

**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, 26 September 2023.

Members Present:

Libby Bateman, Phil Dew, Richard Foster, Neil Heseltine, Julie Hutton, Peter Jackson, David Noland, Stuart Parsons, Karin Sedgwick and Derek Twine

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

27/23 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Derek Twine was nominated for the position of Chair of the Committee. Following a brief election address,

RESOLVED –

That Derek Twine be elected Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee, to hold office until the first Committee meeting following the annual general meeting of the Authority in 2024.

DEREK TWINE IN THE CHAIR

28/23 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

Libby Bateman was nominated for the position of Deputy Chair of the Committee. Following her election address to Members,

RESOLVED –

That Libby Bateman be elected Deputy Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee, to hold office until the first Committee meeting following the annual general meeting of the Authority in 2024.

29/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Simon Myers, Jenny Purcell and Neil Swain.

30/23 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 May 2023, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

31/23 PUBLIC QUESTIONS / STATEMENTS

No public questions or statements had been received.

32/23 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING

There were no declarations of lobbying.

33/23 NEW LICENCE AGREEMENT WITH HUDSON HOUSE, REETH

The Committee CONSIDERED the report of the Director of Park Services.

In RESPONSE to Members' questions:

The Director of Park Services confirmed that arrangements for Hudson House are now in line with the other Partnership Centres and that the Trustees were very supportive in their response to the new Licence agreement. An explanation of the breakdown in cost savings was also provided.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Authority enters into a new Licence agreement with Hudson House which will involve:
 - (a) An annual Licence fee of £5k to provide office space for the Area Ranger.
 - (b) A grant of £5k, for 2024/25, towards the provision of visitor information. Any commitment beyond 2025 will be subject to the outcome of the current Visitor Services Review.

34/23 STATEMENT OF FINAL ACCOUNTS 2021/22

The Committee CONSIDERED the report of the S151 Officer.

Discussion included the following:

Whether the current auditing regime is appropriate for smaller authorities such as National Park Authorities and what possibilities might exist , or be developed, as alternatives to the existing audit regime.

Members agreed that the Authority should respond to the Public Sector Audit Appointments' consultation on the 2023/24 audit fee scale and the Government's consultation on proposals to improve local audit delays. Members were strongly supportive of the Chief Executive engaging with other National Park Authorities and Government on these matters.

In RESPONSE to Members' questions:

The Chief Executive would provide the reconciliation of the reserves figures in paragraph 21 of the SOFA (page 17), with the reserves figures in pages 29 and 32 of the SOFA and update Members.

The Chief Executive gave a more detailed explanation on the income budget, the capacity of the organisation and potential for further growth.

RESOLVED -

- a. To approve the SOFA for the Financial Year Ended 31 March 2022, and the associated Annual Governance Statement (AGS);
- b. To note that the approved SOFA and associated AGS will be signed by the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Executive, once the external audit of the SOFA has been concluded, provided that the overall opinion in the audit report is unqualified.
- c. To note paragraph 8 regarding potential material adjustments on the conclusion of the North Yorkshire Pension Fund audit.
- d. To note the content of the letter of representation which is appended to this report.
- e. To note the additional fee proposed by Public Sector Audit Appointment (PSAA) of £12.3k for **2020/21** audit.

35/23 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS REVIEW

The Committee CONSIDERED the report of the S151 Officer

RESOLVED -

To adopt the updated Financial Regulations.

36/23 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REVIEW 1 APRIL 2023 TO 30 JUNE 2023

The Committee CONSIDERED the report of the Treasurer.

In response to a Member's question:

An update will be provided on B4RN cross the National Park at the December Committee.

The Committee NOTED the report, in particular,

- (i) the position on the Authority's 2023/24 Treasury Management investment activities up to 30 June 2023.
- (ii) the continued applicability of the Prudential Indicators for the period 2023/24 to 2025/26, as agreed on 28 March 2023.

37/23 FINANCIAL PROGRESS REPORT 1 APRIL 2023 TO 30 JUNE 2023

The Committee CONSIDERED the report of the Head of Finance.

In RESPONSE to Members' questions:

The Chief Executive provided an explanation regarding how the pay award would be covered and outlined the varying positions regarding time limits on grant spending.

The Committee NOTED the report.

38/23 STAFFING

The Committee CONSIDERED and NOTED the report of the Head of HR, congratulating the Head of HR on the low vacancy rate.

39/23 SICKNESS ABSENCE

The Committee CONSIDERED and NOTED the report of the Senior Administrative Officer, commending them on the excellent figures.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 11:30 a.m.