



**Lake District
National Park**

Authority: 17 September 2025

Agenda Item: 11a

Resources Committee

MINUTES of a meeting of the Resources Committee held at the National Park Office, Murley Moss, Kendal at 10.00 am on 5 June 2025.

Present

Mr J Jackson (Chair)
Mr M F Carter
Ms J A Drake

Ms S Lansbury
Ms S Mosner
Mr P Walter
2 vacancies

Apologies

Mr W Clark

No Apologies Received

Mr M P Brereton

14/25 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr W Clark.

15/25 Minutes

Decided: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2025 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

16/25 Chair's Announcements

The Chair announced to the Committee and members of the public that the meeting was being livestreamed and that a digital recording of the meeting would be made.

17/25 Declarations of Interest

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

Mr P Walter advised that he is currently the Director of Keswick Tourism Association.

18/25 Questions

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

19/25 **Public Participation**

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

20/25 **Performance and Risk Monitoring Report: End of 2024/25**

The Head of People and Organisational Development presented a report updating Members on progress at the end of 2024/25 in delivering the 2024-2027 Business Plan, including the management of key corporate and Business Plan risks.

It was noted that 11 of the 17 key business plan actions were completed, with the remaining six (including carbon offsetting, farming and nature recovery, historic environment, sustainable travel, access and recreation, and digital services) carried forward into the 2025-28 business plan.

Of the 20 additional key actions, 17 were completed, while three (asset and property management, sustainability, and planning casework) were marked as red.

Discussion focused on the complexity of carbon offsetting, and the challenges of aligning environmental goals with emerging statutory and non-statutory markets. Members requested a future session to explore carbon offsetting and biodiversity net gain (BNG) in more depth. The committee also discussed the importance of visitor management responsibilities and the need to ensure these are not overlooked in structural changes.

Risk management was reviewed, with no risks at critical level. Two risks had a risk score of 10 or above: resource availability (due to the reduced National Park grant and external pressures) and commercial strategy (linked to the Brockhole tender launch). Cybersecurity was highlighted as a growing concern, with assurance provided on current protections and training. Members supported the idea of an annual cybersecurity review.

Continued applications for development in Storrs Park were highlighted and raised as an issue of concern for several Members. Officers were asked not to let the issues slip in the coming year.

Members also discussed the Authority's evolving approach to risk appetite, noting the need for broader Member engagement and thematic clarity. It was agreed that the current framework should be shared with Members and potentially brought to a full Authority committee for discussion.

Decided:

- a. Members reviewed progress at the end of March 2025 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.

21/25 **Volunteering Report 2024/25**

The Head of People and Organisational Development presented the LDNPA volunteering update for 2025 supported by the Volunteer Team Leader. He expressed gratitude for her achievements and highlighted the important role that volunteers play in achieving the LDNPA's strategic objectives.

The Committee heard that the Authority had focused on consolidating and improving the volunteer experience in year one of the three-year strategy. Key achievements included restructuring the volunteer team, reinstating the member-led Volunteer Strategy Group, and improving communication channels. A volunteer survey showed high satisfaction, with 85% enjoying their roles and 90% finding them rewarding.

Member discussion explored the balance between volunteers supporting core services versus "nice-to-have" activities. Members emphasised the financial value of volunteering (estimated at nearly £500,000) and encouraged further integration into core operations. Suggestions included submitting a "spend to save" proposal to the Commercial Strategy Board to expand volunteer management capacity and exploring partnerships with local employers like BAE Systems for corporate volunteering.

Members also stressed the importance of improving Member-volunteer engagement and suggested more opportunities for Members to join volunteer activities. The Committee welcomed the upcoming Volunteers Day and supported efforts to broaden volunteer recruitment, including outreach in Barrow and other underserved communities.

Members praised the progress made in revitalising the volunteering programme and supported further investment and integration.

Decided:

- a. Members noted the Volunteering update for 2025, as shown in Annex 1.

22/25 Finance Report: P12 2024/25 (year to March 2025), draft out-turn

The Head of Resources presented a report updating Resources on revenue and capital budget performance to P12 2024/25. The report provided assurance that the Authority operated within the approved budget envelope, highlighted any proposed budget amendments that may require Member approval, and flagged significant financial risks.

It was explained that the closure of accounts for 2024/25 was still ongoing but was due to meet the statutory publication deadline of 30 June 2025. The report presented the draft out-turn position which may be subject to amendment up to the point of audit sign off.

The draft out-turn report was presented, showing an £850k underspend for the year. Key contributors to the positive variance included improved Visitor Services

performance, higher-than-expected investment interest, and underspends due to vacancies and grant-funded staff time.

The Committee noted that while the trading reserve had been drawn on during the year, the final position of c£390k was better than forecast.

The Committee approved the proposed allocations to reserves as set out in the report.

The revised capital programme (Annex 4) was also reviewed, incorporating the £1.5m one-off capital grant from Defra. Key investments included solar panel projects (subject to delegated approval), toilet refurbishments, and vehicle purchases to reduce leasing costs. Members agreed to delegate authority for solar project approvals to the Chair and Deputy Chair of Resources Committee and the Head of Resources.

Members noted the importance of maintaining reserves amid financial uncertainty.

Decided:

- a. Members noted the financial performance against capital and revenue budgets to the end of the period.
- b. Members approved the specific contributions to reserves as set out in Table 1 of the report.
- c. Members approved the revised capital programme at Annex 4 and delegated authority to the Chair of Resources Committee in consultation with the Head of Resources, for the approval of £310,000 for solar schemes

The meeting was adjourned at 11:28 and reconvened after a 7-minute break at 11:35.

Members noted that it was the Deputy Chair of the Authority's final Resources Committee. The Chair thanked Michael for his hard work and diligence.

Due to changes in Committee composition and leadership, the Chair highlighted that a new Deputy Chair for the Resources Committee would probably be required and invited interested Members to discuss the role with him.

23/25 Commercial Strategy Board Terms of Reference

The Chair introduced the proposed updated Terms of Reference for Commercial Strategy Board to codify the current working practices of the Board. As a sub-group of Resources Committee, Members were asked to approve the Terms of Reference presented in Annex 1 of the report.

The Chair explained to Members that the Board continues to meet regularly to review income-generating opportunities and commercial projects, with decisions referred to the Resources Committee as appropriate.

Members welcomed the transparency and noted the importance of maintaining visibility over both commercial and externally funded project pipelines.

Decided:

- a. Members approved the Terms of Reference for Commercial Strategy Board.

24/25 Resources Committee Self-Assessment for 2024/25

The Head of Resources presented a report of the draft Resources Committee self-assessment of effectiveness for 2024/25 noting that feedback had been incorporated from Members. An annual self-assessment is considered best practice and was agreed to be implemented following Value for Money assessments by external audit.

Members agreed that the overall functioning of the committee remained effective, with no major changes required. Two key areas for improvement were identified: enhancing the presentation of budget information and improving member training and support.

Members discussed the importance of financial literacy and suggested a skills audit to ensure the committee has the right mix of expertise. It was agreed that Away Hours would be used to provide informal briefings and that a more structured training offer should be considered.

The Committee endorsed the self-assessment and agreed to enhance Member training and explore a skills audit to ensure effective oversight of financial and strategic matters within the Resources Committee.

Decided:

- a. Members reviewed and endorsed the draft self-assessment presented at 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

25/25 Visitor Services Trading Update and Budget Progress Q4

The Head of Resources provided an update on LDNPA Visitor Services trading position as at the end of quarter 4 (Q4) of the 2024/25 financial year and reflected the LDNPA yearend position. He asked Members to note that these figures were provisional and unaudited.

Decided:

- a. Members noted the out-turn for 2024/25 for Visitor Services and explanations for key variances set out.

26/25 Disposals and Exemptions Q4

The Head of Resources presented a paper providing Members with the quarter 4 update on progress against planned asset disposals and exemptions granted within the procurement standing orders.

It was noted that there were limited changes.

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.

27/25 Car parking price increase proposals from 1st July 2025

This paper sets out proposals for increases to car parking charges for Member approval. These will apply from 1st July 2025.

The Chair provided contextual information for Members about the pressures from a reduced LDNPA grant.

Decided:

- a. Members approved the proposed base fees to apply from 1st July 2025; and
- b. Members approved the trial of a proposed seasonal price increase at Waterhead.

28/25 Efficiencies and Income Generation 2025/26

This paper sets out proposals for income generation and cost savings in support of the overall aim of setting a balanced budget. This is in the context of setting a 5-year MTFs that meets the £1.5m General Reserve target.

Decided:

- a. Members noted the emerging efficiencies and income generation list at Annex 1; and
- b. Members noted the update regarding visitor services.

The Chair and Authority solicitor presented brief updates on ongoing situations in which they were involved.

Members requested more information and further Member discussion on budget plan analysis.

(The meeting finished at 13:16)