Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
Finance and Resources Committee

Item 4

Minutes of the meeting held at Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Officers, Yoredale, Bainbridge, Leyburn DL8 3EL, on Tuesday, 28 May 2024.

Members Present:

Libby Bateman, Phil Dew, Richard Foster, Neil Heseltine, Peter Jackson, David Noland, Neil Swain and Derek Twine (Chair)

Copies of all Documents considered are in the Minute Book

13/24 Apologies For Absence

Apologies were received from Julie Hutton, Simon Myers, Stuart Parsons, Jenny Purcell and Karin Sedgwick.

14/24 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2024, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

15/24 Public Questions / Statements

No public questions or statements had been received.

16/24 Declarations of Lobbying

There were no declarations of lobbying.

17/24 Financial Outturn for the year ending 31 March 2024

The Authority **Considered** the report and presentation of the Head of Finance

Members' attention was drawn to the following:

- That gross income was well above the objective (by over £2.5m) but slightly below the budget (by £347k).
- The gross income was down but additional net income of £320K was secured.

DRAFT

- External projects are increasingly contributing towards the Authority's corporate costs i.e. staff and overheads, rather than simply covering the direct cost of the project.

Members queries included the following:

- How did the underspend of £150K on the FiPL project come about?

In response the Head of Finance explained that certain applicants pulled out of the project late in the day and that hard cut off dates added to this.

- Can part of the underspend of £62K on the Westmorland Dales Project be allocated to Tebay Parish Council to continue with a project at Tebay that was started under the Project?

The Chief Executive responded that Tebay Parish Council were welcome to put forward a detailed proposal for funding to the Authority for consideration and that an application to the Sustainable Development Fund may be appropriate.

- Clarification was requested about National Trails, who provide income for the Rights of Way programme.

The Chief Executive gave details of the Authority's involvement in National Trails (the Pennine Way, Pennine Bridleway and the Coast to Coast) and information about the Pennine National Trails Partnership (PNTP) and partner organisations involved. The Authority is the lead body for the PNTP.

Resolved – To note the contents of the report and approve the carry forward of 2023/24 budget allocations into 2024/25, totalling **£355k (net)** as detailed in **Appendix 5** of the report.

18/24 Action Plan

The Committee **Considered** and **Noted** the report of the Deputy Chief Executive presented by the Chief Executive.

Members attention was drawn to the following:

- Action 5.7 of the Annex has now been completed and will be removed from the action plan.
- An additional action will be added - To Review Priorities.
- An additional spend of £77k has been underwritten by the Chief Executive under his urgency powers to cover the increase in costs of the Cautley Bridge/Cross Keys project which are as a result of Planning conditions, a higher specification of work required and a crane for overbridging.
- The Chief Executive suggested it would be helpful to establish a steering group for the Hawes-Garsdale multiuser route in order to work on the detail of the routes delivery. The group would report to Finance and Resources Committee.

DRAFT

- The Action Plan is ambitious and stretching. There has been a lot of discussion about whether we might be over reaching but, on balance, Officers believe what Members have before them is achievable based on what we know at present.

In **Response** to Members' questions:

The Chief Executive agreed to contact Richard Foster to confirm whether there will be any consultation/the process for the new accessible town trails leaflets (Action 8.1 of the Annex).

Resolved –To approve the Action Plan for 2024-25 as the basis for managing the Authority's day to day work in 2024/25 with the addition of an action to Review Priorities. The Chief Executive to consult with the Chair, Deputy Chair of F&R on Terms of Reference and establish a Hawes-Garsdale multiuser route steering group.

19/24 Treasury Management Performance 2023/24

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

In **Response** to Members' questions

The Head of Finance explained the process of acquiring the shares in B4RN and confirmed that it is still a very good return on investment. Further opportunities for investment are diminishing because the voucher scheme from government is closing.

20/24 Income Generation Strategy: Progress Report Update

The Committee **Considered** and **Noted** the report of the deputy Chief Executive, presented by the Chief Executive.

In **Response** to Members' questions

The Chief Executive explained that 'Active Travel' funding can be used both within the National Park boundary and beyond to encourage more cycling, walking and more sustainable means of transport.

The Chief Executive clarified how new projects are found by officers and that all officers have a responsibility to look at future funding opportunities.

The Director of Park Services explained the new grant scheme Access Unlimited.

An explanation was provided about why the Revere Woodland' project is on hold while alternative sources of funding are sought. The Three Counties – One River' project is to be resubmitted to NLHF with a shift in the approach of the project to address the weaknesses identified in the failed bid.

The Chief Executive agreed to pick up the issue of consultation on the Access to Eden project with Phil Dew and Libby Bateman.

DRAFT

21/24 Annual Human Resources Report

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

22/24 Volunteer Resources Annual Report

The Committee **Considered** and **Noted** the report of the Volunteers Development Officer.

The Director of Park Services agreed to speak to the Volunteers Development Officer and confirm to Neil Swain if there was a particular explanation as to why there has been an increase in the number of volunteers leaving after 1-3 years.

Congratulations were extended to the Volunteers Development Officer by the Authority's Chair for the report and the challenge of managing the Volunteer programme.

23/24 Annual Health and Safety and Wellbeing Report

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

24/24 Staffing

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

It was noted that Vacancies FTE should total 5 not 3 on page 69 para 4.

25/24 Sickness Absence

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

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 12:04 a.m.

DRAFT