

North York Moors National Park Authority

1 October 2018

Finance Collaboration Update

<p>1. Purpose of the Report</p>
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<p>1.1 To provide an in-year update on the Finance Collaboration Agreement.</p>

2. Background

2.1 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires Authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs. In order to discharge this duty the Authority must designate someone to hold the statutory office of 'Chief Financial Officer'. The role is one of the three which the Authority is required to appoint by statute. The Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires the s151 Officer to be a member of one of the recognised Accountancy Bodies.

2.2 The Authority has had a Collaboration Agreement with North Yorkshire County Council since April 2016 to provide a range of finance related services. This agreement includes for provision of the s151 Officer role. The Authority has also found it to be operationally helpful to have a named Deputy.

2.3 In March 2018 Members resolved that the appointment of Karen Iveson as s151 Officer be extended until 31 March 2019 whilst Pete Williams, who was appointed Deputy s151 officer following the departure of the Director of Corporate Services, settled into his wider role (he is also Head of Finance at Selby District Council and leads the finance teams for a range of external clients for the County Council).

3. Performance

3.1 6 months into these arrangements the Collaboration Agreement continues to deliver well for the authority and has provided resilience in a time of change. However, growing complexity and demands on Finance at the North York Moors National Park and other partners mean that the cover provided by the current service is stretched and therefore the s151 arrangements will continue in their current form for the remainder of the financial year. Whilst no further changes are proposed at this time, the demands on the service will be kept under close review with funds available in the budget if more resources are needed.

3.2 Despite the challenges, performance against the service specification is on track with all key milestones met – a significant achievement given the requirements for faster closedown.

3.3 Since the last update, a review of procurement support for the authority has been undertaken and additional services have been agreed with North Yorkshire County Council. The service specification has been updated to reflect these additional services.

3.4 A further update and proposals for the service from 1 April 2019 will be brought to the NPA meeting in March 2019.

4. **Financial and Staffing Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial or staffing implications for the Authority as a result of this report. Budget provision has been made as part of the costs for financial services.
- 4.2 The Collaboration Agreement provides for 345 days of support both on and off site at a cost of £92,512 in 2018/19. Where possible service requirements are delivered within the overall cost envelope but there is provision for additional ad-hoc work should this be required (for exceptional items) – the current day rate for additional work is £268.
- 4.3 Notwithstanding the provisions for additional ad-hoc work, Procurement support has been agreed at an additional cost of £12k p.a. and this is being funded from existing corporate budgets.

5. **Sustainability and Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There are no sustainability or legal issues arising from this report.

<h4>6. Recommendation</h4>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">6.1 Members are requested to note the report. |
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Contact Officer
Karen Iveson
S151 Officer
Tel No 01609 535664

Background papers to this Report

File ref

NPA report 19 March 2018