Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Item 5

Finance & Resources Committee

25 February 2025

Draft Budget 2025/26 including Medium Term Strategy

Purpose of report

1. To seek approval for:
   - the draft 2025/26 Budget and the associated Reserves Strategy; and
   - the indicative draft budgets for 2026-27 and 2027-28 and related actions.

Recommendation

2. That Members 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.

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 30**:
     Plan and manage the Authority's work so as to make the most effective use of our resources.

Background

4. The Authority is required to produce a balanced budget for the financial year ahead. This budget, together with projections for the following two years, constitute the Authority's three-year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Financial Outlook

5. The Authority's financial position looks more difficult than it has been for some time, at least in relation to Government financial support. Conversely, this outlook takes place at a time when the Authority has never been so successful in terms of its external income generation performance and consequently, the range of programmes that we currently undertake - from a Government core grant of £5.7m for 2024-25 we are generating work programmes worth over £15m.

6. Discussions with the new Government suggest a difficult few years to come for the UK's Protected Landscapes, which means our priorities for dealing with the Country's nature and climate emergencies and developing our engagement and health and wellbeing agendas will come under serious pressure.

7. Much of the detail for 2025-26 and future years has yet to be confirmed. This means we have had to make a series of assumption in producing this MTFS. These are set out below.

    - Our government grant in 2024/25 is £5.7 million. This included an uplift, of £500k. It was expected that this sum would form part of our Core Grant in future years. In the event, we have now had it confirmed that this uplift has been removed and, at best, we will receive a 'flat settlement' of £5.2m for the coming year. Defra has also indicated it is seeking to replace a proportion of this revenue grant (RDEL) with capital (CDEL) although we have no details yet of what this might entail. The vast majority of the Authority's expenditure is revenue; indeed, our current capital budget for 2025/26 is only £245k. If DEFRA replaces RDEL with CDEL above this figure, it may significantly affect our work programmes for 2025/26 and future years. The Authority is unlikely to receive confirmation of the core grant funding settlement before the end of March 2025. Consequently, we have assumed that our grant will remain 'flat' at £5.2m for the next 3 years.

    - In addition, unlike other local authorities, NPAs are explicitly excluded from the £515m Government National Insurance compensation grant. We have asked for assistance with this additional burden from DEFRA and have written formally to the Treasury Minister. Unless the Treasury provide funding to cover this, we will need to find £122k to cover the additional costs.

8. DEFRA has indicated a three-year settlement figure should be notified to protected landscapes in the summer after the completion of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). Consequently, we are recommending a strategy to Members which entails funding our plans and work programmes for 2025-26 through a series of measures: the use of some reserves, some ambitious new income generation targets and, some cuts to programmes. This should create the space we need to understand the consequences of the CSR for the Authority's future work programmes. Should the CSR settlement be as difficult (or more difficult) than our current projections, then we are likely to have to undertake a significant re-structuring of the Authority and its programmes.

9. Although we are planning for a reduction in our work programme for 2025-26, we are still able to undertake and deliver some excellent environmental and engagement/access projects. These are set out below.

    - Complete the Tees-Swale: Naturally Connected project – restoring peatland, hay meadows, woodland and other priority habitats across Swaledale and Arkengarthdale;
    - Complete implementation of the Coast-to-Coast National Trail through the National Park;
    - Continue to provide externally funded Education and Outreach projects: Championing National Parks for Everyone and development of an Active Travel Plan;

- Facilitate Young Rangers, ‘Upskill Down Dale’ youth engagement programme, and additional apprenticeships, developing skills that lead to employment in the environmental sector;
- Complete the Grow Back Greener programme, supporting the creation of a further 25 ha of native woodland;
- Continue to provide an efficient and effective Development Management service, that meets Government targets;
- Publish a new National Park Management Plan, giving priority to tackling the climate and nature emergencies;
- The further development of the Garsdale to Hawes multi use route;
- Complete preparation of a new Local Plan for the whole National Park, and submit it to the Planning Inspectorate for public examination;
- Continue to provide quality visitor facilities and experiences at Dales Countryside Museum and the four National Park Visitor Centres;
- Promote the understanding and enjoyment of the National Park by facilitating the Cheese Festival and Dark Skies Festival;
- Replace aging IT equipment and develop a new website.

Overall position

10. The main features of the proposed MTFS are:
    - A balanced budget for 2025/26.
    - The Government core **Revenue** Grant is assumed at £5.2m for all 3 years (a cut of £500k from 24/25), and no inflationary increases.
    - There is no additional government funding to offset the additional burdens of increases in National Insurance and audit costs.
    - The total income for 2025/26 is **£9.7k,** this is higher than we were projecting a year ago (£8.9m) but below our long-standing income objective (£10.2m). The drop in spending compared to 2024/25 is primarily because there is, as yet, no confirmation of the Farming in Protected Landscapes grant scheme (which was worth £2.5m this year). As Members will be aware, new sources of project income are being sought but the lead-in time means they will not start until 2026/27.
    - For 2025/26, the planned use of £245k of Capital Reserves for IT, Estates and Plant, and £161k of Earmarked reserves (including the refund of B4RN shares, and use of legacies). £250k of General Reserves are also being used to balance the budget.

Key features of the budget

11. We have been able to retain a 'match funding' reserve of £500k for the coming year. This is critical and enables us to develop and secure external funding for significant projects and programmes, though in light of our financial difficulties we may have to be more flexible in how this fund is used.

12. Staff pay increases have been set at 3% for 2025/26, 2% thereafter (note: each 1% above or below this equates to approximately £50k).

13. The 'vacancy factor' remains at 2.5%, which translates to a required saving of £127k through vacancies in 2025/26.

14. Additional income has been projected for Planning (£10k), Car Parks (£81k), Retail (£63k) and Bank Interest (£68k) based on performance in 2024/25 and an increase to the fee levels in planning and car parks. We believe these are ambitious but attainable.

15. A number of cuts to work programmes have been included in 2025/26 in order to help balance the budget. These include cuts to; the Sustainable Development Fund, National Park Centres, Tourism, Historical Environment, Trees and Woodlands, and Staff/Member Training. Further details can be found in **Appendix 3**.

Beyond 2026/27

16. The position beyond 2025/26 is still unclear but current indications are that it does not look positive. This is for two reasons – one largely within our control, the other less so.

17. The Authority has an objective - **to maintain spending in real terms at 2014/15 levels.** This would require expenditure of £10.2m in 2026/27. The projected budget is currently £9.1m. This reflects the fact that the 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' programme, and the 'Grow Back Greener' project are both scheduled to end in March 2026. New funding streams will need to be identified to fill this gap. Members will be aware that several significant projects are in development. Our previous experience suggests that additional funding will be secured over the next 12 months.

18. The second issue relates to the continuing uncertainty over the Country's public finances in general and NPA finances in particular. The new Government has cut Central and Local Government Spending in 2025/26, and DEFRA have indicated the next three years will be equally tight. Of course, it is difficult to predict what awaits us beyond the next financial year but the point for Members to note is that our MTFS assumes that the core grant level from 2026/27 onwards remains at £5.2m and that this is revenue grant. Further cuts from 2026/27 or revenue being replaced with capital funding, would likely necessitate a fundamental review of our structures and work programmes.

19. The MTFS covers a three-year period to 2027/28, however, the budget has been extended to 2029/30 in order to map out the longer term. Current projected deficits beyond 2025-26 and before the use of any reserves stand at; 2026/27 - £697k, 2027/28 - £905k, 2028/29 - £918k, 2029/30 - £1.3m.

The Draft Budget: Detail

20. Detailed information on all programme and corporate activity budgets is contained within the following appendices:

- **Appendix 1**: **Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26-2027/28.** The detailed budget for 2025/26 and projections for the following two years.
- **Appendix 2**: **Budget assumptions: Costs and income.** The key assumptions that underpin the projections. The estimates are considered to be robust, and additional explanations are provided where there is any significant level of uncertainty.
- **Appendix 3**: **Significant budget changes**. Those parts of the 2025/26 budget that have changed significantly from the indicative figures presented last year.
- **Appendix 4: Work Programme Budgets**. Detailed proposals for each work programme.
- **Appendix 5**: **Reserves.** Details of the planned use of a number of our earmarked and General Reserves.
- **Appendix 6**: **Risks**: significant issues that may affect the budget in 2025/26.

Equality Impact Assessment

21. 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.

Conclusion

22. This year's budget has been balanced using a combination of use of reserves, cuts to a few programmes, and assumptions about additional income. The use of reserves is not sustainable in the long term. If our deficits continue to grow year-on-year, with flat settlements or further cuts in core funding, a more fundamental review of the Authority's structure and work programmes will be required.

23. The draft Budget may be subject to further minor revisions before it is submitted to the Authority for final approval. Any such changes will be highlighted within the accompanying report to be submitted to the Authority meeting in March.

Michelle Clyde
Head of Finance/Treasurer

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	2024/25 BUDGET NET £000's	2025/26 BUDGET NET £000's	2026/27 BUDGET NET £000's	2027/28 BUDGET NET £000's
PROGRAMME BIDS				
Staff Cost	771.7	807.4	830.1	849.6
Programme Cost	60.2	58.5	58.7	59.0
Income	(321.5)	(337.0)	(337.0)	(337.0)
Development Management Total	**510.4**	**528.9**	**551.8**	**571.6**
Staff Cost	690.4	713.4	639.6	463.7
Staff income	(349.5)	(338.2)	(254.1)	(63.0)
Programme Cost	2,561.1	44.4	13.0	13.0
Income	(2,503.1)	(41.4)	(10.0)	(10.0)
Farm Conservation Total	**399.0**	**378.2**	**388.5**	**403.7**
Staff Cost	202.7	227.1	186.1	190.9
Staff income	(51.4)	(81.1)	(17.1)	(17.4)
Programme Cost	126.3	128.2	129.8	131.4
Income	(74.0)	(76.2)	(77.8)	(79.5)
Biodiversity Total	**203.7**	**197.9**	**221.0**	**225.5**
Staff Cost	718.5	719.8	686.1	704.0
Staff Income	(304.9)	(255.0)	(143.7)	(146.9)
Programme Cost	1,036.5	748.5	683.1	682.3
Income	(467.8)	(507.6)	(478.1)	(478.1)
Rights of Way Total	**982.2**	**705.6**	**747.3**	**761.2**
Staff Cost	147.5	169.1	136.6	139.4
Programme Cost	81.0	66.0	26.0	26.0
Income	(15.0)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Development Planning Total	**213.5**	**235.1**	**162.6**	**165.4**
Staff Cost	108.5	162.0	166.5	170.8
Staff Income	0.0	(47.8)	(50.0)	(52.0)
Programme Cost	141.3	26.6	15.0	28.0
Income	(120.3)	(6.6)	0.0	0.0

Recreation & Health Total	**129.5**	**134.2**	**131.5**	**146.8**
	2024/25 BUDGET NET £000's	**2025/26 BUDGET NET £000's**	**2026/27 BUDGET NET £000's**	**2027/28 BUDGET NET £000's**
PROGRAMME BIDS				
Staff Cost	305.0	319.9	233.5	239.5
Staff Income	(144.7)	(112.7)	(21.2)	(21.7)
Programme Cost	64.4	101.6	37.0	37.0
Income	(35.1)	(54.6)	0.0	0.0
Education & Outreach Total	**189.6**	**254.2**	**249.2**	**254.9**
Staff Cost	291.2	207.2	167.5	173.7
Staff income	(149.3)	(55.7)	0.0	0.0
Programme Cost	676.9	694.4	52.3	52.3
Income	(629.8)	(667.6)	(5.5)	(5.5)
Trees & Woodlands Total	**189.0**	**178.3**	**214.2**	**220.5**
Staff Cost	100.2	109.6	112.7	115.0
Programme Cost	120.3	113.4	118.4	119.4
Income	(89.7)	(89.7)	(89.7)	(89.7)
Dales Countryside Museum Total	**130.9**	**133.3**	**141.5**	**144.8**
Staff Cost	144.5	155.3	191.8	143.8
Staff income	(20.5)	(20.0)	(51.4)	0.0
Programme Cost	64.5	16.5	36.5	46.5
Income	(38.0)	(20.0)	(20.0)	(20.0)
Historic Environment Total	**150.5**	**131.8**	**156.9**	**170.3**
Staff Cost	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Programme Cost	23.7	3.7	3.7	3.7
Income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Landscape Features Total	**23.7**	**3.7**	**3.7**	**3.7**
Staff Cost	213.8	228.2	233.8	239.6
Staff Income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Programme Cost	126.6	219.5	142.4	170.8
Income	(6.0)	(13.3)	0.0	0.0
Volunteers and Apprentices Total	**334.5**	**434.3**	**376.2**	**410.4**

	2024/25 BUDGET NET £000's	2025/26 BUDGET NET £000's	2026/27 BUDGET NET £000's	2027/28 BUDGET NET £000's
PROGRAMME BIDS				
Staff Cost	124.9	131.4	134.1	136.8
Staff Income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Programme Cost	20.0	15.0	20.0	20.0
Income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Tourism Total	**144.9**	**146.4**	**154.1**	**156.8**
Staff Cost	363.2	396.1	406.6	416.0
Programme Cost	356.2	367.9	385.9	387.8
Income	(347.1)	(409.6)	(409.6)	(409.6)
National Park Centres Total	**372.3**	**354.4**	**382.9**	**394.2**
Staff Cost	43.1	45.9	46.8	47.8
Programme Cost	155.0	100.0	155.0	155.0
Income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sustainable Development Total	**198.1**	**145.9**	**201.8**	**202.8**
Staff Cost	87.8	93.2	95.1	96.9
Programme Cost	333.8	303.7	310.0	320.1
Income	(951.3)	(1,029.0)	(1,029.0)	(1,029.0)
Car Parks & Toilets Total	**(529.6)**	**(632.1)**	**(623.9)**	**(611.9)**
Staff Cost	67.7	75.3	76.9	78.4
Programme Cost	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0
Income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Recreation Management Total	**78.7**	**86.3**	**87.9**	**89.4**
PROGRAMME SUMMARY				
TOTAL GROSS PROGRAMME COSTS	**10,339.4**	**7,579.6**	**6,541.6**	**6,469.3**
TOTAL PROGRAMME INCOME	**(6,618.8)**	**(4,163.1)**	**(2,994.3)**	**(2,759.2)**
TOTAL PROGRAMME SPEND	**3,720.7**	**3,416.5**	**3,547.3**	**3,710.1**

	2024/25 BUDGET NET £000's	2025/26 BUDGET NET £000's	2026/27 BUDGET NET £000's	2027/28 BUDGET NET £000's
CORPORATE EMPLOYMENT & CENTRAL COSTS				
Conservation of the Natural Environment	134.8	140.1	142.9	145.7
Promoting Understanding and Enjoyment	117.1	112.1	116.6	121.4
Communications and Interpretation	202.9	214.6	221.6	227.5
Ranger Service	85.6	89.7	91.4	93.1
Development Planning	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Corporate Services	1,036.0	1,112.0	1,128.2	1,151.9
Vacancy Factor	(122.5)	(127.4)	(125.8)	(127.5)
Other Employee Costs - Corporate Management	20.6	35.9	20.8	21.0
Other Employee Income - Corporate Management	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL CENTRAL GROSS COSTS	**1,474.6**	**1,576.9**	**1,595.8**	**1,633.0**
TOTAL CENTRAL INCOME	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**
Total Corporate Employment Costs	**1,474.6**	**1,576.9**	**1,595.8**	**1,633.0**
Support Services	241.3	273.7	276.4	294.4
Support Services Income	(210.0)	(228.0)	(160.5)	(160.5)
CEO Support	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.2
CEO Support Income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Legal Services	25.2	32.4	33.5	34.2
Legal Services Income	(17.0)	(28.0)	(28.0)	(28.0)
Office Accommodation	130.0	130.5	135.8	141.3
Office Accommodation Income	(18.1)	(20.2)	(20.2)	(20.2)
Office Buildings Maintenance	453.0	57.3	32.8	26.1
Health & Safety	6.6	6.7	6.9	7.0
Member Costs	162.7	137.3	143.4	142.0
IT Licences, Consumables and Support	163.0	339.7	237.9	228.6
Communications	71.8	140.4	61.5	62.5
Communications Income	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(3.0)
Training	69.1	49.9	63.1	63.1
TOTAL CENTRAL GROSS COSTS	**1,326.6**	**1,172.0**	**995.4**	**1,003.5**
TOTAL CENTRAL INCOME	**(248.1)**	**(279.2)**	**(211.7)**	**(211.7)**
Total Central Costs	**1,078.5**	**892.8**	**783.7**	**791.8**

	2024/25 BUDGET NET £000's	2025/26 BUDGET NET £000's	2026/27 BUDGET NET £000's	2027/28 BUDGET NET £000's
BUDGET SUMMARY				
DEFRA National Park Grant Income	(5,729.8)	(5,229.8)	(5,229.8)	(5,229.8)
Other Income	(6,866.9)	(4,442.3)	(3,206.0)	(2,970.9)
Total Income	(12,596.7)	(9,672.1)	(8,435.8)	(8,200.7)
Gross Expenditure	13,140.6	10,328.6	9,132.8	9,105.8
In-Year Deficit/(Surplus)	544.0	656.4	697.0	905.1
Opportunities Fund	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
In-Year Deficit/(Surplus) after Opportunities Fund	544.0	656.4	697.0	905.1
FUNDED BY:				
Matched Funding from Specific Reserves	(60.0)	(161.1)	0.0	0.0
Capital Expenditure Funded from Reserves	(482.7)	(245.3)	(102.1)	(69.7)
General Reserve (if budget balances in 24/25)	(1.3)	(250.0)	0.0	0.0
(Surplus)/Deficit in year	0.0	0.0	594.9	835.4
% Ratio - Salary Costs to Gross Income	46.6%	63.2%	70.1%	70.9%
Non-DEFRA income % of Total Income	54.5%	45.9%	38.0%	36.2%

Appendix 2

Budget assumptions: Costs and income

1. Defra Grant

Defra's grant settlement letter for 2025/26 has not been received, and it is likely that the figures will not be known or confirmed until late March at the earliest. The budget has been set on the basis of a flat cash settlement of £5.2m, without replacement of revenue with capital funding. It is also assumed there will be no compensation for the additional National Insurance or External Audit cost increases.

2. Income from Fees & Charges

Projections for income from fees and charges are considered to be realistic based on prior years.

3. Other Income

Income has been profiled where it has been confirmed, or it is very likely that the projects will proceed. Speculative income has not been included for projects which are currently in the pipeline.

4. Staff Costs

Staff costs have been modelled in detail across the next 5 years to identify potential affordability issues. The projections include the estimated national pay increase, pay-band progression, employer Pension and National Insurance contributions, and a saving due to temporary vacancies (vacancy factor). Projections for the ratio of staff costs to gross income are shown below.

% Salary Costs to Gross Income	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Projections as at January 2025	**63%**	**70%**	**71%**	**72%**	**73%**

Members had adopted an indicative measure for this ratio of 50%-55%. So, the above figures identify a growing issue. The figures are exacerbated by the increase in NI payments and the projected fall in external income in 2025/26, and again in 2026/27. However, all recent experience is that the actual ratio will be less problematic in 12 months' time (as some new grants and income streams are secured) but in the light of the expected freeze on core grant for a further four years, the situation is likely to remain very challenging.

5. Staff pay and Member allowances

Estimated increases have been kept at:

3% - 2025/26.
2% - thereafter.

6. Overheads

Inflation on corporate overheads has been applied at variable rates depending on the item. Inflation is lower than the previous year, in particular for utilities.

7. Capital Expenditure

The Authority's capital expenditure comprises investment in Property, IT and Plant & Equipment, for which detailed schedules have been prepared covering the next five years. The capital budget is £245k 2025/26, £102k 2026/27, and £70k 2027/28. This will be funded by using Earmarked reserves (see **Appendix 5**).

Appendix 3

Significant Budget Changes

The changes below highlight significant budgetary changes between the indicative budgets approved by the Authority in March 2024 (for the years 2025/26 – 2027/28), and the revised budget now proposed.

Staffing

1. The National Pay Award for Local Government:

The national pay award for 2024/25 was budgeted at 4% across the board. The pay settlement agreed was £1290 per scale point to scale point 38, (between 9.4% to 2.5%), and an increase of 2.5% for scale point 39 and above.

In 2025/26 the National Insurance rate increases from 13.8% to 15% and the Secondary Threshold reduces from £9,800 to £5,000 (the value where the employer starts to pay NI). This increases our staffing costs by £122k. In addition, there were increases in the National Minimum Wage and Apprentice Wage. This MTFS assumes these changes are across the budgeted period.

There were also a few changes in staff hours and scale points.

2. Increased staffing costs

- Education Trainees - 1 trainee per year for 3 years (25/26-27/28): ~£30k p.a.
- Climate Change Officer - 0.5FTE ~£22k p.a.
- Temporary Development Plan Officer - extend for 6 months £21k (25/26)
- Higher Level Apprentice Historical Environment £32k p.a. (25/26-26/27)

3. Funded Posts (no cost to the Authority)

- FIPL – funding extended £212.4k (25/26), £186.2k (26/27)
- Tees Swale Apprentice (9 months) £13.7k
- Recreation & Health Project Officer ~ £48k (funded by Active Travel 25/26)
- Education & Outreach – Championing NPs £47k (25/26 only)

4. Additional income to offset Salaries

- Wildlife, Ure Dales project - £45.5k cost/£52.4k income (25/26)
- Wildlife, House Birds project - £17k income (25/26-26/27)
- Wildlife, Red Squirrel project - £12k income (25/26)

5. Total Staffing

- The combined result of the above staffing changes equates to a net increase of £314.1k in 2025/26, £211.4k in 2026/27, and £236.3k in 2027/28.

Work Programmes

6. Development Management

- Income increased by £15k p.a. – national fees for householder applications will be doubled from April 2025.

7. Rights of Way

- Increased spend back up to £161k p.a. following the financial agreement with NY Council.
- Increased Income from NYC of £50k p.a. for 2025/26 - 2029/30.

8. Trees & Woodlands

- Spend reduced by £20k (25/26 only) - in light of one-year extension of Grow Back Greener project.
- Grow Back Greener project £662.1k expenditure/income (2025/26 only)

9. Historical Environment

- Reduced Scheduled Monuments budget £10k (25/26 only)
- Reduced Historic Environment budget £10k (25/26 only) - transferred to apprentice budget for higher level apprentice role (25/26 and 26/27)
- Reduced Listed Buildings budget £10k (25/26)

10. Volunteers & Apprentices

- 2 x new Ranger Apprentices, part funded by YDMT (25/26)
- New Corporate Apprentice (25/26)
- New Communications Apprentice (25/26)
- New Higher Level Historical Environment Apprentice (25/26-26/27)
- Increased base budget with new minimum wage and apprentice wage estimates for future apprentices, the budget assumes 3 permanent apprentice places continue after the current staff have completed their term.
- Increases budget by £86.4k 25/26, £21.6k 26/27, and £36.8k 27/28

11. National Park Centres and Retail

- Removed refurbishment budget £15k (25/26 only)
- Increased retail income by £62.5k p.a., additional net £25k ‘profit’ after costs of £37.5k.

12. Sustainable Development Fund

- Reduced budget by £55k (25/26 only) – reduced demand for grants in last two years.

13. Car Parks & Toilets

- Net income increased by £77.7k p.a. Income from car park charges increased by £81k and loss of festival income.
- Savings on toilet cleaning and maintenance costs £11k p.a.

14. Central Costs

- Income from Bank interest increased £67.5k
- Legal Services income increased £11k.
- Shared Performance Manager with the North York Moors NPA £23k p.a.
- Overhead costs increased £14k p.a.
- IT costs revised (saving £30.1k 25/26, increased by £61.1k 26/27, and £43.3k 27/28.
- Replacement of website £80k (25/26 only).
- Training budget reduced £13.2k p.a.
- Salary Review £10k (25/26 only)

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Programme Activities:

- Provide a comprehensive pre-application planning advice service
- Process planning applications
- Monitor development and take enforcement action where necessary
- Deal with minerals applications and monitor minerals operations
- Carry out land charge searches

Corporate Plan objectives:

Provide an efficient development management service that supports appropriate opportunities for economic and community development whilst helping to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the National Park, including ensuring that 65% of minor and 80% of 'other' planning applications are being determined within eight weeks and at least 80% of applicants are satisfied with the service provided.

Budget Proposal:

The budget is based on continuing to provide high levels of service for the core Development Management service (but with a 'limited' enforcement and minerals service). This includes a comprehensive pre-application advice service, and regular free 'planning surgeries'.

Development Management		**2024/25** £	**2025/26** £	**2026/27** £	**2027/28** £
Staff	**Expenditure**	**771,708**	**807,353**	**830,076**	**849,650**
IT Maintenance	Expenditure	16,159	14,523	14,741	14,962
Admin, Training & Consultancy	Expenditure	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Applications	Expenditure	23,000	23,000	23,000	23,000
	Income	(270,000)	(285,000)	(285,000)	(285,000)
Pre-Application Advice Service	Income	(31,500)	(32,000)	(32,000)	(32,000)
Minerals Applications & Monitoring	Income	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)
Search Fees	Income	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)
Enforcement	Expenditure	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Programme	**Expenditure**	**60,159**	**58,523**	**58,741**	**58,962**
	Income	**(321,500)**	**(337,000)**	**(337,000)**	**(337,000)**
Net Total (including staff)		**510,367**	**528,876**	**551,817**	**571,612**

FARM CONSERVATION

Programme Activities:

- Support 'High Nature Value' and 'regenerative' farming in the National Park.
- Run the 'Catchment Sensitive Farming' programme to help reduce agricultural pollution in all river catchments within the YDNP boundary.
- Run the 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' programme of support to help farmers prepare for the move to the new Environmental Land Management schemes from 2024.

Corporate Plan objectives:

Support farmers and landowners to continue to deliver a range of public benefits through national agri-environment scheme agreements, green finance, and similar initiatives.

Deliver a co-ordinated 5-year programme of investment to support nature recovery through the Tees-Swale: naturally connected programme, and identify other potential landscape-scale 'nature recovery areas'.

Work with farmers and landowners to improve the condition of the Aire, Eden, Lune, Ribble, Swale, Ure and Wharfe so that at least 70% of all rivers achieve 'good ecological status' by 2025.

Work with farmers, landowners and partner organisations to restore or create 500 ha of species-rich grassland habitats by March 2027

Budget Proposal:

The proposed budget will enable the Authority to continue to drive forward an ambitious and practical programme of funding and advice to farmers and landowners across the National Park to support high nature value farming.

In addition, to supporting farmers to take-up national agri-environment schemes we will:

- continue to deliver Natural England's 'Catchment Sensitive Farming' initiative across the National Park, helping farmers tackle water quality issues and access grants for works to help reduce pollution (NPMP objective C3).
- run a further year of the 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' programme, providing grants of £1m to farmers to make improvements to the natural environment, cultural heritage and public access on their land (NPMP objective A1);

We will also work with local partners to implement three major externally-funded initiatives:

- continue the multi-million pound Tees-Swale: Naturally Connected programme (led by the North Pennines AONB), supporting high nature value farming systems to deliver nature recovery on a grand scale across Swaledale and Upper Teesdale (NPMP objective C1);
- support the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Woodland Trust to develop and implement the 'Ure Dales' Landscape Recovey project in Wensleydale;
- support York City Council (and others) to implement a 5-year programme of measures to demonstrate natural flood management in the Swale, Ure, Nidd and Ouse catchments (NPMP objective D5).

Farm Conservation		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	£	£	£
Staff	**Expenditure**	**488,883**	**508,805**	**453,430**	**463,673**
	Income	**(147,903)**	**(133,620)**	**(67,950)**	**(63,000)**
Agri-Environment Service	Expenditure	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
		(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)
Catchment Sensitive Farming	Expenditure	50,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
	Income	(50,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)
Regenerative Farming	Expenditure	100,000			
	Income	(95,000)			
Farming in Protected Landscapes	Direct Staff Expenditure	201,562	204,599	186,177	**0**
	Advice & Admin Income	(201,562)	(204,599)	(186,177)	**0**
	Other Advice & Admin Costs	66,761	31,443	(0)	
	Other Advice & Admin Income	(66,761)	(31,443)	0	0
	Capital Expenditure	2,216,354			
	Income	(2,216,354)	0	0	0
Northern Upland Chain LNP	Expenditure	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Tees-Swale: Naturally Connected	Expenditure	120,000	0	0	0
	Income	(70,000)	0	0	0
Programme	**Expenditure**	**2,561,115**	**44,443**	**13,000**	**13,000**
	Income	**(2,503,115)**	**(41,443)**	**(10,000)**	**(10,000)**
Net Total (including staff)		**398,980**	**378,185**	**388,480**	**403,673**

BIODIVERSITY

Programme Activities:

- Through the Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum, prepare and implement plans for nature recovery, including surveys and monitoring
- Run the Swinden and Dry Rigg quarry Natural Environment Funds
- Through the local Raptor group coordinate monitoring and roost protection
- Run species-specific nature recovery projects

Corporate Plan objectives:

Work with moorland managers and other key stakeholders to devise and implement a local approach to end illegal persecution of raptors, including independent and scientifically robust monitoring, and co-ordinated Hen Harrier nest and winter roost site protection.

Budget Proposal:

The proposed budget will enable the Authority to continue to drive forward an ambitious and practical programme of support to farmers, landowner and local communities for nature recovery projects. In addition to providing specialist information to support implementation of national and local agri-environment schemes and projects), we will:

- provide grants for projects to restore nature in areas affected by quarrying operations in Wharfedale and Ribblesdale.
- work with partners on the Local Biodiversity Forum to implement the new Nature Recovery Plan for the National Park.
- work through the local Raptor Group to coordinate monitoring and roost site protection (NPMP objective C5).
- provide specialist advice and assistance to the three Landscape Recovery Grant projects being developed by local partner organisations and farmers in the National Park (NPMP objective C1c).

Biodiversity		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	£	£	£
Staff	**Expenditure**	**202,727**	**227,111**	**186,120**	**190,889**
	Income	**(51,381)**	**(81,140)**	**(17,100)**	**(17,400)**
Biodiversity Ranger Vehicles	Expenditure	7,609	7,267	7,267	7,267
Nature Recovery	Expenditure	47,200	47,200	47,200	47,200
	Income	(2,500)	(2,500)	(2,500)	(2,500)
Local wildlife grants	Expenditure	71,521	73,694	75,323	76,952
	Income	(71,521)	(73,694)	(75,323)	(76,952)
Programme	**Expenditure**	**126,330**	**128,161**	**129,790**	**131,419**
	Income	**(74,021)**	**(76,194)**	**(77,823)**	**(79,452)**
Net Total (including staff)		**203,655**	**197,938**	**220,987**	**225,456**

RIGHTS OF WAY

Programme Activities

- Routine Rights of Way and Green Lanes maintenance
- Pennine Way and Pennine Bridleway maintenance
- Lead Authority for the management of the Pennine National Trails Partnership
- Replacement and maintenance of bridges and stepping stones
- Other large engineering capital projects
- Diversion of Rights of Way under Town and Country Planning Act (T&CP Act)
- Path Order applications (diversions not under T&CP Act) and creation agreements

Corporate Plan objectives:

Benefit a wide variety of users by raising the standard of all public rights of way so that, on average, 90% are 'easy to use'.

Maintain and promote the Pennine Trails and other recognised long-distance routes, and implement the Coast-to-Coast path as a National Trail through the National Park by 2025.

Budget Proposal:

The Rights of Way network is key to providing opportunities for a wide range of people to enjoy the special qualities of the National Park. The Authority currently has delegated responsibility from North Yorkshire, Lancashire and Westmorland and Furness Councils for maintenance of public Rights of Way. It has a 5-year Maintenance Plan with associated targets, agreed by Members, outlining how it will meet these responsibilities. The Authority also manages the National Trails (Pennine Way, Pennine Bridleway) partnership, involving 14 local authorities. Implementation of the Coast to Coast path is funded by Natural England and the Authority is working with partners and stakeholders to bring this route up to National Trail standard. External funding is also secured for maintenance work on bridges and promoted routes. The actual scale of income and corresponding expenditure, in any year, for these projects is difficult to predict as it depends on successful applications to several possible funding sources. The Authority will receive some funding from Westmorland and Furness Council and North Yorkshire Council for the delegated statutory highways duties it undertakes on their behalf.

Rights of Way		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	£	£	£
Staff	**Expenditure**	**524,114**	**561,712**	**622,782**	**639,390**
	Income	**(75,130)**	**(78,609)**	**(80,446)**	**(82,339)**
Ranger Vehicles, Workshops	Expenditure	147,149	136,557	135,188	136,373
National Trails Partnership	**Expenditure Staff**	**57,710**	**62,022**	**63,284**	**64,573**
	Staff Income	**(57,710)**	**(62,021)**	**(63,284)**	**(64,573)**
	Grant Expenditure	329,910	329,910	329,910	329,910
	Income-Hosting Fee	(16,519)	(16,519)	(16,519)	(16,519)
	Income	(329,911)	(329,910)	(329,910)	(329,910)
Coast to Coast	**Expenditure Staff**	**136,638**	**96,022**	**0**	**0**
	Staff Income	**(172,065)**	**(114,369)**	**0**	**0**
	Project Expenditure	50,000	50,000	0	0
	Project Income	(50,000)	(50,000)	0	0
Plant & Equipment	Expenditure	6,000	57,000	28,000	26,000
Legal Orders	Expenditure	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
	Income	(8,000)	(8,000)	(8,000)	(8,000)
RoW Routine Maintenance	Expenditure	114,400	161,000	161,000	161,000
	Income	(33,400)	(88,200)	(93,700)	(93,700)
Green Lanes Maintenance	Expenditure	25,000	10,000	25,000	25,000
	Income	(30,000)	(15,000)	(30,000)	(30,000)
Multi User Routes	Expenditure	360,000			
Programme	**Expenditure**	**1,036,459**	**748,467**	**683,098**	**682,283**
	Income	**(467,829)**	**(507,629)**	**(478,129)**	**(478,129)**
Net Total (including staff)		**982,187**	**705,595**	**747,305**	**761,205**

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Programme Activities:

- Produce and monitor the National Park Management Plan
- Produce and monitor the Local Plan and associated documents
- Implement planning policies and support partners to deliver affordable housing and bring under-occupied housing back into use.

Corporate Plan objectives:

Work with neighbouring authorities to produce a single, updated Local Plan for the whole of the National Park by 2025, which will help achieve the vision and objectives in the National Park Management Plan

Encourage and facilitate high quality proposals for new housing in a range of tenures, sizes, types and prices, such that around 85 new dwellings are approved each year including identifying measures to reduce the proportion of under-occupied properties.

In partnership with key organisations, and in consultation with local communities and visitors, update the National Park Management Plan (NPMP) by 2025, giving priority to tackling the climate and nature emergencies.

Budget Proposal:

The budget will fund the remaining work needed to complete the new Local Plan, including the cost of the statutory Local Plan Examination.

As well as developing new policy, the budget includes funding to implement the existing Local Plan policies. This includes supporting the work of the unitary councils to reduce the number of under-occupied properties, and build more affordable housing.

Finally, the budget includes the small annual costs of running the National Park Management Plan Steering Group, who will be updating the Management Plan by June 2025.

Development Planning		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Staff	**Expenditure**	**147,512**	**169,051**	**136,624**	**139,388**
Local Plan policy	Expenditure	55,000	55,000	15,000	15,000
Local Plan implementation	Expenditure	25,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
	Income	(15,000)	0	0	0
National Park Management Plan	Expenditure	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
	Income				
Programme	**Expenditure**	**81,000**	**66,000**	**26,000**	**26,000**
	Income	**(15,000)**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Net Total (including salaries)		**213,512**	**235,051**	**162,624**	**165,388**

RECREATION & HEALTH

Programme Activities

- Promote and waymark 'easy' walks and miles without stiles routes; improve routes for people with disabilities or long-term health conditions and families.
- Promote opportunities and recreational activities for people to enjoy the special qualities of the National Park to benefit their health and well-being.
- Work with outdoor providers to raise awareness and widen participation of recreational opportunity, encourage responsible enjoyment and promote understanding.
- Work with health providers and community groups to deliver green social prescribing activities in the National Park to improve people's health and wellbeing through connection with nature.
- Create and deliver an Active Travel Plan to increase opportunity for people to walk, cycle, wheel and horse ride into and around the National Park.

Corporate Plan objectives:

Increase and promote opportunity for people with a disability to access the National Park so that by 2026, 15% of visitors using the Miles without Stiles routes self-Identify as having a disability or long-term health condition.

Maintain the National Park as a place where a true sense of tranquillity, remoteness and solitude can be found and retain Dark Skies Reserve status.

Run a cohesive programme of inspirational, participatory activities that attract at least 4,000 people each year to find out more about the National Park's special qualities.

Promote and encourage responsible cycling, enabling the development of two 'cycle hubs', and working with local Highway Authorities and other partners to undertake the work necessary to develop at least one further family-friendly cycling route by 2026.

Budget Proposal:

This programme actively develops and promotes, for all, the recreational and health benefits of being in the National Park. It includes improvements to create access for all 'miles without stiles' routes that will benefit families with pushchairs, people with limited mobility and mixed ability parties. For example, The National Heritage Lottery funded project Access to Eden is providing funding for the creation of a new miles without stiles route at Smardale Nature Reserve. These and other 'easy' walks, are actively promoted, as well as broader opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding. An Active Travel Plan is also in development to increase opportunity for people to walk, cycle, wheel and horse ride into and around the National Park. Outdoor providers are commissioned to run recreational activities in the National Park which are attractive to those who wouldn't otherwise access them. The programme provides funding to work with health providers and community groups to deliver green social prescribing projects and in will fund a Health and Wellbeing conference in partnership with the NYMNP in Autumn 2025. This programme also includes the work to retain Dark Sky Reserve status, and the 'Creatively Connected' Arts Council / Tees Swale funded arts engagement project.

Recreation & Health		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Staff	**Expenditure**	**108,484**	**162,029**	**166,518**	**170,828**
	Income	**0**	**(47,849)**	**(50,027)**	**(51,981)**
Miles Without Stiles	Expenditure	77,208	2,000	2,000	2,000
Access Income	Income	(69,208)	0	0	0
Recreational Activities	Expenditure	13,000	18,000	13,000	26,000
Creatively Connected Project	Expenditure	51,062	6,564		
Arts Council/Tees Swale	Income	(51,062)	(6,564)		
Programme	**Expenditure**	**141,270**	**26,564**	**15,000**	**28,000**
	Income	**(120,270)**	**(6,564)**	**0**	**0**
Net Total (including staff)		**129,484**	**134,180**	**131,490**	**146,847**

TREES & WOODLANDS

Programme Activities:

- Provide funding and advice for new native woodland and woodland management schemes

Corporate Plan objectives:

Through Grow Back Greener and other local funding programmes, support farmers and landowners to create at least a further 225 hectares of native broadleaved and mixed woodland that enhances the National Park's landscape by 2025.

Budget Proposal:

The proposed budget will enable the Authority to continue to support a significant increase in woodland creation in the Park (building on NPMP objective D2). In addition to continuing our longstanding partnership with the Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust, and Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, we will also work with local partners to:

- Complete a final additional year of the Woodland Trust's '*Grow Back Greener*' programme in the National Park, directly supporting the creation of 180 ha of native woodland by March 2026.
- Support and further develop the White Rose Forest partnership, including developing a new Strategic Plan 2025-50, and securing long-term funding.

We will also continue smaller-scale programmes to support the other objectives of the Dales Woodland Strategy relating to woodland management and planting individual field trees.

Trees & Woodlands		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	£	£	£
Staff	**Expenditure**	**291,186**	**207,220**	**167,473**	**173,703**
	Income	**(149,269)**	**(55,700)**	**0**	**0**
Woodland Ranger Vehicle	Expenditure	7,609	7,267	7,267	7,267
Woodland Management	Expenditure	25,000	15,000	25,000	25,000
	Income	(5,500)	(5,500)	(5,500)	(5,500)
Woodland Creation	Expenditure	20,000	10,000	20,000	20,000
Grow Back Greener	Capital Expenditure	523,900	662,100	0	0
	Capital Income	(523,900)	(662,100)	0	0
Grow Back Greener	Administration Costs	100,355	0	0	0
	Administration Income	(100,355)	0	0	0
Programme	**Expenditure**	**676,864**	**694,367**	**52,267**	**52,267**
	Income	**(629,755)**	**(667,600)**	**(5,500)**	**(5,500)**
Net Total (including staff)		**189,025**	**178,287**	**214,240**	**220,470**

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Programme Activities

- Deliver a 'formal education' outdoor learning programme for schools, which promotes understanding of the National Park through the national curriculum.
- Provide session activities for family groups and under-represented groups to connect people with nature

Corporate Plan objectives:

By 2024, provide 5,000 people from under-represented groups with activity days that enable them to access the special qualities of the National Park and so increase their understanding, enjoyment, health and well-being.

Through educational and skills-based activities, inspire 1,500 young people from in and around the National Park to explore and enhance their environment each year.

Budget Proposal:

This programme includes the Authority's formal education offer – delivering an outdoor learning programme to primary, secondary and special schools whose catchment includes part of the National Park, and through externally funded projects, such as the Tees Swale working with schools in the urban areas around the National Park. These education sessions are practical and engaging learning experiences that meet the requirements of the National Curriculum; as well as enabling children and young people to develop an informed and inquisitive relationship with the National Park. This budget proposal also includes the Authority's outreach programme which includes a range of projects and programmes such as 'Championing National Parks' to enable people from under-represented communities to experience the health and wellbeing benefits of connecting with nature, cultivate a sense of care for the environment and develop a lifelong relationship with the National Park.

Education & Outreach		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Staff	**Expenditure**	**304,962**	**319,882**	**233,458**	**239,530**
	Income	**(144,729)**	**(112,660)**	**(21,244)**	**(21,677)**
Education & Outreach	Expenditure	26,000	36,650	32,000	32,000
	Income		(4,650)		
Dales bus Support	Expenditure	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Tees Swale	Expenditure	12,700			
	Income	(12,700)			
Nature Calling	Expenditure		20,000		
	Income		(10,000)		
Championing National Parks	Expenditure	20,673	39,977		
	Income	(22,353)	(39,977)		
Programme	**Expenditure**	**64,373**	**101,627**	**37,000**	**37,000**
	Income	**(35,053)**	**(54,627)**	**0**	**0**
Net Total (including staff)		**189,553**	**254,222**	**249,215**	**254,853**

DALES COUNTRYSIDE MUSEUM

Programme Activities

- Create a welcoming site for first time visitors to the National Park.
- Celebrate and share the collection, cultural heritage, wildlife and landscape of the National Park through permanent displays, events and activities, exhibitions and creative partnerships.
- Create and host temporary exhibitions
- Museum collection management, in accordance with museum accreditation including provision of access for research
- Deliver a 'formal education' heritage learning programme for schools, which promotes understanding of the National Park through the national curriculum.
- Provide creative opportunities for families and young people to learn about and be inspired by the landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Dales.
- Provide public access to archive collection and family history material
- Bring people together through cultural activity that makes them happier, healthier, that excites, inspires and enriches their lives.
- Provision of a café franchise

Corporate Plan objectives:

Use the Dales Countryside Museum and the Historic Environment Record to help local heritage groups to research, record and promote the stories of the National Park area, including completing the enhancement of the Historic Environment Record for the new area of the National Park by 2024.

Budget Proposal:

This programme includes all fixed site costs for the DCM premises (e.g. utilities and rates) including the public toilets, the National Park Centre, Ranger base and car charging points. Income is generated through admissions, café rent, room hire, events, the biomass boiler through the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) scheme and via the public pod point car charging points.

Other costs to run the Museum (including a small sum for the events and exhibitions programmes and updating of displays are shown in the 'non-premises' costs. The Friends of DCM charity membership scheme, together with the facility to add Gift Aid to charitable donations, generates income which contributes match funding for projects at DCM.

Dales Countryside Museum		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Staff	**Expenditure**	**100,239**	**109,589**	**112,735**	**115,024**
Building Maintenance	Expenditure	20,970	11,700	14,934	13,972
Cleaning & Caretaker	Expenditure	20,369	21,501	22,146	22,811
Rates	Expenditure	2,877	3,021	3,172	3,330
Premises Fixed Costs	Expenditure	52,092	53,134	54,196	55,280
Premices Income	Income	(15,750)	(15,750)	(15,750)	(15,750)
Non-Premises Museum Costs	Expenditure	22,000	22,000	22,000	22,000
Admissions, Café Lease	Income	(72,900)	(72,900)	(72,900)	(72,900)
DCM Projects	Expenditure	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
DCM Projects Income	Income	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
Programme	**Expenditure**	**120,308**	**113,356**	**118,448**	**119,394**
	Income	**(89,650)**	**(89,650)**	**(89,650)**	**(89,650)**
Net Total (including staff)		**130,897**	**133,295**	**141,533**	**144,768**

HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT

Programme Activities:

- Help people to conserve, maintain and re-use Listed Buildings
- Help people to conserve and maintain Scheduled Monuments, and other heritage sites, structures and features
- Maintain the Historic Environment Record for the National Park

Corporate Plan objectives:

Help local people to restore, repair and - where possible - bring back into use nationally-important historical sites, buildings and structures so that less than 4% of scheduled monuments and listed buildings are considered 'at risk' by 2025

Use the Dales Countryside Museum and the Historic Environment Record to help local heritage groups to research, record and promote the stories of the National Park area, including completing the enhancement of the Historic Environment Record for the new area of the National Park by 2025

Budget Proposal:

The budget remains in line with recent years. Activity will be focused on preventing any worsening in the overall condition of listed buildings and scheduled monuments that are 'at risk' (or may soon become so). This includes delivering a number of heritage projects funded through other programmes, notably:

- repairs to traditional buildings through Farming in Protected Landscapes;
- works to former metal mines through the Tees-Swale: Naturally Connected programme; and,
- advice and support for heritage conservation as part of peatland restoration works through the Ure Dales Nature Recovery scheme.

Historical Environment		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Staff	**Expenditure**	**144,456**	**155,288**	**191,821**	**143,841**
	Income	**(20,473)**	**(20,000)**	**(51,411)**	**0**
Historic Environment IT Maintenance	Expenditure	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Listed Buildings at Risk	Expenditure	18,500	8,500	8,500	18,500
Scheduled Monuments	Expenditure	24,000	4,000	14,000	14,000
	Income	(10,000)	0	0	0
Historic Environment Record	Expenditure	20,000	2,000	12,000	12,000
	Income	(28,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)
Programme	**Expenditure**	**64,500**	**16,500**	**36,500**	**46,500**
	Income	**(38,000)**	**(20,000)**	**(20,000)**	**(20,000)**
Net Total (including staff)		**150,483**	**131,788**	**156,909**	**170,341**

LANDSCAPE FEATURES

Programme Activities:

- Conserve and enhance distinctive local landscapes through Landscape Partnerships
- Repair and restore traditional farm buildings and dry stone walls
- Conserve and enhance Conservation Areas
- Protect important trees

Corporate Plan objectives:

Secure funding each year to repair, restore, and, where appropriate, find adaptive new uses for traditional field barns, particularly those in Swaledale, Arkengarthdale and Littondale

Budget Proposal:

The Authority will continue to seek opportunities to secure funding to support the repair or traditional barns, including through the Farming in Protected Landscapes grant programme.

The budget includes a small amount of funding for ongoing work to enhance Conservation Areas, including producing up-to-date character appraisals.

Landscape Features		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Barn Restoration & Repair	Expenditure	20,000	0	0	0
Conservation Area Enhancements	Expenditure	3,700	3,700	3,700	3,700
Programme	**Expenditure**	**23,700**	**3,700**	**3,700**	**3,700**
	Income	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Net Total (including staff)		**23,700**	**3,700**	**3,700**	**3,700**

VOLUNTEERS AND APPRENTICES

Programme Activities

- Volunteers support to Authority programmes
- Supported activities to encourage youth volunteering (age 12 to 29)
- Other initiatives for communities to look after the National Park
- Apprenticeships

Corporate Plan objectives

Give people from all backgrounds an opportunity to enjoy and contribute to the National Park by providing at least 7,000 volunteer days per year, with 15% coming from under-represented groups.

Budget Proposal

The work of volunteers makes a valuable contribution across almost all Authority work areas, and we will continue to work to increase the diversity of opportunity, particularly for young people. A sum is included to support young people (ie under 30 years) to volunteer, through the Young Rangers programme and 'upskill down dale' to supports skills development to help with employment. It also includes delivery with YDMT for the National Citizen Service. Volunteer travel expenses were reviewed in 2022/23 this resulted in a small cost saving, with more volunteers car sharing.

The staff costs below include those apprenticeships provided directly by the Authority.

Volunteers and Apprentices		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Staff	**Expenditure**	**213,834**	**228,222**	**233,805**	**239,603**
	Income	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Ranger Vehicles, apportioned	Expenditure	24,917	24,235	24,235	24,235
Volunteers	Expenditure	55,000	55,000	55,000	55,000
Apprentice staff costs	**Expenditure**	**38,709**	**138,223**	**61,124**	**89,593**
Apprentice Grant income	Income	0	(13,333)	0	0
Youth volunteering, young rangers	Expenditure	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
National Citizen Service	Expenditure	6,000	0	0	0
	Income	(6,000)	0	0	0
Programme	**Expenditure**	**126,626**	**219,458**	**142,358**	**170,828**
	Income	**(6,000)**	**(13,333)**	**0**	**0**
Net Total (including staff)		**334,461**	**434,347**	**376,164**	**410,431**

TOURISM

Programme Activities

- Development of Festivals to provide opportunities for tourism businesses based on NP special qualities.
- Work with Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs) and the national tourism agency (Visit England) to promote regenerative tourism in the Yorkshire Dales
- Provide training, resources and networks which enable tourism businesses to share good practice,
- Produce National Park visitor economy monitoring and trend data

Corporate Plan objectives

Increase opportunities for visitors to understand and enjoy the National Park, so that by 2026 over 60% of total visitors to the 4 National Park 'Visitor Hubs' go into the Visitor Centre.

Develop and promote events, festivals and attractions based on the National Park's special qualities and local distinctiveness so that at least 10% of visitors each year are coming for the first time.

Budget Proposal

The budget is used to promote regenerative tourism in the Dales. Its purpose is to ensure that, through collaboration, the benefits tourism can bring to the area are optimised at the same time as the special qualities of the Dales are safeguarded. It focuses on product development, including facilitation of the Dark Skies Festival and Cheese Festival, training and support for businesses, and provision of resources, for example toolkits, images and case studies to promote local distinctiveness. This budget is also used to provide STEAM economic data, and other research to evaluate the economic impact and trends in National Park's visitors

Tourism		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Staff	**Expenditure**	**124,887**	**131,445**	**134,118**	**136,846**
Tourism Delivery Plan	Expenditure	15,100	10,100	15,100	15,100
Economic Evaluation	Expenditure	4,900	4,900	4,900	4,900
Programme	**Expenditure**	**20,000**	**15,000**	**20,000**	**20,000**
Net Total (including staff)		**144,887**	**146,445**	**154,118**	**156,846**

NATIONAL PARK CENTRES AND RETAIL

Programme Activities

- Face to face advice from National Park Visitor Centres
- A retail service from National Park Visitor Centres
- National Park-specific information and interpretative displays at Partnership Information Centres in Westmorland and Furness area
- Ranger and volunteer bases

Corporate Plan objectives:

Increase opportunities for visitors to understand and enjoy the National Park, so that by 2026 over 60% of total visitors to the 4 National Park 'Visitor Hubs' go into the Visitor Centre.

Budget Proposal:

This programme includes premises fixed running costs for three of the four flagship National Park Visitor Centres, Grassington, Malham, Aysgarth Falls, (NB Hawes is in the DCM budget); a contribution to the partnership centres Kirkby Lonsdale, Sedbergh and Kirkby Stephen, established to provide a presence in the post 2016 extended boundary, and also a contribution and payment for Ranger base in Hudson House Reeth,. The projected retail sales, income and overheads are based on the actual sales achieved in 2024/2025.

National Park Centres & Retail		**2024/25 £**	**2025/26 £**	**2026/27 £**	**2027/28 £**
Staff (including HH staff)	**Expenditure**	**363,164**	**396,091**	**406,573**	**415,950**
NPC Fixed Running Costs	Expenditure	76,143	77,064	78,030	79,045
NPC Refurbishment & Visitor Hubs	Expenditure	25,000	0	15,000	15,000
NPC Planned Maintenance	Expenditure	14,932	8,041	9,652	10,065
NPC Cleaning	Expenditure	16,645	15,295	15,754	16,227
NPC Uniforms and sundries	Expenditure	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
NPC Cash Collection	Expenditure	0	6,500	6,500	6,500
NPC Partnership Centres	Expenditure	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
NPC Income	Income	(17,070)	(17,070)	(17,070)	(17,070)
Retail Overheads	Expenditure	10,080	10,080	10,080	10,080
Retail Trade	Expenditure	198,000	235,500	235,500	235,500
	Income	(330,000)	(392,500)	(392,500)	(392,500)
Programme	**Expenditure**	**356,231**	**367,910**	**385,946**	**387,847**
	Income	**(347,070)**	**(409,570)**	**(409,570)**	**(409,570)**
Net Total (including salaries)		**372,325**	**354,431**	**382,949**	**394,227**

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Programme Activities:

- Run the Sustainable Development Fund
- Work with Local Enterprise Partnerships to support appropriate economic development

Corporate Plan objectives:

Use the Sustainable Development Fund and other funding sources, to support 15 new local projects each year that bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the National Park.

Budget Proposal:

The main expenditure remains the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF), which provides grants for local projects that bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the National Park.

While no direct funding is involved, the Authority will also be working with the unitary authorities and other protected landscape bodies to identify and support new opportunities for sustainable development in the National Park through Local Growth Plans, devolution deals and the 'Shared Prosperity Fund'.

Sustainable Development		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Staff	**Expenditure**	**43,080**	**45,888**	**46,813**	**47,756**
SDF Grants	Expenditure	155,000	100,000	155,000	155,000
Programme	**Expenditure**	**155,000**	**100,000**	**155,000**	**155,000**
Net Total (including salaries)		**198,080**	**145,888**	**201,813**	**202,756**

CAR PARKS AND TOILETS

Programme Activities

- Manage 10 sites with car parks and toilets
- Maintain and clean public conveniences at these sites
- Manage Authority Property (amenity land, woodlands and agricultural holdings)
- Manage toilet facility charging/donations

Corporate Plan objectives:

No specific objective.

Budget Proposal:

The car parking income reflects the income achieved in 2023/24 and anticipated in 2024/25, alongside an increase in car parking charges from 2025/26. Income is difficult to predict as it varies depending on the weather.

Expenditure includes cleaning and maintenance of toilets and individual properties, as well as the cost of car park surface repairs and grounds maintenance. Expenditure no longer includes cash collection charges, with all car park ticket machines converted to card only.

Car Parks & Toilets		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Staff	**Expenditure**	**87,793**	**93,228**	**95,069**	**96,946**
Ranger Vehicle, apportioned	Expenditure	7,609	7,267	7,267	7,267
Car Parks	Expenditure	165,851	140,010	143,517	149,662
Wayleaves	Income	(5,818)	(2,500)	(2,500)	(2,500)
Rents	Income	(4,250)	(4,250)	(4,250)	(4,250)
Parking Fees	Income	(925,000)	(1,006,000)	(1,006,000)	(1,006,000)
Car Parks	Income	(935,068)	(1,012,750)	(1,012,750)	(1,012,750)
Toilets	Expenditure	160,376	156,375	159,233	163,153
Donation & EV Chargers	Income	(16,200)	(16,200)	(16,200)	(16,200)
Programme	**Expenditure**	**333,836**	**303,652**	**310,017**	**320,083**
	Income	**(951,268)**	**(1,028,950)**	**(1,028,950)**	**(1,028,950)**
Net Total (including salaries)		**(529,639)**	**(632,070)**	**(623,864)**	**(611,921)**

RECREATION MANAGEMENT

Programme Activities

- Meet the Authority's statutory duties under the CRoW Act: Open Access – manage restrictions and provide secretariat for the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
- Pre-existing access management agreements
- Manage the use of recreational motor vehicles on sensitive green lanes
- Work with user groups and organisers of large-scale events re: the Sandford Principle

Corporate Plan objectives:

Maintain 'green lanes' and, where appropriate, manage use by recreational motor vehicles, including enforcing any restrictions imposed by Traffic Regulation Orders.

Work with organisers of large-scale events to ensure they are well run, benefit local businesses, and contribute to the maintenance of the Park's natural capital, for example funding the cost of maintaining the 'Three Peaks' route.

Budget Proposal:

This programme includes monitoring recreational motor vehicle compliance with TROs, and management and use on green lanes; meeting our statutory obligations under the CRoW Act both as a 'relevant authority' for Open Access, and as 'access authority', including providing the secretariat for the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum (LAF). It also includes staff time for liaising with user groups and individuals e.g. concerning voluntary climbing restrictions and breeding birds, and the Three Peaks notification scheme. (Note: the Three Peaks Project and Visitor Payback income are included in the Rights of Way budget). The LAF now has one on-line meeting a year so running costs have been reduced to reflect this.

Recreation Management		**2024/25**	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**
		£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Staff	**Expenditure**	**67,728**	**75,320**	**76,851**	**78,413**
Open Access	Expenditure	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Green Lanes	Expenditure	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
LAF	Expenditure	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Programme	**Expenditure**	**11,000**	**11,000**	**11,000**	**11,000**
	Income	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Net Total (including salaries)		**78,728**	**86,320**	**87,851**	**89,413**

Appendix 5

Reserves Strategy

1. The Authority holds Reserves for two purposes:

    - **To help to manage budget risk, by providing financial 'insurance' in case of:**
        - contingencies such as a major legal cost or the interim funding needed to cope with a reduction in National Park Grant from Defra;
        - Inaccurate budget estimates or loss of external funding streams.

    - **To support delivery by:**
        - funding investment requirements;
        - enabling us to take advantage of appropriate project opportunities.

2. This Strategy covers the Authority's **Usable** Reserves. These are Reserves backed by cash and are therefore available to spend on the purposes for which they have been established. At the date of this report, the value of the Authority's Usable Reserves is **£3757.8k.**

The Strategy

3. It is proposed that, for 2025-26, the Authority's Reserves be maintained in line with the table below. Full details of each Reserve, and the purpose for which it is maintained, have not been included here but are available at Members' request.

4. However, following receipt of the results of the CSR a fuller review of the Authority's Reserves Strategy will be required.

5. Reserves will be spent over the following five years to cover the projects and capital spending indicated; the costs of which are included in the main budget.

6. The position at year-end (31 March 2025) will inevitably be different from that shown below, after taking into account the following events:

    - A temporary reserve will be created to contain any carry-forward budgets that are required to complete activity started but not finished in 2024/25, this is normally in the region of £400k to £600k and covers those projects which do not neatly fit into the financial year. This reserve will come from underspends in 2024/25.

    - The balance of the reserve for the ongoing woodland monitoring obligations until 2030 will be increased by the value attributed to 2024/25 new capital projects completed in year. This balance was not known at the time of writing this report.

    - The balance of the Three Peaks budget will be transferred into a new reserve for future spending.

    - It is unlikely that the position at year-end will exactly match the set budget which this estimation is based on. The General Fund will be modified in line with the net

2024/25 year-end financial balance (after taking account of carry-forward budgets).

- The contingency budget will change to 10% of the approved expenditure but is set at the 2024/25 levels here.

		ESTIMATED BALANCE @ 31/3/25	USE OF RESERVES 2025/26
No	**Reserve Description**	**£'000**	
1	Contingency Reserve - 10% gross budgeted expenditure 24/25	1312.0	
2	Carry Forward Budgets	TBN	
3	IT Equipment	400.5	(134.4)
4	Property	164.3	(54.0)
5	Plant & Equipment	134.1	(57.0)
6	Attracting Younger People	9.3	(9.3)
7	B4RN Shares	64.4	(64.4)
8	Earmarked legacies	77.9	(72.5)
9	Trees and Woodlands Reserve	248.5	(14.9)
10	Garsdale to Hawes multi use route	231.5	
11	External Funding Match Bid Reserve	500.0	
	Estimated Earmarked Reserves Balance	3,142.5	
	Estimated General Fund Reserve	*615.3*	*(250.0)*
	Estimated Total Usable Reserve Balance (based on current budget)	3757.8	(656.5)

Appendix 6

Risks associated with the Draft Budget

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Control / Mitigation
1. DEFRA Core Grant is not as budgeted	High	High/ Moderate	The Budget will need to be re-worked should the grant be lower than a flat settlement, or if the revenue is replaced by more capital than the capital budgeted for 2025/26.
2. Longer term plans are unaffordable	High	High	Projections indicate that our plans for 2026/27 and 2027/28 are unaffordable in their current form, a fundamental review will be necessary when the 3-year financial settlement is received in summer 2025 covering 2026/27- 2028/29.
3. Staff costs in excess of budget	High	Moderate	Staff turnover may not generate the saving from vacancies built into the budget. The Local Government pay award for 2025/26 is not yet agreed. For every additional 1% above budget, the Authority's staff costs rise by ~£50k pa.
4. Inflation greater than projected	Moderate	Moderate	Specific rates of inflation, appropriate to each overhead, have been used to prepare the budget. The current situation is changeable and will be monitored, so that more substantial increases in inflation can be taken onto account should the budgeted rates prove to be too low.
5. Unidentified costs missing from budget.	Low	Low	Any significant problems could be managed through a call on the Matched Funding or Contingency Reserve.
6. Failure to achieve earned income projections.	Moderate	Low	Achievement of targets is kept under continuous review. The most significant 'earned income' target is car parking, which has seen a stable income stream to date; prices are being increased in 2025/26. The increasing contribution from external grant income to our budgets isn't necessarily accompanied by increased risk: the majority of such income is linked to related expenditure, with no overall net *financial* impact, although gross income would be impacted.
7. Failure to deliver objectives within Corporate Plan	High	Low	Closely managed process, with scheduled in-year reviews. Where additional spending is required to achieve delivery, budget can be made available from the General Reserve or – if necessary - from redirecting resources from lower priority programmes.
8. Insufficient Reserves to cover spending plans	High	Low	Managed through the Reserves Strategy (see Appendix 5).

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