

**YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
AUDIT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE**

ITEM 2

Minutes of the meeting held at the YDNPA offices, Yoredale, Bainbridge, Leyburn DL8 3EL on Tuesday 11 July 2023 at 10:30am.

Members Present:

Lia Appleton Hall, Lizzie Bushby, Robert Heseltine, David Ireton, Allen Kirkbride, Ian Mitchell, Jim Munday (in the chair following his election), Andrew Murday, Yvonne Peacock, Steve Shaw-Wright and Graham Simpkins

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

13/23 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Jim Munday was nominated for the position of Chair of the Committee. Following a brief election address,

RESOLVED –

That Jim Munday be elected Chair of the Audit and Review Committee, to hold office until the first Committee meeting following the annual general meeting of the Authority in 2024.

JIM MUNDAY IN THE CHAIR

14/23 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

That Mark Corner was nominated for the position of Deputy Chair.

RESOLVED –

That Mark Corner be elected Deputy Chair of the Audit and Review Committee, to hold office until the first Committee meeting following the annual general meeting of the Authority in 2024.

15/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Mark Corner.

16/23 MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2023, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record

17/23 PUBLIC QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS

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

18/23 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING

No declarations of lobbying were made at the meeting.

19/23 REVIEW OF AUTHORITY PERFORMANCE 2022/23

CONSIDERED – the report of the Deputy Chief Executive.

Discussion included the following;

- Query whether the figure for additional Retail income (£50K) was net of staff costs;
- Comment on the negative effects of lighting from outside National Park boundary on the Dark Sky Initiative;
- Comment that – contrary to the report - Ellers Bridge in Dent had not been replaced yet;
- In response to Member queries the Deputy Chief Executive explained that there had been underspends 3 major investment programmes (FiPL, Grow Back Greener and Westmorland Dales). In the case of FiPL, 3 big projects that had been approved (on peatland restoration; a barn conversion, and hedgerow creation) were cancelled by the applicants at a very late stage. It wasn't possible to "over-commit" the funding (in case some projects dropped out" because – if none dropped out – the Authority would have had to fund them from its own resources.
- Comments on the effect of fixed term projects on staff recruitment and retention.
- Concerns expressed re the impact on stone walling caused by tree planting close to field boundaries.
- Query as to why action had not been taken to secure the removal of a shipping container at Ribblehead following an enforcement case.
- In response to a query as to how North York Moors had a significant increase in volunteers, the Director of Park Services advised that they had more staff specifically employed to support volunteering, particularly with under-represented groups.
- In response to a query about whether the tourism objective was still achievable in light of Covid, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that the National Park Management Plan Steering Group had taken the decision not to change any of the objectives (because they did not want to dilute the level of ambition).
- In response to a query re charging for toilets the Director of Park Services advised that costs had been incorporated into a higher car parking fee.

RESOLVED – to NOTE the Authority's performance in 2022-23

20/23 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL PLAN

CONSIDERED – the report of the Head of Finance and the annual report of the Authority’s Internal Auditor, Veritau Ltd.

The Committee NOTED the report and thanked Internal Auditor for the report.

21/23 OMBUDSMAN CASE

CONSIDERED – the report of the Corporate Services Officer.

The Committee NOTED the report.

22/23 EXTERNAL AUDIT PLANNING REPORT 2021-22

CONSIDERED – the report of the Head of Finance and the external audit planning report for the audit 2021-22 of the Authority’s External Auditor, Ernst & Young LLP (EY)

The Committee NOTED the planning report. The final accounts, along with the opinion and conclusions arising from the audit, will be presented to the Finance & Resources Committee.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 12:01pm

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