexible Working Policy.

58/24 Financial Progress report: 3rd quarter to 31st December 2024

The Committee **Considered** and **Noted** the report of the Treasurer.

A Member sought clarification on the significant variance to the Public Rights of Way budget. The Director of Park Services explained the delay to work programmes but gave reassurance that the majority was on course to be received by the year end and with no significant underspend.

A Member requested more detail on the increase in car park rates and any proposed increase to EV charging rates . The Director of Park Services responded with details of the increases to parking fees and how the Authority monitors the EV charge out rates and usage but there were no immediate plans to increase EV charge rates.

59/24 Treasury Management Performance Quarterly Report

The Committee **Considered** and **Noted** the report of the Treasurer.

60/24 Staffing

The Committee **Considered** and **Noted** the report of the Head of Human Resources.

A Member asked for an update on the previously reported vacancies of staff in the Planning Team.
The Head of Humans Resources confirmed all posts have been filled and staff would be in place by the end of March 2025.

61/24 Sickness Absence

The Committee **Considered** and **Noted** the report of the Senior Administrative Officer.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 11:47 a.m.