

North York Moors National Park Authority Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee

Public Minutes of the meeting held at The Old Vicarage, Helmsley on Monday 12 August 2013.

Present: M Bowes, D Jeffels, Mrs C Patmore, J Ritchie, E Sanderson, A Scott, B Suthers, R Thompson, J Walker.

Apologies: J Bailey, B Briggs

Officers in Attendance: Irene Brannon (Director of Corporate Services), John Barnett (Auditor), Roman Pronyszyn (Auditor), Catherine Raistrick (Finance and Performance Officer), Richard Smith (Solicitor), Simon Baum (ICT Manager), Stephen Croft (External Fundraising Officer), Vanessa Burgess (Committees Officer)

Copies of All Documents Considered Are In The Minute Book

32/13 Election of Chairman

Resolved:

That Mr D Jeffels be elected Chair of Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee to take office until the first meeting of Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee following the Annual General Meeting of the Authority.

33/13 Election of Deputy Chairman

Resolved:

That Mrs C Patmore be elected Deputy Chair of Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee to take office until the first meeting of Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee following the Annual General Meeting of the Authority.

David Jeffels In The Chair

34/13 Minutes

Resolved:

That the public minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2013, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

35/13 **Members Interests**

Members were reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interests relating to any agenda item prior to its consideration.

36/13 **Exclusion of the Public**

Resolved:

That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of each of the items of business shown in column 1 of the following table on the grounds that each involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 specified in column 2:-

Item No on the Agenda	Paragraph No
15	1,2,3,4
16	1,2

37/13 **Draft Statement of Final Accounts 2012/13**

Considered:

The report of the Principal Accountant, this item was presented by the Director of Corporate Services.

Members were asked to note a typing error on page 34 of the agenda, figure in relation to net expenditure, Corporate and Democratic Core should read 263 not 463. Officer advised Members that the final accounts would be subject to approval at the next full Authority meeting in September.

Members noted the following:

Expenditure breakdown on revenue items as well as capital items would be useful.
Authority's policy on level/movement of reserves
The Authority's Chief Executive did not claim travel expenses
Authority's input with regard to decisions made concerning Pension Funds

In answer to the questions, the Director of Corporate Services asked Members to note the following:

Members took the decision some time ago to keep reserves at approx. 1 million, but accepted that further explanation of the reserves situation would be useful to Members.

Action: The Authority to provide Members with additional breakdowns regarding revenue items, plus greater explanation in the use of reserves.

The Authority's Chief Executive does not claim expenses. The Authority operates a system of Pool cars and train tickets are booked centrally.

A Member asked of the likelihood that Potash shares would form part of the Authority's Pension Portfolio. The Auditor advised Members that the Pension Company always seeks to follow the Authority's preferred strategies in relation to Pension investments.

Action: Director of Corporate Services to ask the Authority's Pension providers to speak to Members.

A Member commented that the value received from Volunteers supporting the work of the National Park was not reflected in the Authority's accounts.

Members appreciated that this was a difficult thing to show in accounting terms, but finding some way to build in this information may be helpful.

Officers noted Members views and informed members that there was flexibility within the accounting system to include more information if thought useful.

Resolved:

That Members comments on the Draft Statement of Final Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2013 be noted and amendments be agreed with the Auditors and subject to approval at September Authority.

38/13 Internal Audit Plan 2013/14

Considered:

The report of the Director of Corporate Services

The chair introduced and welcomed the Auditors to the meeting. The Auditors advised Members of the main purposes of the Internal Audit Plan

- Effectiveness in Risk Management
- Effectiveness in Governance
- Effectiveness in Internal Control

Members asked the following:

That the Authority provides a high level risk register at each meeting.

Action: Officers to provide high level risk register at each quarterly meeting.

That the Authority have appropriate measures in place with regard to income generation and new sources of income.

Officers welcomed Member's creative ideas and suggested that these could be discussed more fully at Member's seminars.

Resolved:

Members noted the content of the reports.

39/13 Finance Update

Considered:

The report of the Finance Officer

The Director of Corporate Services introduced and welcomed the new Finance and Performance Officer, Catherine Raistrick.

The Finance Officer updated Members on the financial performance of the Authority for the 1st quarter, followed by The Director of Corporate Services who gave Members a brief update on the proposed use of 60K for improvements to Sutton Bank cycling facilities and 45K for urgent footpath repairs.

Discussion took place between Members and Officers regarding the Authority's current situation in relation to grants and reserves.

Action: Director of Corporate Services agreed to split the reserves figures down, to give Members greater understanding of how the reserves are used.

Resolved:

That the Finance update be noted by Members and at Officers provide a fuller report on the use of Reserves.

40/13 **External Funding**

Considered:

The report of the External Fundraising Officer.

The Officer reported the Authority's disappointment regarding their recent unsuccessful cycling bid and further disappointment at the inconsistent way in which the information had been communicated to the Park Authorities. The four Authorities who had been successful were; the Peak District, South Downs, New Forest and Dartmoor. The Officer informed Members that there may be an opportunity to use aspects of the cycling bid in a new Community Activity Scheme currently being offered by Sport England.

The Officer also updated Members on the 'This Exploited Land' project, saying that even though the scheme had been oversubscribed, four bids across the Yorkshire and Humberside Region, the Authority has put in a strong bid and remains optimistic of a positive outcome.

The Officer informed Members that Volunteer input equated to a significant part of our match funding at approximately 1.8 million. Members suggested that the Authority give greater publicity about the value of Volunteers' to the Park, especially as the North York Moors National Park Authority has the greatest number of volunteers across all of the National Parks.

The Officer shared with Members the Authority's option to bid for Coastal Community Fund money next May and meetings would be taking place to talk through some ideas. Grant funding wouldn't be enough to cover a Staithes water quality project, but there may be enough funding to look at regenerating the neighbourhood around Staithes to improve the visitor environment on the approaches to the village.

One Member suggested Skinningrove as a possible beneficiary of the Coastal Funding.

The Director of Corporate Services informed Members that 1K had been received by the Authority from Scottish National Heritage towards ANPA Conference costs and that an additional 3K had been pledged by Natural Resources Wales, but that this sum would probably need to be approved by the Welsh Assembly before payment is made.

Resolved:

Members noted the report.

41/13 **ICT Update**

Considered:

The report of the ICT Manager

The ICT Manager informed Members that 694 of the Buildings at Risk surveys had been completed, by approximately 15 volunteers using mobile tablet devices. The ICT Manger also informed Members that the 40% saving on Connectivity charges roughly equated to 12K per year.

Resolved:

Members noted the report of the ICT Manager

42/13 **Member Training**

Considered:

The report of the Committees Officer

Members commented that they found training such as the Evening seminars useful. Members also offered the following suggestions for additional areas of training:

- Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee training
- Factual explanation of Potash report

Resolved:

The training programme was agreed. Officers to look at possible ways to provide additional FRASC, Potash support to Members.

43/13 **Internal Audit Report 2012/13**

Considered:

The report of the Director of Corporate Services. This item was presented by the Principal Auditor.

Resolved:

Members noted the content of the report.

44/13 **External Audit Fee 2013/14**

Considered:

The report of the Director of Corporate Services

Resolved:

Members noted the content of the report and appendices

**Public Summary of Items considered "in private"
at the meeting of the Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee
on 12 August 2013**

Private Minutes

Mrs Patmore and Mr Jeffels declared a personal interest in this item as Members of NYCC and SBC

Members agreed that the private minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2013, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Complaints and Compliments Update

Members considered the report of the Committees Officer which set out the details of the complaints and compliments received since the last report.

Authority Officers shared with Members the decision of the ICO confirming their 'no further action required' decision on a received complaint. With regard to this complaint, the Authority's Solicitor advised Members of the Authority's preferred next course of action. Members agreed the proposed action. Additional options for action were also discussed. These would be reviewed further once any additional reply has been received from the complainant.

Authority Officers also informed Members of the ICO view concerning another complainant, Members agreed with the ICO view.