



Lake District National Park

Lake District National Park Authority
Authority: 10 December 2025

Agenda Item: 10a

Resources Committee

MINUTES of a meeting of the Resources Committee held at the National Park Office, Wayfaring House, Murley Moss Business Park, Kendal at 10.00 am on 2 September 2025.

Present

Mr J Jackson (Chair)	Ms S Mosner
Ms J Boak	Mr P Walter
Mr M P Brereton	3 vacancies

Also in attendance

Chair of the Authority: Ms T Hunt MBE

Apologies

Mr W Clark

No Apologies Received

Ms J A Drake

29/25 Appointment of Chair

Mr Walter nominated Mr Jackson to be appointed as Chair and Ms Mosner seconded the appointment. There were no other nominations.

Decided: That Mr J Jackson be re-appointed Chair for the coming year.

30/25 Appointment of Deputy Chair

Ms Hunt nominated Mr Walter to be appointed as Deputy Chair for the first quarter and Ms Mosner seconded the appointment. There were no other nominations.

Decided: That Mr P Walter be appointed as Deputy Chair for the first quarter of the coming year.

31/25 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr W Clark.

32/25 Minutes

The Authority Solicitor outlined two changes that had been made since the draft Minutes were circulated.

Decided: that the amended Minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2025 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

33/25 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.

34/25 Declarations of Interest

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

35/25 Questions

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

36/25 Public Participation

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

37/25 Performance and Risk Monitoring Report: Quarter One 2025/26

The Head of People and Organisational Development presented the report updating Members on progress in delivering the 2025-2028 Business Plan, including the management of key corporate and Business Plan risks. It also included a proposal to make in-year changes to the Business Plan.

Key Points Discussed:

- Of the 39 key actions, 35 are on track, and 4 are rated Amber. One of these has subsequently moved from Amber to Green in quarter two due to improved budget performance.
- The sustainable travel and transport action remains under review due to ongoing discussions around the Cumbria devolution deal.
- Development Management service performance continues to be rated Amber due to backlog issues, although the team's performance was commended.
- Other service areas remain rated Green.
- No risks are currently rated as high or critical.
- Seven of nine medium risks are rated Amber, primarily due to external factors such as World Heritage inscription and resource availability.
- One internal risk, related to Brockhole remains Amber pending further developments.

The Chair thanked Officers for a complicated but clearly written paper.

Changes to the Business Plan:

- Members approved the reallocation of actions due to the division of the Strategy and Ranger service into two separate services. These changes were largely administrative and involved assigning responsibilities to appropriate teams.
- A proposed removal of the milestone under Action 8 (Sustainable Travel and Transport) was not approved. Members expressed concern over the timing and process of this change, noting that:
 - The most recent changes had not been discussed at the Park Strategy and Vision (PS&V) Committee.
 - The transport strategy remains a priority and should reflect the Authority's leadership role, especially during the interim period before the establishment of a Mayoral Combined Authority.
 - Members acknowledged that the milestone may be rated Red in future reports, but it still reflected the strategic importance of sustainable transport.

Officers were asked by Members to revisit the wording of the Ranger Services objective to ensure it accurately reflects the service's intent and strategic focus.

After full discussion, Members agreed that the transport milestone will remain in the Business Plan, with a view to revisiting the objective following further discussions at the PS&V Committee and developments in the transport working group.

Members reviewed and endorsed the performance and risk elements of the report. They approved administrative changes to service allocations but deferred the removal of the sustainable transport milestone, reaffirming its strategic importance and the Authority's leadership role in shaping future transport initiatives.

Decided:

- a. Members reviewed progress in delivering the 2025-2028 Business Plan by reviewing performance, as set out in Annexes 1, 2, 3 and 5;
- b. Members reviewed the management of corporate risks and Business Plan risks, as set out in Annexes 1 and 4; and
- c. Members did not approve the proposed in-year changes to the milestones for the Sustainable Travel and Transport action in the Business Plan, as set out in Annexes 1 and 6.

38/25 Health and Safety Annual Report 2024/25

The Head of People and Organisational Development presented the Health and Safety Annual Report for 2024/25 which provided a comprehensive overview of the Authority's performance, incidents, and strategic developments in Health and Safety management.

The Head of People and Organisational Development commenced the report by advising Members' that the drowning incident at Brockhole the previous Summer was not reflected in the report statistics. He reminded Members that the incident occurred during an organised school visit, which meant that the Authority were not the reporting organisation. Members' condolences were expressed to family and friends, and they praised the support work carried out by Brockhole staff on the day and in the following weeks.

Key Points Discussed:

- A reduction in the number of reported incidents was noted, though Members were reminded that there is always a risk that not all accidents, incidents or near misses are reported.
- The importance of continuing to encourage a culture of open and accurate reporting was emphasised by Members.
- Improvements in mandatory training completion rates were highlighted.
- Members supported ongoing efforts to ensure all staff are up to date with Health and Safety training, particularly in high-risk operational areas and with casual staff.
- The integration of Health and Safety considerations into service planning and risk assessments was welcomed.
- Members discussed the need for continued focus on mental health and wellbeing as part of the Authority's broader health and safety strategy.

Officers were asked to continue promoting a culture of safety and wellbeing, with particular attention to:

- Improving incident reporting accuracy with a suggestion of near-miss examples being given to stimulate reporting.
- The Chair suggested that an Annex could be included giving numbers of reports from schools so as the opportunity to learn from near misses was not lost. This was supported by the Authority Chair who spoke of a need to give guidance to visiting schools and groups based on knowledge of incidents that had occurred.
- Embedding Health and Safety into all levels of service delivery.

The report was commended for its clarity and detail, with Members noting the positive direction of travel in Health and Safety culture across the organisation and recognising the proactive work undertaken by Officers to improve reporting, training, and incident management. Members acknowledged the progress made and the importance of maintaining momentum in Health and Safety improvements.

The Chair thanked the Head of People and Organisational Development for an excellent and comprehensive report.

Decided:

- a. Members agreed the Health and Safety Annual Report for 2024/25, as shown in Annex 1.

39/25 Wellbeing Annual Report 2024/25

The Head of People and Organisational Development presented the Wellbeing Annual Report for 2024/25 which outlined the Authority's approach to supporting staff wellbeing, key initiatives undertaken, and areas for future development.

The report was well received, with Members acknowledging the growing importance of wellbeing in the workplace and there was recognition of the efforts made to embed wellbeing into organisational culture and strategy.

Members noted the range of activities and support mechanisms introduced, including mental health first aid provision, flexible working arrangements, and access to wellbeing resources. The Authority's commitment to staff wellbeing was commended, particularly in the light of ongoing external pressures and organisational change.

It was noted that there had been a reduction in absence due to mental health by 50% since last year but it was explained that this decrease could result from only a reduction in one or two people requiring time off work as mental health often required lengthy absences. In this respect, Members discussed the importance of gathering meaningful feedback from staff to assess the effectiveness of wellbeing initiatives and were supportive of continuing efforts to monitor wellbeing trends and adapting support accordingly.

The integration of wellbeing into broader organisational planning and performance frameworks was welcomed, including attempts to engage all line managers and ensure that they were trained as mental health first aiders.

Members emphasised the need to maintain momentum and ensure wellbeing remains a priority across all departments. Officers were encouraged to:

- Continue developing and promoting wellbeing initiatives.
- Strengthen mechanisms for staff feedback and engagement.
- Ensure wellbeing considerations are embedded in service planning and leadership development.

The Wellbeing Annual Report 2024/25 was positively received, with Members expressing strong support for the Authority's approach and progress.

The Chair commended the report and figures presented. Members noted that the target needs to remain ambitious.

The importance of maintaining a proactive and responsive wellbeing strategy was reaffirmed, with a commitment to ongoing improvement and staff engagement.

Decided:

- a. Members noted the Wellbeing Annual Report for 2024/25, as shown in Annex 1

The meeting was adjourned at 11:09 and reconvened after an eight-minute break at 11:17.

40/25 Sustainability Strategy

The Head of Resources presented the Sustainability Strategy for approval. The Authority currently has a number of cultures and practices aimed towards enhancing its sustainability. The strategy was developed to codify current practice and to set out a direction of travel and aspiration to guide future decision making and prioritisation.

The Head of Resources explained that Martin Sleath (Sustainability Adviser) was the driving force behind the proposals, and the Chair invited Martin to join the Committee as the proposals were discussed.

The Chair of the Authority praised the construction of the report and noted good progress in some areas, but considerable challenges in others, and asked for an explanation of the most significant obstacles. These were described as including: the nature of the Authority's buildings and the requirements for heat; the requirement for travel with the National Park covering such a large geographical area; and how we change behaviours to ensure sustainability is considered.

Members and the CEO discussed the impact of internal sustainability policies versus peat restoration and other park wide projects. The CEO suggested that there could perhaps be a focus on one or two areas in terms of resourcing, and that Members could discuss this as part of business planning discussions at their Strategic Workshop at Glaramara at the end of October.

The Chair asked Officers to prepare a simplified higher-level document with principles, objectives and brief deliverables to articulate the LDNPA strategy in an easily digestible format. Discussion led to the proposal of two additional columns, the first clarifying whether the action was already in the budget or was an aspiration, and the second giving the actual cost. The Chair explained that this would enable Member oversight and prioritisation.

Decided:

- a. Members reviewed and approved the proposed Sustainability Strategy.

41/25 ICT Policy Review

The Head of Resources presented the most recently amended version of the ICT Policy Framework. The report presented further revisions: the addition of Section 17 Cyber Security Policy and the division of the policy into two parts – policies relevant to end users (Annex 2) with the more technical policies in a separate document (Annex 3). It was explained that both documents will be available to all staff and members.

The Head of Resources explained to Members that the review had been prompted by internal audit recommendations, which highlighted the need to consolidate

existing cyber-related provisions into a clearer, more cohesive format – this having increasing relevance due to the growing prevalence of cyber threats.

The ICT Services Manager explained to Members that the revised policy had been split into two distinct documents: a technical version for ICT professionals and a user-facing version aimed at staff and Members. This structure is intended to improve accessibility and understanding, particularly around user behaviour, which is recognised as a critical factor in mitigating cyber risk. It was noted that even the most robust technical safeguards can be undermined by user error, such as clicking on malicious links.

In response to Member questions, the ICT Services Manager outlined the external support framework, including engagement with the National Cybersecurity Centre and third-party providers during the transition to cloud-based systems. The organisation has implemented measures such as mandatory email encryption and restrictions on data transfer to and from external devices, enhancing overall security.

The Authority Solicitor provided an update on data protection and GDPR compliance. She confirmed that internal policies, privacy notices, and breach reporting procedures are in place and accessible via the intranet. An Information Management Assistant was appointed to support the ongoing review and update of these policies, which will be brought to the Committee later in the year.

The discussion also touched on the use of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly the risks associated with third-party platforms such as ChatGPT. Members were advised to use the organisation's Microsoft Co-Pilot AI, which ensures data remains within secure boundaries. It was agreed that further guidance and a Member briefing on AI usage would be beneficial, and the Authority Solicitor agreed to circulate a summary and relevant links in the interim.

The Chair thanked the ICT Services Manager for the paper and expressed appreciation from Members and staff for keeping them safe online.

Decided:

- a. Members reviewed and approved the proposed amendments to the ICT Policy.

42/25 Finance Report: P3 2025/26 (year to June 2025)

The Head of Resources presented the report updating Members on revenue and capital budget performance up to P3 2025/26.

Overall, revenue performance to date projected favourable variance of approximately £350,000 by year-end, relative to the assumptions in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). However, Members were reminded that this is a one-off improvement and future years still present significant financial challenges.

On **capital expenditure**, the Committee had previously approved a revised capital programme, including the allocation of £1.5 million in capital grants. As of June, approximately £300,000 had been spent, with significant commitments made including the outright purchase of vehicles previously leased and solar panel investments with c£200,000 approved to commence by the Chair of Resources and S151 Officer.

Risks and future planning were discussed, including concerns about inflation and the adequacy of the 2% pay award assumption in the MTFS. The Committee acknowledged ongoing uncertainties around the Defra settlement, which may not be confirmed until late in the financial year. It was suggested that any in-year surplus be moved into reserves to mitigate potential shortfalls in the 2026/27 budget. This approach was supported as a prudent measure given the current economic climate and national financial pressures.

In closing, members expressed cautious optimism about the current year's financial position but reiterated the need for vigilance and strategic planning to address future budgetary pressures given the significant revenue budget gaps in future years.

Decided:

- a. Members noted the report.

(The meeting finished at 12:17)