



Lake District National Park

Resources Committee: 5 June 2025
Draft Minutes Subject to Committee Approval

Agenda Item: 2

Resources Committee

MINUTES of a meeting of the Resources Committee held at the National Park Office, Murley Moss, Kendal at 10.00 am on 7 March 2025.

Present

Mr J Jackson (Chair)

Mr M P Brereton

Mr M F Carter

Mr W Clark

Ms J A Drake

Ms S Lansbury

Mr P Walter

2 vacancies

Also in attendance

Chair of the Authority: Ms T Hunt MBE

Apologies

Ms S Mosner

01/25 Apologies

Apologies were received from Ms S Mosner.

02/25 Minutes

Decided: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

03/25 Chair's Announcements

The Chair announced to the Committee and members of the public that the meeting was being livestreamed and that a digital sound recording of the meeting would be made. Members were asked to note the sensitivity of forthcoming financial discussions.

The Chair outlined a change to the agenda order where the Finance Report: Quarter 3 2024/25 and the Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26-2029/30 would be discussed before the Draft Business Plan.

The Chair noted that this would be the last meeting for Mr Tony Watson, Head of Visitor Services. The Chair and Members extended their thanks for his hard work and valuable contributions.

Members welcomed Ms Sally Lansbury to her first Resources Committee.

04/25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of a registrable interest or disclosable pecuniary interest relating to any of the business of the Committee.

05/25 Questions

There were no questions relating to the business of the Committee.

06/25 Public Participation

There were no questions, petitions or deputations of a general nature relating to the business of the Committee.

07/25 Performance and Risk Monitoring Report: Quarter Three 2024/25

The Head of People and Organisational Development presented an executive summary of the report which updated members on progress at the end of December 2024 in delivering the 2024-2027 Business Plan, including the management of key corporate and Business Plan risks.

Members reflected on the encouraging progress being made with regards to key actions. All risks were within tolerance however, the potential for the documented reclassification of several risks as amber to affect future funding decisions was raised.

Decided:

- a Members reviewed progress at the end of December 2024 in delivering the 2024-2027 Business Plan by reviewing performance, as set out in Annexes 1, 2, 3 and 5; and
- b Members reviewed the corporate risks and Business Plan risks, as set out in Annexes 1 and 4.

08/25 Finance Report: Quarter 3 2024/25 (to December 2024, Period 9 2024/25)

The Head of Resources presented an executive summary of the report which updated Members on revenue and capital budget performance for Quarter 3 2024/25. This provided assurance that the Authority is operating within the approved budget envelope, highlighted any proposed budget amendments that required Member approval, and flagged significant financial risks.

Members discussed the financial and delivery consequences of the dissolution of the hosting arrangement with Cumbria Woodlands and agreed that it was an unfortunate situation but understood the issue around financial sustainability needed addressing.

Decided:

- a. Members noted the financial performance against capital and revenue budgets to the end of the period, and the emerging financial risks

09/25 Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26-2029/30

The Head of Resources presented the paper outlining the Authority's draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30 for member consideration. A verbal update was provided with further information and the potential impact.

The CEO presented an update on National Park Grant. Members were informed that there had been significant changes in Officers' knowledge and awareness as result of recent discussions with DEFRA since the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget was prepared and circulated. Although the indicative total reduction to Revenue funding and total increase to Capital funding across the ten English National Parks had been shared by DEFRA, the distribution of these changes for each National Park was still an unknown. The CEO would continue to press DEFRA for confirmation to allow Officers to make commensurate amendments to the MTFS.

Members considered the challenges and discussed opportunities to generate revenue savings through partnerships and maximise revenue through investment. Timing for the creation of a meaningful revised Medium Term Financial Strategy and actions needed were also discussed. Members were informed that a different set of papers would be presented at the Authority Committee in March and further changes expected until September 2025.

Members discussed the implications of the changes to funding on aspects of the high level MTFS including opportunities to invest in assets to generate future income. The trade-off between rate of return and the risk / certainty of return was noted.

The Head of Financial Services presented a proposal to purchase rather than lease cars for the Authority's fleet on value for money grounds. Members reflected on this and other sensible investment opportunities for the future and funding opportunities available.

The delegation to the S151 Officer was amended to include a limit of £425,000.

Decided:

- a. Members commented on the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy set out in Annex 1 prior to presentation to Authority Committee in March 2025; and
- b. Members approved the delegation of up to £425,000 to the S151 Officer to purchase vehicles, decide on lease vs buy options for these vehicles, and make the resulting adjustments to capital and revenue budgets.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30am and reconvened after a 15-minute break.

10/25 **Draft 2025-2028 Business Plan**

The Head of People and Organisational Development presented the report containing the draft 2025-2028 Business Plan.

The 2025-2028 Business Plan is a 3-year rolling plan so there have been no radical changes.

Members were invited to review and make comments (via email before Tuesday 11 March) on the milestones and actions contained within the 2025-2028 Business Plan for inclusion in the final version of the Plan which is to be presented to Authority Committee for adoption on 26 March 2025.

Members agreed that the proposal in Part B (Section 2.11) - whereby the Resource Committee was granted delegated authority to approve changes to the Business Plan in Q1 and Q2 - was appropriate.

Decided:

- a. Members commented on the draft 2025-2028 Business Plan shown in Annex 1, and the key Business Plan and corporate risks shown in Annex 2, in advance of the final Business Plan and the risks being presented to Authority on 26 March, and
- b. Members commented on the proposal to ask Authority to give delegated authority to Resources Committee to agree in-year changes to Business Plan actions, where factors have significantly impacted on our ability to deliver planned work.

11/25 **Staff engagement report 2025**

The Head of People and Organisational Development presented the report which updated Members on Staff Engagement in 2024.

Members reflected on the positive nature of the report paying tribute to everybody involved.

Decided:

- a. Members noted the Staff Engagement Report for 2025, as shown in Annex 1.

The Committee passed the following Resolution:

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items. This was because exempt information, as defined in Schedule 12A of the Act, may be disclosed during discussions.

Part 2

Commercial in Confidence

12/25 Disposals and Exemptions 2024/5 – Quarter 3 Update

The Head of Resources presented the paper providing Members with the quarter 3 update on progress against planned asset disposals and exemptions granted within the procurement standing orders.

Members considered the impact of the new (24 Feb 2025) procurement regulations on direct awards. However, the Authority Solicitor explained that this impact would be negated by the move to award under Framework Agreements.

Decided:

- a. Members noted the progress against the planned disposals in Annex 1; and
- b. Members noted the exemptions to the procurement standing orders set out in Annex 2

Commercial & Staff in Confidence

13/25 Visitor Services 2024/25 Quarter 3 Trading Update and Budget Progress

The CEO outlined the reorganisation of Visitor Services following a staff consultation period.

The Head of Visitor Services presented the paper giving an update on our Visitor Services trading position as at the end of quarter 3 (Q3) of the 2024/25 financial year.

Members discussed the trading position across the whole of the remit of visitor services and acknowledged particular challenges.

Decided:

- a. Members reviewed and commented on the Quarter 3 Trading Position. (Original Budget);
- b. Members noted the performance of period 10 vs current budget; and
- c. Members noted the outlook towards year end, and developing risks.

(The meeting concluded at 12:30 pm)