Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Item 5

Finance & Resources Committee

20 May 2025

Budget Update 2025/26

Purpose of report

1. To update Members on the most recent discussions with Defra; to provide Members with the final position on Defra grants for 2025/26 and to seek approval for the additional Capital expenditure for 2025/26.

Recommendation

2. That Members note the update and approve the capital expenditure proposals for 2025/26 in the Annex.

Strategic Planning Framework

3. The information and recommendations contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's strategic planning framework, and in particular:

   - **Corporate Plan objective 28**:
     Plan and manage the Authority's work so as to make the most effective use of its resources, including generating sufficient income to maintain expenditure at the same level as 2014/15 in real terms across the extended National Park area

Background

4. The Authority approved the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) at its meeting on 31 March 2025. Due to the fluidity of the financial discussions with Government a number of verbal updates were provided at that meeting. We now have the definitive figures from Government for our Grant funding, and these are set out below:

Final Settlement

REVENUE	**£000**	**£000**
Revenue Grant	4,800.8	
Contribution to NPE subs	20.0	
		4820.8

CAPITAL		
Replacement for revenue cut	429.0	
Access For All grant	113.1	
Additional Capital grant	1140.0	
		1682.1
TOTAL GRANT		**6502.9**

5. The impact on our future spending plans, of this additional capital grant, is very positive in that it enables us to accelerate some of our plans which, as well as delivering our ambitions, should lead to some 'invest to save' initiatives.

6. Importantly, we have been able to identify 3 schemes that were initially due to be funded from revenue in the last financial year. We are now able to use the additional capital grant to fund these 3 schemes. This enables us to put the revenue back into our reserves. The impact of this approach on our finances is to reduce our call on reserves in 25/26 from £656.4k reported to the NPA in March, to £83k.

7. The 3 schemes are:

Description	**Programme**	**Value**
Langcliffe Quarry Ranger base	Ranger	£221k
SDF Capital Projects	Sustainable Development Fund	£106k
Leased Vehicles	Various	£363k
Total		**£690k**

Future Financial Prospects

8. Representatives from the English NPAs recently met with Ministers and Officials from Defra to discuss the funding position and the prospects for the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR).

9. The meeting was helpful in setting out further detail and the context of the 2025/26 financial settlement though, unsurprisingly, less helpful in terms of the prospects for National Parks in the coming CSR. We were notified that, although the headline CSR results will be known by Summer, the internal business planning within individual Government Depts is unlikely to be concluded before Jan/Feb 2026. This is well outside the budget planning timetable that has previously been reported to Members.

10. Members will need to consider what approach they wish to adopt in producing the Authority's MTFS for 2026/27 – 2028/29 within the next few months. Officers have already started some scenario planning to assist in these deliberations and

these will be brought to Members for discussion as part of these considerations in due course.

11. A positive from the recent discussions was that our concerns about a one-off, one-year Capital grant allocation have been addressed to some extent. There is an expectation in Government that these capital allocations are likely to continue for future years, but the content and detail will not be known until the CSR Business planning has concluded.

Additional Capital Grant Allocation

12. After the allocations set out in Paragraph 7, there is still £567k capital grant available. When this funding was announced by Government it came with criteria for eligible spend. This is divided into two streams. Activities may be directed towards:

    • innovation, investing-to-save, and income-generation, and/or
    • delivery of 30 by 30 targets.

13. Although the additional capital money is very welcome, the lateness of the announcement does create some issues for the Authority. In this first year, 2025-26, it is key that the total capital allocation across the National Park family, is fully utilised. In the YDNPA we believe we can achieve this but in planning for it we believe we would need to initially over commit on the planned expenditure. The details are shown on the attached Annex.

14. More importantly, with time for improved planning and preparation in future years, we should be able to concentrate our spending far more on schemes and programmes that deliver more for nature and specifically the Government's ambitions around 30 x 30. That should be reflected in future proposals that come before Members, and it is an area of work that will need some time allocating to it over the coming year.

15. For the current year it is proposed that the additional capital funding be allocated to the projects identified on the attached **Annex**.

Legal Implications

16. None

Equality Impact Assessment

17. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the budget and the proposals it describes, with specific reference to the protected characteristics prescribed by the Equalities Act 2010. This assessment concluded that the proposals have no adverse impact with respect to equalities.

David Butterworth	**Michelle Clyde**
Chief Executive	**Treasurer**

Annex

Description	Programme	Value
		£'000
Available Budget		567
30 X 30 Programme		
Semerwater SSSI improvements	Farm Conservation	TBN
Climate Change Mitigation/adaptation		
Grassington toilets solar panels	Toilets	4.0
Horton toilets solar panels	Toilets	4.5
Buckden toilets solar panels	Toilets	4.5
Stainforth toilets solar panels	Toilets	4.5
Grassington centre solar panels	National Park Centre	7.0
DCM ranger roof solar panels	DCM	6.0
Colvend workshop solar panels	Corporate	8.0
Battery storage at Dales Museum	DCM	22.0
Battery storage at Yoredale office	Corporate	22.0
Battery storage at Colvend office	Corporate	22.0
Project Manager and consultant fees for roof replacements (including Malham), solar panel installs and battery storage	Corporate	21.3
Improved Access for all Facilities		
Malham changing places toilet	National Park Centre	63.0
NPA Infrastructure Improvements/invest to save		
Stainforth toilet block re-roof	Toilets	20.0
Horton toilet re-roof	Toilets	20.0
Malham full re-design	National Park Centre	43.0
Malham centre re-roof	National Park Centre	32.0
Colvend office roof replacement	Corporate	12.0
IT upgrade network switches	Corporate	10.0
Wallgate sink replacements (new trough and sensor taps)	Toilets	35.0
Dales Museum – train porch install and platform ramp replacements	DCM	28.0
Dales Museum - train secondary glazing	DCM	6.0
Dales Museum – secondary glazing engine shed	DCM	15.0
Dales Museum – new heating system engine shed	DCM	15.0
Dales Museum – Project Manager and consultant fees	DCM	6.4
Grassington car park extension/upgrade-grasscrete	CarParks	125.0
Car parks re-design/planning (EV/blue badge/capacity)	CarParks	40.0
Total Additional Capital Projects		596.2
Over Committed		(29)