WITH its continued emphasis on diversifying sources of income (in response to the loss of 40% of central government funding), the Authority has had a successful year – securing new strands of income and delivering a wide range of work on the ground.

This has been set in the context of a rapidly changing policy framework – uncertainty about the prospect for Agri-environment schemes and concerns about securing the future of the National Park’s protected environment.

Last summer we completed our latest four-yearly residents’ survey. Conserving the North York Moors landscape and wildlife, and looking after footpaths and access were the two issues that residents told us were the most important priorities for our work over the next four years.

Feedback like this helped us to shape our new Business Plan for 2017-21. Alongside our ongoing work we have identified three key priorities:

- Establish effective wildlife corridors in the National Park
- Increase the profile of the North York Moors and support the local economy
- Inspire young people to understand and experience the North York Moors and be actively involved in its future

In order to support delivery of our plans we have been working on a number of initiatives to broaden the Authority’s income base, including large scale Heritage Lottery Funded programmes and the establishment of the North York Moors National Park Trust.

In November 2016, York Potash announced they had secured Stage 1 funding for the York Potash/Sirius Minerals Polyhalite Mine project, with formal commencement expected in 2017. The Authority has established two Officer posts to ensure the efficient delivery of the substantial package of environmental/social/economic mitigation and compensation measures set out in the planning application, approved conditions and Section 106 Agreement.

We’re also well underway with producing our new Local Plan, which, when finished, will be the main influence on how we will decide planning applications in the future. An important part of producing a Local Plan is to engage local people in its content. Last autumn we asked people to tell us what they valued about the North York Moors National Park and what they thought were the key issues it needs to address. We received 155 responses and would like to thank everyone who took the time to send us their views. We’ll be asking for further views on the key issues – and on the potential planning policies to address them – later this year.
Looking back – 2015 to 2016

- Our £3.8 million Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership known as This Exploited Land of Iron got underway. One of the first projects to be completed was the £77k repair of the landslip at the East Kilns in Rosedale on the line of the old Rosedale Railway. There is now safe access to the two sets of kilns, which will be subject to major consolidation during 2017.

- Members approved a contribution of up to £55,000 from conservation grant budgets towards the restoration and reinstatement of the traditional hedgerow network at Kettleness to improve habitat connectivity and the landscape.

- Our results for determining planning applications on time continued to be good with 79% being completed within the target time. Our appeal success rate was 92%.

- We completed our four-yearly residents’ survey. Overall satisfaction with the Authority’s services has been maintained at 70% and we were pleased to see that 83% of people who responded were satisfied with the helpfulness and courtesy of our staff.

- 16 apprentices worked with us through a number of programmes. The outdoor apprentice team undertook tree- and hedge-planting and worked closely with the North Yorkshire Moors Railway constructing access stairs for volunteers at Goathland railway station.

- The Inspired by Gallery... at The Moors National Park Centre, Danby, celebrated a decade of showcasing art inspired by the beauty of the North York Moors with its Past and Present Exhibition. The gallery, which is free to enter, has hosted around 100 exhibitions since it first opened in 2007.

- Eleven Conservation Area Enhancement Grants were awarded in six conservation areas (Staithes, Robin Hood’s Bay, Osmotherley, Egton, Helmsley and Thornton le Dale). Works included replacing plastic windows with traditional timber windows to match original designs; replacing concrete tiles with handmade clay pantiles; and removing a tree from a listed pinfold in Thornton le Dale which was destabilising the dry stone structure.

- It was the fourth year of the Authority’s Community Grant scheme, which offers small-scale grants to local groups for projects that deliver environmental benefits, cultural heritage and local history support, or community facility improvements. We provided grant aid to 18 projects, including 50% of the costs of refurbishing the splendid village clock on Fawcett’s Butchers Shop in Ingleby Greenhow.

- We completed the publication consultation stage for the National Park’s new Joint Minerals Plan. The ‘first steps’ initial consultation on a new Local Plan for the National Park was also completed.

- A total of 66 Traditional Boundary Scheme (TBS) agreements were completed, 48 of which were for drystone walls and the remainder for hedges. In the south-west of the National Park near Sproston, a TBS grant helped to plant 500m of species-rich new hedgerow adjacent to the A170. This will form part of a wider hedgerow network in the area, providing food, shelter and nectar for a range of species.

- The Loftus ACCORD Walkers are Welcome group joined our Coast Ranger for a task at Waupley Wood to open up an overgrown and unusable footpath. The group is now working with us every month on tasks in the northern part of the National Park coastal area.

- A piece of land art commissioned by the Authority and Hambleton District Council, celebrating the 2016 Tour de Yorkshire, scooped first prize. The 70-metre long, 40-metre wide painting on Sutton Bank, entitled ‘The Finest View’, showed a horse, ram and wild boar riding a penny farthing while looking out over what James Herriot described as ‘the finest view in England’.

- The Authority retained its customer service excellence award – being fully compliant with all 57 elements of the standard and showing best practice in 10 of these.

- 85% of the rights of way in the National Park were deemed to be ‘easy to use’ according to surveys that were completed.

- Our range of volunteer opportunities continues to grow, with more families signing up to the National Park’s Explorer Club to learn about the habitats of the National Park and get involved in practical conservation tasks such as tree-planting and footpath restoration.
Looking forward – 2016 to 2017

In the year ahead we will be working to deliver the targets and objectives in our new Business Plan

- We will work towards publishing a ‘preferred options’ draft of a new Local Plan for the National Park by February 2018.
- Delivery of the Authority’s education strategy will be extended and we will engage with 18,000 young people through our education service.
- Continuing our work on apprenticeships, we will develop a National Apprenticeship standard for Countryside Workers.
- We will continue to meet our targets for timely determination of planning applications and ‘ease of use’ of the National Park’s 2,000km rights of way network.
- We will administer grants for 21 projects, which are already lined up under our Community grant scheme, and will open a new applications window in December 2017.
- Working with potential partner organisations, a delivery plan for projects associated with the Polyhalite Mine project Section 106 Agreement will be prepared for consideration by the Authority at the December 2017 Committee.
- We will continue to hold regular Parish Forums to keep in touch with and hear the views of local people and supporting Parishes.

Ryevitalise Landscape Partnership

- Following a Stage 1 approval of a £2m grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund to support a Landscape Partnership project to revitalise the River Rye’s heritage, we will work with other organisations, land owners and local communities to submit a second stage bid for submission in September 2018.
- Thanks to a £64,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund we will undertake vital research and conservation work to try and halt the dramatic decline of Turtle Dove numbers in the National Park.
- A new accessible trail on the Cleveland Way opened in August. Starting at Sutton Bank National Park Centre, the 5.3-mile-long route provides stunning views, and following access improvements is suitable for trampers, mobility scooters and wheelchair users.
Judging our performance

We set high standards of customer service and performance that are monitored through a variety of measures – including those set out below. The suite of measures reported on here is currently under review. In order to fit with the Authority’s new Business Plan we will be agreeing an updated set of measures in the year ahead. If you have any suggestions about what you’d like to see here, please email them to feedback@northyorkmoors.org.uk or write to the address below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
<th>INDICATOR</th>
<th>2016/17 TARGET</th>
<th>ACTUAL</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Percentage of National Park managed in line with NPA conservation objectives</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>*Figure not yet available from Natural England for 2016/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Net annual change in area of National Park managed in line with NPA conservation objectives</td>
<td>+1922ha</td>
<td>-16407ha *</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>Percentage of footpaths and other Public Rights of Way that are easy to use by the public</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>*Figure based on surveying a sample of rights of way – highest it’s been in the past five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor services</td>
<td>Satisfaction rating for users of ‘promoting understanding’ services (Visitor Centres, Website, Education and Events)</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>*Figure only available for education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Planning applications determined in a timely manner</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>*First time in a number of years that this has fallen below target</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Major applications determined within 13 weeks</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>*Only a small number of major applications received each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minor applications determined within 8 weeks</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>*Slight decrease on last year</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other applications determined within 8 weeks</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>*Slight decrease on last year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfaction with the Planning service</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>*Survey carried out every other year – last completed May 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of appeals dismissed (average over 4 years)</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>*In 2016 92% of appeals were dismissed.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning cost per head of population</td>
<td>£29.67</td>
<td>£30.13</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Customer services</td>
<td>Telephone calls answered personally within 5 rings</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>*Slightly lower than previous year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correspondence answered within 10 working days</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>*Excludes planning department correspondence</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* 2015/16 figure

Financial overview

Between April 2016 and March 2017 the Authority spent £6.41 million. The majority of this income came from Government with additional funding from external partners such as Natural England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage as well as earned income from fees and charges.

Please note that these figures have yet to be audited and may change.