

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Friday 2 February 2024

Present: A Cooper, W Dracup, G Gribble, P Harper, G Hill, S Morgan, C Mott, M Owen, G Pannell, P Sanders, P Smerdon, M Williams, P Woods, J Nutley, M Renders

Apologies: M Jeffery, L Samuel, D Thomas, J McInnes

Officers: K Bishop, Chief Executive (National Park Officer)
R Drysdale, Director of Conservation and Communities
A Stirland, Head of Business Support
N White, Head of Organisational Development

Independent Person in Attendance: C Shewan

3538 Declarations of Interest

Mr Dracup and Mr Owen declared an interest in FiPL, both having received FiPL grants.

Mr Harper declared an interest in FiPL, as he is on the FiPL Assessment Board.

3539 Minutes of the previous meetings

The Minutes of the Authority meeting held on 5 January 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Mr Sanders proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mr Cooper.

The Minutes of the Audit and Governance meeting held on 3 November 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Mr Sanders proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mrs Morgan.

3540 Chair's Report

The Chair reported attending the following:

- Meeting with the Shadow Secretary of State for DEFRA, Steve Reed who visited Dartmoor
- National Parks England Meeting in January, also attended by Rebecca Pow, our Minister. She was unable to give us any assurances regarding funding, although she acknowledged the challenges currently faced and spoke about new plans for National Parks.
- Meeting with Mel Stride MP, along with our Chief Executive (National Park Officer) to discuss items raised in our previous letter:
 - Core funding issue;
 - Outcomes of the Fursdon Review;
 - Digital National Parks;

Mel Stride MP has agreed to arrange a meeting with Steve Barclay to discuss these points with him. We await confirmation of a date for this meeting.

The Chair invited other Members of the Authority to report any news. None were reported.

Mr Sanders thanked the Chair, Deputy Chair and Chief Executive (National Park Officer) on behalf of the Members for their time and efforts regarding financial issues.

3541 Items Requiring Urgent Attention / allied with Public Participation

The following motion was proposed from a Member of DNPA:

“That the Authority recognises the special characteristics of Lydford and the role the public car park plays in servicing the wider community. To that end I ask that the question of charging in the village is revisited by Members.”

Mrs Mott brought the above motion to the Meeting for debate. She advised that she had been asked by Parish Councillors to bring forward this motion at the meeting.

Councillor Gilpin spoke against the car park charges and highlighted perceived differences between Lydford Car Park and the other car parks in the National Park for which he supports the raised charges. He suggested that the other car parks are used mainly by visitors to the National Park whereas the car park in Lydford is used by residents as part of their daily life and the proposed charges would decrease their quality of life, impact negatively on their well-being and amount to a tax on living in the village.

Councillor Gilpin also advised that the road near the car park was often very congested and offers no off-road parking for residents. He asked for a delay to the implementation of the charges in order to allow for discussions about this.

A Member reinforced the need for the National Park to implement charges for car parking to cover the maintenance of the actual car parks – this was not mentioned by the Councillor. The area has recently been refurbished (before the charges were implemented).

Regarding the delay requested for discussions, Members were under the impression that discussions have taken place. Councillor Gilpin suggested that discussions with the Brewery need to continue.

Mrs Powne spoke against the car park charges. As a long-term resident of Lydford and with the support of the Parish Council as well as the local MP, she advised that the car park is situated at one end of Lydford where the main attractions and amenities are also found. The car park was acquired by the DNPA from the local public house and the toilets located in the car park, which are currently shut, were previously paid for by the village, who were under the impression that the toilets are owned by West Devon Borough Council.

Mrs Powne then went on to talk about the population of the village with the majority being over the age of 60, for whom a surcharge of £3-£5 every time they need to visit the village may become restrictive. She also added that there were fewer spaces in the car park since the tarmac and repainting of the lines and that in her opinion, paid parking will be of detriment to village life in Lydford.

The Director of Conservation and Communities thanked the speakers and commented as follows:

- As an Authority, we have been advised to ensure we are making money from any assets that we own, which includes the car park at Lydford .
- The DNPA implemented charges in the car park in Princetown in 2013, which were increased in March 2020 (however, due to Pandemic they were not implemented)
- On 12 July 2022 the Director of Conservation and Communities advised a meeting of the Parish Council by email of the rationale for charging for parking and met with Councillors on 18 July.
- He spoke several times over several months with St Austell Brewery about the possibility of them paying towards the cost of the car park.
- The Traffic Regulation Order closed in July 2022 and responses were considered by Devon County Council who sent their report to West Devon Highways and Order Committee who then approved car parking charges on 21 October 2022
- Following discussions with the church, it was agreed to change the chargeable time in the car park to 10am-6pm every day except Sunday which would be 12 midday-6pm.
- The Brewery, unfortunately, were not able to cover the cost of the 25-space car park. It was noted however that the Castle Inn has 13 guest rooms, so this has the potential of 13 spaces to be taken by visitors. The Granite Way can be accessed from the village, so the car park will be used by these visitors as well.
- It was argued that the turning area is still available and that the car park is unlikely to be used by local school traffic
- It was noted that the car park is not a highways issue.
- We have received support from local MP, Geoffrey Cox and as stated earlier we have been asked to raise money from our assets. This particular asset was purchased by DCC just under 100 years ago, while West Devon Borough Council had a Traffic Regulation Order on the land and own the toilet block (but not the land they are built on). The TRO has been amended and any anomalies complete.
- The consultation period for this proposal finished on 08 January 2024 with no objections and so now West Devon Borough Council has no authority for charging at the car park. This will take affect from 02 April 2024
- The Landlord of The Castle Inn has requested 5 permits for parking spaces for use by staff.
- The Director of Conservation and Communities welcomes ongoing discussions.

A Member asked whether the Authority might consider changing the tariff for a shorter stay in the car park and it was agreed that the Ringo App does offer some leeway in this regard, however the cost is currently consistent with other locations such as Princetown.

A Member asked about issues with WiFi coverage in the area, mobile phone coverage and the necessity to possess a mobile phone. It was advised that DNPA are looking at different machines where it will be possible to use a contactless card, however Ringo accounts for 55% of car park payments online. We would explore working with the Castle Inn as to whether cash payments can be made there.

It was proposed that Members recognise the special characteristics of Lydford and the role the public car park plays in servicing the wider community and to that end it was requested that the question of charging in the village be revisited.

The motion was not seconded, and it was therefore agreed that (under Standing Orders) the motion cannot be discussed or debated further.

3542 Internal Audit Report

To note, this is the final report and not the draft.

Ken Johnson, Assurance Manager for Devon Audit Partnership (internal auditors for DNPA) took on this role last year and he is pleased to say the reports produced by DNPA are very good.

The report comes through at this time every year whereupon the plan is agreed by Senior Management Team in June / July.

Last year DNPA achieved 5 out of 8 substantial assurance grades and 3 out of 8 reasonable assurance grades. This year 6 out of 9 are substantial grades and 3 out of 9 reasonable assurance grades.

The Auditor has previously visited the offices and was happy with the processes and ways of working which he was shown. Very high standard. Mr Johnson ran through the 9 different points and the results for each.

Mr Johnson stressed that improvements and progress have been made since last year although there are still areas which can be slightly improved upon, however overall a very good report. The new financial software system which is being introduced jointly with DCC will help the Authority to reach substantial in all areas. Mr Johnson will look at this system to test the new financial system once introduced.

The Chair pointed out that in the first line of the Executive Summary of the Internal Audit Report, it states that the Finance Department “appears” to operate efficiently. The Chair questioned the inference of this sentence. Mr Johnson assured the meeting that this was a slip in language and noted this for next year.

A Member queried the third paragraph of the Executive Summary, where it states “the income processing for Visitor Centres is highlighted as an area where some focus may be beneficial to future income generation” and asked for an explanation, which was duly given: to concentrate on bestselling products and to take advantage of any selling opportunities going forward. DNPA now have a new Retail Officer who is addressing this opportunity.

A Member commented that the Internal Audit Report was extremely accessible and thanked Mr Johnson for the report and our Head of Business Support and her team for their role in this.

RESOLVED: Members noted the report provided

3543 Auditor's Interim Annual Report 2022/23 Value for Money Arrangements

Before discussing the item, Peter Barber introduced himself, the appointed Auditor for 2022-23 as well as Justine Thorpe his colleague. He apologised for Grant Thornton not being able to present this report on 5 January 2024 at a previous Authority meeting.

He went on to explain how Grant Thornton evaluate the arrangements put in place by DNPA in order to measure value for money in the public sector. This is done on three criteria: Financial Sustainability, Governance, and Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness. He ran through the breadth of possible results listed in Appendix B of the report.

Justine Thorpe ran through the Executive Summary of the Report.

Recommendations highlighted were:

- Financial Sustainability: critical area of recommendation is that the Authority should extend their medium-term planning from 2 to 3 years (in line with other Authorities)
- Governance: risk management should also include opportunity planning and risk management process should be aligned with performance management process. Cost-benefit analysis suggests that it is a great advantage to integrate these two to improve effectiveness in both reporting.
- The new risk management strategy introduced last year created some interesting changes in results, despite no fundamental change in the business process. A more realistic risk methodology is being investigated by Officers.
- Determining the Authority's risk appetite: again it is recommended that risk and performance management are integrated. Despite tight resources, the Authority should be documenting on a corporate objective basis, both performance and target performance or alternatively, where it is recognised that tolerance is necessary. Indicators, risk methodology and tolerance should be set individually for each objective or performance.
- No evidence of significant weaknesses in Governance. Just need to enhance the performance and risk management.
- Regarding the Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness we are generating good outcomes with no significant weaknesses, although there are a couple of improvement recommendations from last year which have not yet been fully implemented.

A Member asked why we do still not have the completed audit of our financial statements. Mr Barber agreed that the documents were produced by the Authority in a timely manner and that DNPA are only one of a few public bodies whose accounts made the deadline. Unfortunately, Grant Thornton is unable to make an early start on these. An update on progress was included in the report and Mr

Barber suggested that the accounts should be finished and ready for sign off in the Meeting dated 5 April 2024.

A Member suggested that the recommendation to extend the medium-term planning from 2 to 3 years will add to a drain on resources and is also very difficult to plan as we don't know what the funding will be from the Government. They asked whether an extension would prove to be cost-effective. Mr Barber insisted that a medium-long term plan is important rather than relying on a cyclical plan but that he recognises the lack of clarity regarding funding.

Ms Thorpe added that medium-term planning is an iterative process, which means the figures for year 3 should already be known. This will however change year on year as information becomes more clear. A trajectory into the third year would however be helpful for members and can be used as a lever for planning and policies, etc. and contacting Central Government. Benefits would out-weigh the costs.

The Chief Executive (National Park Officer) noted that there was reported a high level of financial challenges in the short and medium term. He stated that he has no idea currently on what the government grant or pay inflation will be for the next financial year. He understands the importance medium-term planning but asks what is the practical value of forecasting for an additional year into the future given the current level of uncertainty. The staff time necessary to extend the Medium Term Financial Plan would seem to outweigh the practical value. Mr Barber suggested this was an improvement recommendation and not critical to the running of the organisation however suggests that it can be useful. He also suggested scenario planning for worst case/best case funding and inflation. However, he agrees there is lots of uncertainty and if DNPA believe it better to use staff resource elsewhere, he can totally appreciate this viewpoint.

The Chief Executive (National Park Officer) confirmed that the Authority are already scenario planning for the future.

In response to a Member asking the Auditors whether they currently feedback to Treasury staff on the issues that we are facing, it was advised that currently the Report is interim and so cannot be finalised until the Accounts are also finalised when it will be passed to NEL and made available on the Authority's website. Grant Thornton do produce periodical reports highlighting the challenges faced by this sector. It is, of course, the Government who make the final decisions.

Auditors thanked the officers for their support during the Audit.

RESOLVED: Members noted the report provided.

3544 Dartmoor National Park Authority 2022-2023 Audit Plan

External Audit is a retrospective exercise, and the Audit plan for 2022-23 will be ready and with the Authority in February 2024, some 9 months after the year end. Auditors apologised for this delay.

The plan sets out the Auditors' approach to discharging their responsibilities for 2022-23 and recognises that a lot of the work is already well progressed.

The plan is like prior years; risks remain similar. Value for Money represents approximately one quarter of the workload. The opinion on financial statements is the larger portion.

Accounts were produced in a timely manner and Auditors confirmed that the figures are driven from the ledger. Sign off is not done in detail but at a materiality level of £146K for DNPA, so accuracy of each entry is checked within this threshold.

Three significant risks that were checked in detail:

- i) Management override and control: areas of greatest estimation and journals
- ii) Land and buildings (assets)
- iii) Pension fund liability which has decreased dramatically to under £1 million, as this involves assumptions and estimations

The Auditors estimate that they have another 3 weeks' work and then the report will be brought to the next available Authority meeting potentially in April 2024.

Regarding the proposed fees, 2022-23 show an increase of £3K from last year to £19K. This reflects an uplift due to the appointment of new auditors.

A Member questioned whether the fee can be justified as value for money and Mr Barber replied that audit fees have increased during the contract which ended at the end of the financial year 2023. As agreed by the PSAA, the DNPA have a new contract (with new Auditors) for 2023-24 which is more than double the price. It should be noted that the work needed to discharge the role is also significant. Mr Barber did also advise that although their report for DNPA is not timely, it is in advance of many other authorities. Nationally, there is a reset process in place called Back stop which means any accounts not signed off by September will be disclaimed.

The Chair advised the Meeting that Members are not Councillors.

In response to a further query following up on the point raised above asking whether there should be a financial penalty for not completing the job in a timely manner, the Auditor replied that the fees reflect the workload, which will be completed and was significantly larger than in previous years. Before Auditors charge the fees, they are approved by the PSAA who have a robust process in place to determine the correct fee level.

A Member queried the need for investigation of certain aspects in the Audit. Whilst they can appreciate the need to be forensic, however it appears that efforts (and professional fees) are doubled when we already have professionals evaluating the pension, the land, and buildings, etc. Mr Barber concurred, but advised that the level of the audit work on the asset base is at a level set by a regulator despite efforts to change this threshold.

It was confirmed by Mr Barber that the £1K mentioned in the bullet points to increase the scope and nature of the Audit was already included in total figure. An explanation of the ISA 135 revision which increased standards and therefore work necessary in 2022-23 audit.

The Chair thanked the Auditors for their answers to Members' questions and their attendance at the Meeting. We are most frustrated with the fee level, the missed deadlines and the costs to investigate items which have already been provided by professionals.

Mr Barber appreciated the frustration and committed to drawing the line under this process as soon as possible.

RESOLVED: Members noted the update provided.

3545 Financial Management 1 April to 31 December 2023 and Forecast of Financial Outturn 2023/24

Members received the report of the Head of Business Support (NPA/24/05).

The 2023/24 net budget is reporting a potential surplus of £50,008 at year end.

The most significant variations are largely related to:

- Car parking income exceeding the budget.
- Additional external funding namely the Biodiversity Net Gains grant and new home bonus received from West Devon and South Hams District Council
- Interest earned from the bank accounts and treasury deposits.

The bids that have been funded from the Project Fund (PF) to date were set out in the Report along with details of the capital program. The replacement of the aging Ranger fleet is underway, with delivery of new vehicles expected shortly.

The report provides a forecast of interest expected with base rates remaining at 5.25% for the moment.

The forecast movement in reserves for the year was summarised, along with a detailed breakdown and the risk-based analysis in Appendices.

The 2024/25 budget and new Medium Term Financial Plan process is underway, with balances likely to change. We are working on the assumption that the National Park Grant for 2024/25 will be a flat cash settlement (in real terms, a significant reduction).

In conclusion, it was reported that the forecast outturn surplus of £50,008 represents a negative 1.25% variance against the (revised) budget. This could change before the end of the year due to factors outside of the Authority's control.

The current outturn surplus means it is unlikely we will need to utilise reserves and this surplus will be utilised to assist in bridging any funding gap for the 2024/25 budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Budget management is being closely monitored and challenged. Members will be kept informed if new pressures arise that give rise to concern.

In response to a Member asking about Teignbridge withdrawing their share of new homes bonus from DNPA this year, it was confirmed that we did not receive a share of this bonus from them last year.

Members asked that thanks to the Head of Business Support and her team be recorded.

Mr Sanders proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mr Harper.

RESOLVED: Members noted the content of the report.

3546 Car Park Charging Policy Proposal

Members received the report of the Director of Conservation and Communities presented (NPA/24/06).

Charging was introduced in Princetown 2013, added further car parks to the scheme in 2018. In March 2020, it was agreed that car park charges would be doubled.

The agreement to increase was due to Central Government encouraging local authorities to raise revenue from assets where possible. The DNPA is forecast to receive £160K in revenue from the car parks in 2023/24.

There is no formal policy to update car park charges. We are proposing to work on basis of annual charge increased based on the consumer price index of the September of the previous year, with minimum increase annually of 2% and maximum increase of 10% and any increase rounded to the nearest 5p. In comparison, West Devon Borough Council have resolved to apply a similar policy; Teignbridge DC have agreed a percentage increase based on salaries and inflation year to date; DCC also base their charges on the CPI.

Proposed uplift for 2024-25 (applicable in April 2024) to raise by rate of CPI in September 2023 i.e. 6.3%, which would be an increase in takings of £10,080 based on this year's forecast takings of £160K.

Cost of this change would £1K +VAT to advertise and would take three weeks from the advertisement being posted.. Cashless ticket machines will be upgraded with a new supplier across the car parks as well.

It was proposed that Members note the report and agree

- i) to consider the introduction of a formal policy to provide the basis of considering future increases for car parking charges to ensure consistency and avoid significant price increases that might be necessitated by budget or inflation constraints.
- ii) Subject to agreement of the policy, to approve the use of the CPI from September 2023 with the minimum and maximum increases to inform a price increases of car park charges.
- iii) Subject to above, it is requested that the CPI be used on an annual basis for further increases with the change presented to Members by the CFO.

It should be noted that the paper has not considered parking permits or overnight stays.

Following a Member querying the charges, it was confirmed that the charges outlined in the report do not include the RinGo charge as this is charged separately to the user. Members of the general public had highlighted this to the Director previously, however they appeared very happy to pay as long as the monies identified were all going to DNPA.

It was advised that we do need to advertise the increase in line with the CPI every time we amend the parking charge.

The charge will be rounded up or down to the nearest 5p.

Members were advised that the charges will be implemented as soon as possible now that the report has been presented to the Members. There have been delays in ensuring the Traffic Orders were in place which is now done so we can move forward with the advertisement which will take 3 weeks.

It was advised that the additional amount to be paid to Ringo will be made clear on the parking meters and notices in the car park.

Mr Sanders proposed all three recommendations, which were seconded by Mr Cooper.

RESOLVED: Members noted the report and agreed:

- iv) to consider the instruction of a formal policy to provide the basis of considering future increases for car parking charges to ensure consistency and avoid significant price increases that might be necessitated by budget or inflation constraints.
- v) Subject to agreement of the policy, to approve the use of the CPI from September 2023 with the minimum and maximum increases to inform a price increases of car park charges.
- vi) Subject to above, it is requested that the CPI be used on an annual basis for further increases with the change presented to Members by the CFO.

The Meeting broke for lunch and resumed at 1.30pm.

3547 Business Plan Monitoring 2023-2024

Members received the report of the Head of Organisational Development (NPA/24/07). He advised that the report informed Members of the Authority's performance to the end of Quarter three, against the key actions identified in the Business Plan.

There are 23 key actions within the Business Plan; progress from 1 April 2023 to 31 December 2023 was provided within table 2.3 of the report. The table also provided date for the previous two years for comparison. Additional detail was to be found at Appendix 1.

He reported that Leadership Team had identified five key actions that would not be completed as planned. Staff turnover and unplanned work e.g., input to the Fursdon Review, were some of the reasons why some actions have had to be reprogrammed.

A Member asked that the minutes record Members' thanks to every member of staff for their achievements so far in what has been an incredibly difficult year thus far due to the issues surrounding funding as well as uncertainties faced. Members were unanimously in agreement.

Mr Harper proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mrs Morgan.

RESOLVED: Members NOTED the contents of the report.

3548 Performance Indicators 2023-2024 and Health and Safety Policy 2024

Members received the report of the Head of Organisational Development (NPA/24/08). He advised that the report was in two parts - part one reporting on performance against the agreed targets for 2023/24 and part two being an update on health and safety and the recently updated Health and Safety Policy.

With regard to the Performance Indicators, Appendix 1 provided colour-coded (Red/Amber/Green) data, showing performance set against target. With regard to the Development Management indicators, this information has not been provided due to staff absence. Members were asked to note that the indicator which reports on their attendance at Authority meetings showed that this had fallen to 79% against the set target of 85%. There had been a significant increase in staff sickness in Quarter 3, exceeding the target set. Sickness data is continually reviewed to ensure that support is provided for staff and managers.

With regard to Member attendance, the Chair asked Members for their comments regarding performance. Members commented as follows:

- Members are often subjected to clashes with other meetings elsewhere and are often required to attend those instead;
- The Dartmoor National Park Authority membership consists of 19 individuals; it only takes a small number of apologies to significantly affect the percentage attendance; Members do not wish to see a lack of attendance become a trend;
- A Member commented that he hoped that Members saw their appointment to DNPA as a serious commitment and that their attendance at the committee meetings should be treated as a priority.

The Head of Organisational Development reported that the second part of the report dealt with key developments and improvements in respect of health and safety over the past 12 months.

The table provided at section 5.3.1 within the report provided the number of recorded accidents and incidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences for the year to date, as well as data for the previous six years. A draft programme for 2024/25 was provided at section 5.4.1.

Members were reminded of their duty (as set out in the Health & Safety Policy) to ensure that health and safety is effectively managed through the organisation and ensure that there are, in place, comprehensive corporate health and safety arrangements. The current Health and Safety Policy was provided at Appendix 2 to the report.

Mr Sanders proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by Mr Harper.

With regard to the RIDDOR incident, the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) clarified for Members that this related to a contractor who was not actually working for the Authority; it was for a third party. The tribunal which investigated the incident found no blame on the part of the Authority or its staff.

In response to a Member query regarding contractor health and safety procedures, the Head of Organisational Development advised that these were kept under regular review through use of a checklist of contractor obligations.

RESOLVED: Members:

- (i) noted the content of the report;
- (ii) analysed the performance for 2023/24 to date and considered any action which needed to be taken to maintain and/or improve performance or to address under performance; and
- (iii) noted the Health & Safety Policy 2024 and health and safety update

3549 Strategic Risk Register

Members received the report of the Head of Organisational Development (NPA/24/09). He advised Members that the Register forms an important part of the Authority's overall risk management strategy and that it was important that Members regularly reviewed the strategic risks in order to raise any issues for consideration and to highlight areas of risk to be added or removed. He added that Leadership Team monitored and reviewed the Strategic Risk Register on a quarterly basis.

He reported that following a previous audit recommendation, the Authority had adopted a new Risk Management Policy in January 2023. During the recent Value For Money audit, Grant Thornton was pleased to note the implementation of that policy.

However, the audit had also highlighted that the re-scoring of risks under the new methodology had disproportionately increased the Authority's risk profile without a change in business practices. To address this issue, the Leadership Team had re-scored the risks to better reflect the Authority's risk profile and, in doing so, also determined the Authority's risk appetite for each strategic risk. These actions also addressed Improvement Recommendations Three & Four as set out in the Auditor's Interim Annual Report 22/23 Value For Money arrangements presented to Members earlier in the meeting. Table 2 in the report showed the rescored residual risk ratings. This rescoreing exercise has brought the Strategic Risk Register broadly into line with the former risk register, using the current scoring methodology.

Members were asked to note that two severe risks remained; these related to:

- Workforce planning and resilience
- Potential for further reductions in National Park Grant

In response to Member questions, Officers responded as follows:

- With regard to the reference to appeals, enforcement action, legal costs etc within Finance Risk F3, the Head of Business Support and the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) advised that the level of Reserves is always under review and that their allocation is currently being reviewed as the Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan is set to ensure that there are sufficient Reserves set for potential legal liabilities etc;
- With regard to F1: potential for further reductions to the National Park Grant, the Head of Organisational Development commented that this had been raised at the previous meeting and the Leadership Team had considered this risk very carefully. He clarified that the Risk Management Policy that the Authority had adopted has four risk categories, compared to the previous three. 'Very Severe Risks', as set out in the Policy, are those which cause most concern, their materialisation would have a potentially disastrous impact on the Authority's reputation or business continuity and immediate or comprehensive action would be required. The financial pressures that the Authority faces are not in any way underestimated but the question to be asked would be 'what immediate and comprehensive action could be taken in addition to what the Authority is currently doing regard the financial position?' It was therefore determined to class this risk as 'severe' rather than 'very severe'

Mr Cooper proposed the recommendation, which was seconded by Mr Dracup.

RESOLVED: Members:

- (i) noted the changes to the planned residual risk ratings in response recommendations by the Authority's External Auditors; and
- (ii) approved the updated Strategic Risk Register attached at Appendix 1

PART II - ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ON THE GROUNDS THAT EXEMPT INFORMATION MAY BE DISCLOSED

The Chair read the recommendation to take the following items under Part II conditions:

It is recommended that, in accordance with s.100A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended, the following Agenda items are taken in the absence of the Press and Public, on the ground that exempt information within the meaning of Part 1 Paragraph 3 to Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act (as amended) will be discussed, namely:-

Information in respect of commercial sensitivity.

It was proposed by Ms Woods, seconded by Mr Sanders and agreed by all Members that the meeting would move into Part II proceedings.

3550 Proposed Dartmoor Foundation

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) (NPA/24/10). Members agreed the proposed recommendations pertaining to the establishment of a Dartmoor Foundation and to offer funding to support the establishment of the Foundation.

3551 National Park Authority's Estate Strategy

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) (NPA/24/11). Members agreed the recommendation to consider a potential acquisition of land subject to securing a 100 per cent grant from Defra.

There being no other Part II business, Mr McInnes proposed that the meeting return to Part I proceedings, which was seconded by Mr Harper.

The meeting returned to Part I and closed.