

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 25 November 2013 .

Present: Malcolm Bowes, David Jeffels, Ted Sanderson, Andrew Scott, Richard Thompson, Jeremy Walker

Apologies: Jim Bailey, Caroline Patmore, John Ritchie, Bill Suthers.

Officers in Attendance: Andy Wilson (Chief Executive), Peter Yates (Section 151 Officer), Catherine Raistrick (Finance and Performance Officer), Simon Baum (ICT Manager), Stephen Croft (External Fundraising Officer), Ian Nicholls (Assistant Director of Corporate Services), Vanessa Burgess (Committees Officer)

Copies of All Documents Considered Are In The Minute Book

Before the meeting officially commenced, the Authority's Chief Executive advised Members that some items for action from the previous minutes remain outstanding, largely due to the limited expertise of other Authority Officers covering in the absence of The Director of Corporate Services. The Chief Executive went on to thank Peter Yates and Rob Davisworth of NYCC for their additional support during this time and informed Members that the outstanding actions would be considered as part of the forthcoming Directors' away days. The Chief Executive also informed Members that the Director of Corporate Services was now on a phased return to work.

Members welcomed the news of the Director of Corporate Services return.

The Chief Executive also advised Members that as yet, no information had been received from DEFRA regarding future National Park Grant settlements, so there may need to be an additional meeting early in the new year once the announcement had been made and the information had been digested.

Members were given supplementary papers at the start of the meeting in the form of an **Annual Audit Letter from Deloitte**.

46/13 Minutes

Resolved:

That the public minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12 August 2013, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

47/13 Members Interests

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

48/13 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
12	1, 2, 3, 4
13	1, 2, 7
14	1, 2,

49/13 IT Update

Considered:

The report of the ICT Manager.

The ICT Manager updated Members as follows:

- PC refresh going well, 40 completed already, results have been well received.
- Inspired – project to implement this is well on schedule
- GIS Officer recently attended National Parks GIS meeting and shared mapping expertise.

One member asked if the IT team envisaged any additional costs in the near future. The ICT Manager informed the Member that any further major spend was unlikely in the near future. Members considered it commendable that the Authority's GIS Officer was taking a lead in Mapping technology and sharing expertise with other National Park Authorities. Members asked if the Authority's IT team might be willing to share this mapping expertise/offer a certain amount of technical support to Parish Councils who were currently in the process of signing up for OS mapping. The ICT Manager agreed there was potential for the Authority's IT staff to help give guidance at a Parish Council level.

Resolved:

That the ICT Manager's report be noted.

50/13 External Funding

Considered:

The report of the External Funding Officer.

The External Funding Officer was pleased to update Members on the recently successful HLF bid for This Exploited Land project. From the maximum £3 million grant, an initial £198K will be given to fund the development phase; once that phase is approved, then the remainder of the money will be released. A Project Manager to be appointed in due course and project will take approximately five years to deliver.

Members agreed to act as ambassadors for the project, plus try to reduce people's expectations of immediate action as a thorough planning phase will be the key to successful delivery.

Resolved:

That Members noted the success of the bid and approved the external funding work.

51/13 **Budget Estimate**

Considered:

The report of the Chief Executive, the Assistant Director of Corporate Services, the Section 151 Officer and the Principal Accountant.

The Chief Executive informed Members that as yet no National Park Grant settlement figures had been received, but that information was expected within the next few weeks. Whilst not a sustainable long term strategy, in the short term, reserves have been kept relatively high to help cover any immediate shortfall in funds, with the year end figure being £880K. Funds of £200K spent on Potash, hadn't helped the Authority's financial situation this year, with little prospect of support from DEFRA to fund this. The Authority asked Members to agree to £100K from discretionary conservation budgets being transferred into reserves this year as a precaution against anticipated cuts to National Park Grants in 2014/5.

The Chief Executive informed Members that staff would be consulted regarding possible future staff related savings.

The Section 151 Officer gave Members a little more insight on possible future budget situation based on 2% cut scenario.

Action: Authority/FRASC to meet again once announcement made, probably January 2014.

Resolved:

That Members noted budget position. Staff be included in the savings consultation process. £100K be moved from conservation budget into reserves. Authority/FRASC to meet again once funding announcement received.

52/13 **Second Quarter Finance Update**

Considered:

The report of the Finance and Performance Officer.

Members were asked to note that income from the Coast Alive claim, would be coming back into the Authority, albeit slowly.

Members asked for clarification on allocation of spend from the reserves fund, especially in relation to Potash.

The Authority's Chief Executive advised Members that the legal budget was under pressure and that Authority spending was ahead of profile because of Potash. However, the Chief Executive reported that the Director of Planning was confident that his budget would balance out.

Resolved:

That Members noted the report.

David Jeffels, FRASC Chair, left the meeting at 11.50am. In the absence of FRASC Deputy Chair, Caroline Patmore, Malcolm Bowes, Deputy Chair of the NPA, took over as Chair.

53/12 Six Month Scrutiny Report on Treasury Management

Considered:

The report of the Treasurer.

The Treasurer updated Members on the position of the Authority up to 30 Sept 2013.

Resolved:

That Members noted the position of the Authority and approved the Prudential Indicators.

54/12 Six Monthly Performance Indicators Outturn

Considered:

The report of the Finance and Performance Officer.

The Finance and Performance Officer advised Members that performance had generally been good. Items to note:

- Problems with data collection from other organisations gave rise to a lower performance under Recreation and Park Management. Some organisations only provide information annually, so data collection figures are always incomplete for the first six months.
- Low performance with under-represented groups due to cuts in funding, although BME groups are increasing.
- Promoting understanding – low performance, due to lack of survey data collection while developing the new website.
- Planning – appeals looked at over four year timescale.

Resolved:

That Members noted performance.

55/12 Appraisal Scheme

Considered:

The report of the Assistant Director of Corporate Services.

The Assistant Director of Corporate Services advised Members that good discussions had taken place with staff and Unison regarding changes to the Authority's appraisal scheme. He also clarified the current scheme for Members and indicated what the new look scheme would hope to include:

- Values, how we behave
- Leadership Development Programme
- Income Generation

Members gave their views, supported the proposed changes, and made comment on the following:

- Measuring performance
- Moderation process
- Scepticism towards 360 feedback process

Resolved: That Member's noted the work to date.

.....(Chairman)
3 February 2014

**Public Summary of Items considered "in private"
at the meeting of the Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards
on, Monday 25 November 2013**

Private Minutes of Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee

Members agreed that the private minutes of the Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards meeting held on, Monday 12 August 2013 having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Confidentiality of Standards Hearing

The Authority's Chief Executive updated Members on the position with respect to the release of documents under the Freedom of Information Act relating to the on-going Standards investigation. Members supported the Chief Executives decision not to release information in light of the ICO decision.

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. Members noted the report.