



NPA/20/012

Dartmoor National Park Authority

12 June 2020

REMOTE MEETINGS OF THE AUTHORITY & ANNUAL MEETING

Report of Head of Organisational Development

Recommendations: **That Members:**

- (i) **note the introduction of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 that permit remote formal meetings of the Authority;**
- (ii) **note the Formal Meetings Protocol and confirm that the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Authority (or in their absence the Deputy Chair of the Authority) has authority to revise the Protocol as deemed necessary;**
- (iii) **agree that the Authority does not hold an Annual Meeting until such time that it is possible to conduct a face to face meeting in a safe manner or expiry of the Regulations on 7 May 2021 (or such extended date), whichever is sooner; and**
- (iv) **confirm the calendar of meetings for 2020/2021 as set out at Appendix 1.**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (“the Regulations”) permit remote attendance in Local Authority meetings.
- 1.2 The regulations are made by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020(1) and paragraph 36(1)(b) of Schedule 6 to the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011(2).
- 1.3 The Regulations apply to local authority meetings (and police and crime panel meetings) that are required to be held, or held, before 7th May 2021.
- 1.4 The Authority is bound by the Regulations, which override provisions in the Authority’s existing standing orders.

- 1.5 A local authority may make other standing orders regarding issues such as voting, Member and public access to documents and remote access of public and press to a local authority meeting to enable them to attend or participate. This does not appear necessary as current processes allow for this and access to meetings and public participation will continue.
- 1.6 Officers have developed a Formal Meetings Protocol to support the effective running of remote meetings which was used for the Authority's the first remote meeting (Development Management Committee) held on Friday 22 May. The Protocol has been published on the Authority's website. It is likely that this protocol will continue to evolve over the next 12 months. Members are asked to note the contents of the Protocol, and to note that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Authority (or Deputy Chair of the Authority in their absence), shall revise the Protocol as necessary over the next 12 months.

2 Annual Meeting

- 2.1 Standing Orders state that the Authority shall in every year hold an annual meeting and that the first meeting of the Authority held after 31 May in any year shall be the annual meeting.
- 2.2 Regulation 6 of the new legislation disapplies the requirement to hold an annual meeting.
- 2.3 Regulation 4(2) provides that appointments normally made at the annual meeting will continue until the next annual meeting is held.
- 2.4 It is proposed that the Authority postpones the Annual Meeting that was due to take place on Friday 12 June until the Authority is able to conduct a face to face meeting in a safe manner, or upon the expiry of the regulations of 7 May 2021 (or such extended date), whichever is sooner.

3 Calendar of Meetings

- 3.1 A calendar of meetings is normally agreed at the Annual Meeting each year.
- 3.2 A draft calendar of meetings for 2020/2021 is attached at Appendix 1 for approval.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5 Equality and Sustainability Impact

- 5.1 None.

6 Conclusion and Recommendation

- 6.1 The introduction of remote meetings has enabled the Authority to continue to make decisions and support the work of the Authority.

6.2 However, it is recommended that the Annual Meeting be postponed until the Authority is able to conduct a face to face meeting, as set out above, and that all current appointments will continue until the next annual meeting is held.

NEIL WHITE

Attachments: **Appendix 1 – Draft Calendar of Meetings 2020/2021**

2020 06 12 NW Remote Authority Meetings

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2020/21

Meetings of the **Authority**, its **Development Management Committee** and **Audit and Governance Committee** will be held on the dates and at the times shown below. Meetings of the **Standards Sub-Committee** will take place in May and November each year, immediately after the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee. All Members are welcome to attend meetings of the Planning and Sustainable Development Working Panel and the Park Management Working Panel.

**Meetings open to the public*

July 2020		
3 July 2020	Site Inspection <i>(if needed)</i>	On Site
8 July 2020	National Park Forum (2.00pm)	CANCELLED
31 July 2020	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
31 July 2020	Authority Meeting* <i>(on rising of DM committee)</i>	Parke
August 2020		
TBA	Site Inspection <i>(if needed)</i>	On Site
September 2020		
4 September 2020	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
4 September 2020	Authority Meeting* <i>(on rising of DM committee)</i>	Parke
11 September 2020	Annual Member Workshop	Parke
18 September 2020	Site Inspection <i>(if needed)</i>	On Site
25 September 2020	Planning & Sustainable Development Working Panel	Parke
October 2020		
2 October 2020	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
2 October 2020	Authority Meeting* <i>(on rising of DM committee)</i>	Parke
9 October 2020	Park Management Working Panel	Parke
13 October 2020	Joint Exmoor/Dartmoor Member Day	Exmoor
16 October 2020	Site Inspection <i>(if needed)</i>	On Site
November 2020		
6 November 2020	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
6 November 2020	Audit and Governance Committee* <i>(on rising of Authority Meeting)</i>	Parke
6 November 2020	Standards Sub-Committee* <i>(on rising of A&G Cttee)</i>	Parke
20 November 2020	National Park Forum (2pm)	Parke
20 November 2020	Site Inspection <i>(if needed)</i>	On Site
December 2020		
4 December 2020	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
4 December 2020	Authority Meeting* <i>(on rising of DM committee)</i>	Parke
11 December 2020	Planning & Sustainable Development Working Panel	Parke
18 December 2020	Site Inspection <i>(if needed)</i>	On Site

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2020/21

January 2021		
8 January 2021	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
8 January 2021	Authority Meeting* (on rising of DM committee)	Parke
22 January 2021	Site Inspection (if needed)	On Site
February 2021		
5 February 2021	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
5 February 2021	Audit and Governance Committee* (on rising of DM committee)	Parke
19 February 2021	Site Inspection (if needed)	On Site
March 2021		
5 March 2021	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
5 March 2021	Authority Meeting* (on rising of DM committee)	Parke
19 March 2021	Site Inspection (if needed)	On Site
26 March 2021	Park Management Working Panel	Parke
April 2021		
9 April 2021	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
9 April 2021	Authority Meeting* (on rising of DM committee)	Parke
23 April 2021	Site Inspection (if needed)	On Site
30 April 2021	Planning & Sustainable Development Working Panel	Parke
May 2021		
14 May 2021	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
21 May 2021	Site Inspection (if needed)	On Site
28 May 2021	Audit and Governance Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
28 May 2021	Standards Sub-Committee* (on rising of A&G Cttee)	Parke
June 2021		
9 June 2021	Team Dartmoor Day	On Site
11 June 2021	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
11 June 2021	Annual Meeting* (on rising of DM committee)	Parke
11 June 2021	Authority Meeting* (on rising of Annual Meeting)	Parke
18 June 2021	Park Management Working Panel All Day Tour	On Site
July 2021		
2 July 2021	Site Inspection (if needed)	On Site
7 July 2021	National Park Forum (2.00pm)	Parke
30 July 2021	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
30 July 2021	Authority Meeting* (on rising of DM committee)	Parke

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2020/21

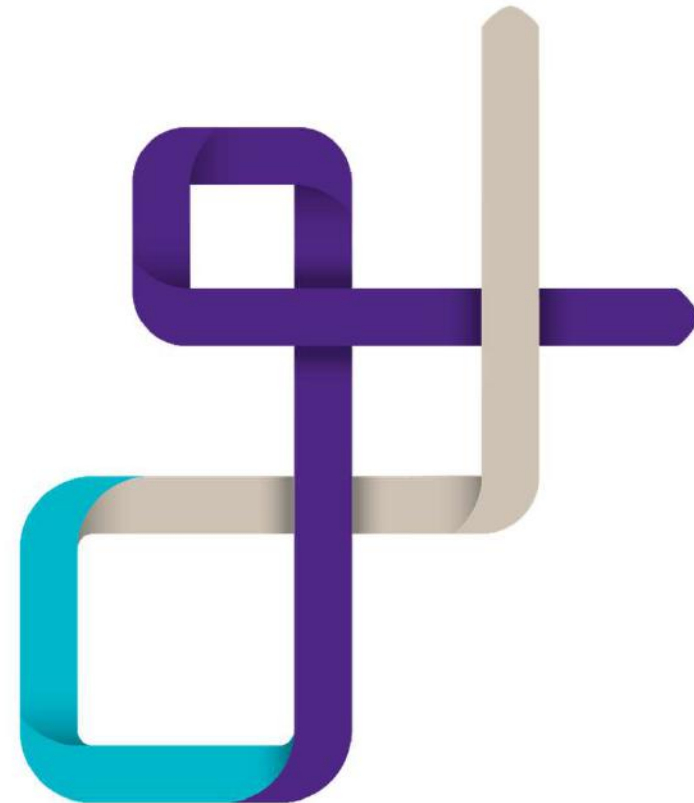
August 2021		
TBA	Site Inspection <i>(if needed)</i>	On Site
September 2021		
3 September 2021	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
3 September 2021	Authority Meeting* <i>(on rising of DM committee)</i>	Parke
10 September 2021	Annual Member Workshop	Parke
17 September 2021	Site Inspection <i>(if needed)</i>	On Site
24 September 2021	Planning & Sustainable Development Working Panel	Parke
October 2021		
1 October 2021	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
1 October 2021	Authority Meeting* <i>(on rising of DM committee)</i>	Parke
8 October 2021	Park Management Working Panel	Parke
12 October 2021	Joint Exmoor/Dartmoor Member Day	Dartmoor
15 October 2021	Site Inspection <i>(if needed)</i>	On Site
November 2021		
5 November 2021	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
5 November 2021	Audit and Governance Committee* <i>(on rising of Authority Meeting)</i>	Parke
5 November 2021	Standards Sub-Committee* <i>(on rising of A&G Cttee)</i>	Parke
19 November 2021	National Park Forum (2pm)	Parke
19 November 2021	Site Inspection <i>(if needed)</i>	On Site
December 2021		
3 December 2021	Development Management Committee* (10.00am)	Parke
3 December 2021	Authority Meeting* <i>(on rising of DM committee)</i>	Parke
10 December 2021	Planning & Sustainable Development Working Panel	Parke
17 December 2021	Site Inspection <i>(if needed)</i>	On Site

External Audit Plan

Year ending 31 March 2020

Dartmoor National Park Authority

6 May 2020



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The contents of this report relate only to the matters which have come to our attention, which we believe need to be reported to you as part of our audit planning process. It is not a comprehensive record of all the relevant matters, which may be subject to change, and in particular we cannot be held responsible to you for reporting all of the risks which may affect the Authority or all weaknesses in your internal controls. This report has been prepared solely for your benefit and should not be quoted in whole or in part without our prior written consent. We do not accept any responsibility for any loss occasioned to any third party acting, or refraining from acting on the basis of the content of this report, as this report was not prepared for, nor intended for, any other purpose.

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1. Introduction & headlines

Purpose

This document provides an overview of the planned scope and timing of the statutory audit of Dartmoor National Park Authority ('the Authority') for those charged with governance.

Respective responsibilities

The National Audit Office ('the NAO') has issued a document entitled Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'). This summarises where the responsibilities of auditors begin and end and what is expected from the audited body. Our respective responsibilities are also set out in the Terms of Appointment and Statement of Responsibilities issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA), the body responsible for appointing us as auditor of [insert name of organisation]. We draw your attention to both of these documents on the [PSAA website](#).

Scope of our audit

The scope of our audit is set in accordance with the Code and International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) (UK). We are responsible for forming and expressing an opinion on the :

- Authority's financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of those charged with governance (the Authority)
- Value for Money arrangements in place at the Authority for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in your use of resources.

The audit of the financial statements does not relieve management or the Authority of your responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the Authority to ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the conduct of its business, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for. We have considered how the Authority is fulfilling these responsibilities.

Our audit approach is based on a thorough understanding of the Authority's business and is risk based.

Significant risks

Those risks requiring special audit consideration and procedures to address the likelihood of a material financial statement error have been identified as:

- Management override of controls
- Valuation of land and buildings
- Valuation of net pension fund liability
- Covid-19

We will communicate significant findings on these areas as well as any other significant matters arising from the audit to you in our Audit Findings (ISA 260) Report.

Materiality

We have determined planning materiality to be £121k (PY £115.6k) for the Authority, which equates to 2% of your prior year gross expenditure for the year. We are obliged to report uncorrected omissions or misstatements other than those which are 'clearly trivial' to those charged with governance. Clearly trivial has been set at £6k (PY £5.8k).

Value for Money arrangements

Our risk assessment regarding your arrangements to secure value for money has identified the following VFM significant risk:

- Financial sustainability.

Audit logistics

The timing of our final accounts audit is being discussed with management given the changes in the deadlines proposed by MHCLG for the local government sector. Our key deliverables are this Audit Plan and our Audit Findings Report.

Our fee for the audit will be £12,841 (PY: £9,841) the Authority, subject to the Authority meeting our requirements set out on page 12. The increase in fees reflects the additional work which will be required during 2019-20. Further details are set out on pages 13 and 14.

Independence

We have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and we as a firm, and each covered person, confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

2. Key matters impacting our audit

Factors

The wider economy and political uncertainty

Local Government funding continues to be stretched with increasing cost pressures.

The Authority had assumed an increase of 1.7% in the National Park Grant from DEFRA in its 2020-21 budget setting. The actual grant allocation represented a 5% cut, offset with one-off funding to give a cash neutral position when compared with 2019-20.

This represents a £65k reduction in the assumed grant position for the Authority which is required to be met from reserves in order to set a balanced budget for 2020-21. The Authority's financial planning scenarios show budget gaps for 2021-22 and 2022-23 of circa £30k under a real terms increase of 2% per annum, rising to gaps of £374k in 2021-22 and £459k in 2022-23 in a flat cash worst case scenario of no increase from 2020-21 and no one-off funding.

While a number of solutions are being explored to close these budget deficits, they reflect the level of financial challenge faced by the Authority.

At a national level, the government is continuing its negotiation with the EU over Brexit. The Authority will need to ensure that it is prepared for all outcomes, including in terms of any impact on contracts and service delivery.

Financial reporting and audit – raising the bar

The Financial Reporting Council (FRC) has set out its expectation of improved financial reporting from organisations and the need for auditors to demonstrate increased scepticism and challenge, and to undertake more robust testing as detailed in Appendix 1.

Our work in 2018-19 has highlighted areas where local government financial reporting, in particular, property, plant and equipment and pensions, needs to be improved, with a corresponding increase in audit procedures. We have also identified an increase in the complexity of local government financial transactions which require greater audit scrutiny.

Coronavirus

The coronavirus global pandemic is impacting how people work. Whilst it is a constantly evolving picture, we are expecting the delivery of the audit to be impacted by staff at audited bodies and audit teams working remotely to avoid spreading the virus as well inevitable sick days reducing staff capacity for both finance and audit teams.

On 17 March 2020, the government announced that the deadline for local government financial audits will be extended to 30 September 2020 from 31 July 2020. Updated proposals were announced on 6 April for this to be further extended to 30 November 2020.

Our response

- We will consider your arrangements for managing and reporting your financial resources as part of our work in reaching our Value for Money conclusion.
- We will consider whether your financial position leads to material uncertainty about the going concern of the Authority and will review related disclosures in the financial statements.
- We will continue to meet with senior management and consider the Authority's financial position.

As a firm, we are absolutely committed to meeting the expectations of the FRC with regard to audit quality and local government financial reporting.

Our proposed work and fee, as set out further in this Audit Plan and is subject to PSAA agreement.

Since early March, we have been liaising with the Section 151 Officer to discuss how we can work together effectively to deliver the audit despite the restrictions on unnecessary physical interaction.

Following the government's announcement on Monday 16 March, we also closed our offices for the foreseeable future and have instructed our people to work from home.

All of our staff are set up to work remotely and we use a variety of tools to communicate and share information such as Microsoft Teams and Inflo.

3. Significant risks identified

Significant risks are defined by ISAs (UK) as risks that, in the judgement of the auditor, require special audit consideration. In identifying risks, audit teams consider the nature of the risk, the potential magnitude of misstatement, and its likelihood. Significant risks are those risks that have a higher risk of material misstatement.

Risk	Reason for risk identification	Key aspects of our proposed response to the risk
<p>The revenue cycle includes fraudulent transactions</p>	<p>Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a rebuttable presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue.</p> <p>This presumption can be rebutted if the auditor concludes that there is no risk of material misstatement due to fraud relating to revenue recognition.</p>	<p>Having considered the risk factors set out in ISA240 and the nature of the revenue streams at the Authority, we have determined that the risk of fraud arising from revenue recognition can be rebutted, because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is little incentive to manipulate revenue recognition • opportunities to manipulate revenue recognition are very limited • the culture and ethical frameworks of local authorities, including Dartmoor National Park Authority, mean that all forms of fraud are seen as unacceptable <p>Therefore we do not consider this to be a significant risk for Dartmoor National Park Authority.</p>
<p>Management over-ride of controls</p>	<p>Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a non-rebuttable presumed risk that the risk of management over-ride of controls is present in all entities. The Authority faces external scrutiny of its spending and this could potentially place management under undue pressure in terms of how they report performance.</p> <p>We therefore identified management override of control, in particular journals, management estimates and transactions outside the course of business as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate the design effectiveness of management controls over journals • analyse the journals listing and determine the criteria for selecting high risk unusual journals • test unusual journals recorded during the year and after the draft accounts stage for appropriateness and corroboration • gain an understanding of the accounting estimates and critical judgements applied made by management and consider their reasonableness with regard to corroborative evidence • evaluate the rationale for any changes in accounting policies, estimates or significant unusual transactions.

Significant risks identified (continued)

Risk	Reason for risk identification	Key aspects of our proposed response to the risk
Valuation of land and buildings	<p>The Authority revalues its land and buildings on an annual basis to ensure that the carrying value is not materially different from the current value or fair value (for surplus assets) at the financial statements date.</p> <p>This valuation represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements due to the size of the numbers involved (£2.8 million in the 2018/19 balance sheet) and the sensitivity of this estimate to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p>Management have engaged the services of a valuer to estimate the current value as at 31 March 2020.</p> <p>We therefore identified valuation of land and buildings, particularly revaluations and impairments, as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate management's processes and assumptions for the calculation of the estimate, the instructions issued to the valuation experts and the scope of their work • evaluate the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the valuation expert • discuss with the valuer the basis on which the valuations were carried out • challenge the information and assumptions used by the valuer to assess completeness and consistency with our understanding • test, on a sample basis, revaluations made during the year to ensure they have been input correctly into the Authority's asset register • evaluate the assumptions made by management for any assets not revalued during the year and how management has satisfied themselves that these are not materially different to current value.

Significant risks identified (continued)

Risk	Reason for risk identification	Key aspects of our proposed response to the risk
Valuation of the pension fund net liability	<p>The Authority's pension fund net liability, as reflected in its balance sheet as the net defined benefit liability, represents a significant estimate in the financial statements.</p> <p>The pension fund net liability is considered a significant estimate due to the size of the numbers involved (£13.2 million in the 2018/19 balance sheet) and the sensitivity of the estimate to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p>We therefore identified valuation of the Authority's pension fund net liability as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • update our understanding of the processes and controls put in place by management to ensure that the Authority's pension fund net liability is not materially misstated and evaluate the design of the associated controls • evaluate the instructions issued by management to their management expert (an actuary) for this estimate and the scope of the actuary's work • assess the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the actuary who carried out the Authority's pension fund valuation • assess the accuracy and completeness of the information provided by the Authority to the actuary to estimate the liability • test the consistency of the pension fund asset and liability and disclosures in the notes to the core financial statements with the actuarial report from the actuary • undertake procedures to confirm the reasonableness of the actuarial assumptions made by reviewing the report of the consulting actuary (as auditor's expert) and performing any additional procedures suggested within the report • obtain assurances from the auditor of Devon Pension Fund as to the controls surrounding the validity and accuracy of membership data; contributions data and benefits data sent to the actuary by the pension fund and the fund assets valuation in the pension fund financial statements.

Significant risks identified (continued)

Risk	Reason for risk identification	Key aspects of our proposed response to the risk
Covid – 19	<p>The global outbreak of the Covid-19 virus pandemic has led to unprecedented uncertainty for all organisations, requiring urgent business continuity arrangements to be implemented. We expect current circumstances will have an impact on the production and audit of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020, including and not limited to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remote working arrangements may impact on the quality and timing of the production of the financial statements, and the evidence we can obtain through physical observation - Volatility of financial and property markets will increase the uncertainty of assumptions applied by management to asset valuation and receivable recovery estimates, and the reliability of evidence we can obtain to corroborate management estimates - Financial uncertainty will require management to reconsider financial forecasts supporting their going concern assessment and whether material uncertainties for a period of at least 12 months from the anticipated date of approval of the audited financial statements have arisen; and - Disclosures within the financial statements will require significant revision to reflect the unprecedented situation and its impact on the preparation of the financial statements as at 31 March 2020 in accordance with IAS1, particularly in relation to material uncertainties. <p>We therefore identified the global outbreak of the Covid-19 virus as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with management to understand the implications the response to the Covid-19 pandemic has on the organisation’s ability to prepare the financial statements and update financial forecasts and assess the implications on our audit approach • Liaise with other audit suppliers, regulators and government departments to co-ordinate practical cross sector responses to issues as and when they arise • Evaluate the adequacy of the disclosures in the financial statements in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic • Evaluate whether sufficient audit evidence using alternative approaches can be obtained for the purposes of our audit whilst working remotely • Evaluate whether sufficient audit evidence can be obtained to corroborate significant management estimates such as asset valuations and recovery of receivable balances • Evaluate management’s assumptions that underpin the revised financial forecasts and the impact on management’s going concern assessment • Discuss with management any potential implications for our audit report if we have been unable to obtain sufficient audit evidence.

We will communicate significant findings on these areas as well as any other significant matters arising from the audit to you in our Audit Findings (ISA260) Report.

4. Other matters

Other work

In addition to our responsibilities under the Code of Practice, we have a number of other audit responsibilities, as follows:

- We read your Narrative Report and Annual Governance Statement to check that they are consistent with the financial statements on which we give an opinion and consistent with our knowledge of the Authority
- We carry out work to satisfy ourselves that disclosures made in your Annual Governance Statement are in line with the guidance issued by CIPFA
- We carry out work on your consolidation schedules for the Whole of Government Accounts process in accordance with NAO group audit instructions
- We consider our other duties under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the Act) and the Code, as and when required, including:
 - Giving electors the opportunity to raise questions about your 2019-20 financial statements, consider and decide upon any objections received in relation to the 2019/20 financial statements
 - Issue of a report in the public interest or written recommendations to the Authority under section 24 of the Act, copied to the Secretary of State
 - Application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 or for a judicial review under Section 31 of the Act or
 - Issuing an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Act.
- We certify completion of our audit.

Other material balances and transactions

Under International Standards on Auditing, "irrespective of the assessed risks of material misstatement, the auditor shall design and perform substantive procedures for each material class of transactions, account balance and disclosure". All other material balances and transaction streams will therefore be audited. However, the procedures will not be as extensive as the procedures adopted for the risks identified in this report.

Going concern

As auditors, we are required to "obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence about the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern assumption in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and to conclude whether there is a material uncertainty about the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern" (ISA (UK) 570). We will review management's assessment of the going concern assumption and material uncertainties, and evaluate the disclosures in the financial statements.

5. Materiality

The concept of materiality

The concept of materiality is fundamental to the preparation of the financial statements and the audit process and applies not only to the monetary misstatements but also to disclosure requirements and adherence to acceptable accounting practice and applicable law.

Misstatements, including omissions, are considered to be material if they, individually or in the aggregate, could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

Materiality for planning purposes

We have determined financial statement materiality based on a proportion of the gross expenditure of the Authority for the financial year. In the prior year we used the same benchmark. Materiality at the planning stage of our audit is £121k (PY £115.6k) for the Authority, which equates to 2% of your prior year gross expenditure for the year. We design our procedures to detect errors in specific accounts at a lower level of precision which we have determined to be £10k for Senior officer remuneration.

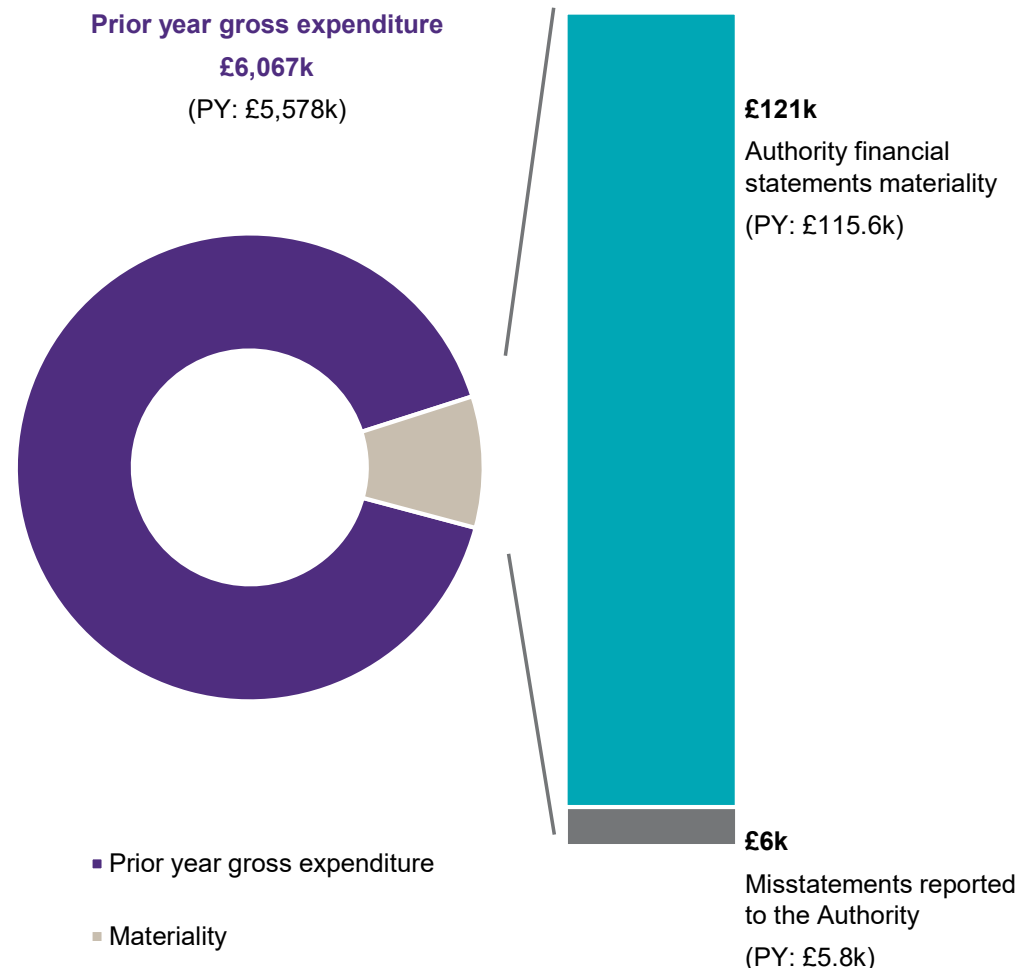
We reconsider planning materiality if, during the course of our audit engagement, we become aware of facts and circumstances that would have caused us to make a different determination of planning materiality.

Matters we will report to the Authority

Whilst our audit procedures are designed to identify misstatements which are material to our opinion on the financial statements as a whole, we nevertheless report to the Audit Committee any unadjusted misstatements of lesser amounts to the extent that these are identified by our audit work.

Under ISA 260 (UK) 'Communication with those charged with governance', we are obliged to report uncorrected omissions or misstatements other than those which are 'clearly trivial' to those charged with governance. ISA 260 (UK) defines 'clearly trivial' as matters that are clearly inconsequential, whether taken individually or in aggregate and whether judged by any quantitative or qualitative criteria. In the context of the Authority, we propose that an individual difference could normally be considered to be clearly trivial if it is less than £6k (PY £5.8k).

If management have corrected material misstatements identified during the course of the audit, we will consider whether those corrections should be communicated to the Authority to assist it in fulfilling its governance responsibilities.



6. Value for Money arrangements

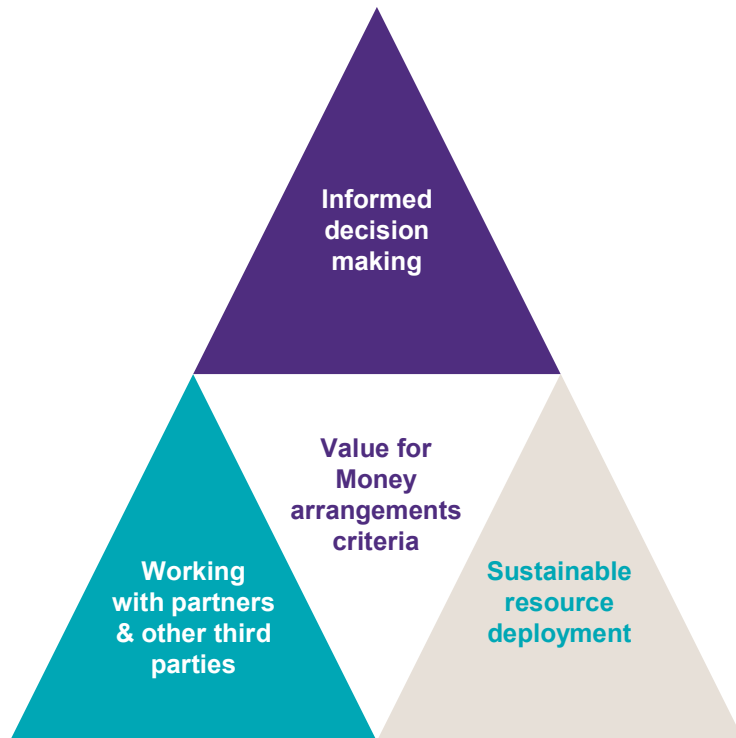
Background to our VFM approach

The NAO issued its guidance for auditors on Value for Money work in November 2017. The guidance states that for Local Government bodies, auditors are required to give a conclusion on whether the Authority has proper arrangements in place to secure value for money.

The guidance identifies one single criterion for auditors to evaluate:

“In all significant respects, the audited body takes properly informed decisions and deploys resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.”

This is supported by three sub-criteria, as set out below:



Significant VFM risks

Those risks requiring audit consideration and procedures to address the likelihood that proper arrangements are not in place at the Authority to deliver value for money.



Financial sustainability

The Authority has had a 5% cut in grant funding in 2020-21 which, although it was offset by one-off funding in the year, is below what had originally been budgeted for.

This represents a £65k reduction in the assumed grant position for the Authority. The Authority's financial planning scenarios show budget gaps for 2021-22 and 2022-23 of circa £30k under a real terms increase of 2% per annum, rising to gaps of £374k in 2021-22 and £459k in 2022-23 in a flat cash worst case scenario of no increase from 2020-21 and no one-off funding. While a number of solutions are being explored to close these budget deficits, they reflect the level of financial challenge faced by the Authority.

Since the budget was set the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the financial plans of all sectors of the UK, including local government and National Parks. We have been discussing the impact of the lockdown on the Authority through our liaison with the S151 Officer.

We will consider the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown on the Authority's income projections and wider budget for 2020-21 and its medium term financial plans.

We will summarise our findings in our ISA260 Report later in the year on completion of our 2019-20 audit.

7. Audit logistics & team



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Changes to local authority accounts and audit timetable

As a result of the impact of the coronavirus, on 6 April the local authority accounts and audit deadlines were changed. The deadline for approving draft accounts was moved from 31 May to 31 August 2020 and the target date for audited accounts was moved from 31 July to 30 November 2020.

We are currently in discussions with your Section 151 Officer in terms of the expected date for receipt of your accounts and the subsequent timetabling of our audit. Once these are agreed we will update Authority members accordingly.

Client responsibilities

Where clients do not deliver to the timetable agreed, we need to ensure that this does not impact on audit quality or absorb a disproportionate amount of time, thereby disadvantaging other clients. Where the elapsed time to complete an audit exceeds that agreed due to a client not meeting its obligations we will not be able to maintain a team on site. Similarly, where additional resources are needed to complete the audit due to a client not meeting their obligations we are not able to guarantee the delivery of the audit to the agreed timescales. In addition, delayed audits will incur additional audit fees.

Our requirements

To minimise the risk of a delayed audit, you need to ensure that you:

- produce draft financial statements of good quality by the deadline you have agreed with us, including all notes, the narrative report and the Annual Governance Statement
- ensure that good quality working papers are available at the start of the audit, in accordance with the working paper requirements schedule that we have shared with you
- ensure that the agreed data reports are available to us at the start of the audit and are reconciled to the values in the accounts, in order to facilitate our selection of samples
- ensure that all appropriate staff are available on site throughout (or as otherwise agreed) the planned period of the audit
- respond promptly and adequately to audit queries.

8. Audit fees

Planned audit fees 2019-20

Across all sectors and firms, the FRC has set out its expectation of improved financial reporting from organisations and the need for auditors to demonstrate increased scepticism and challenge and to undertake additional and more robust testing. Within the public sector, where the FRC has recently assumed responsibility for the inspection of local government audit, the regulator requires that all audits achieve a 2A (few improvements needed) rating.

Our work across the sector in 2018-19 has highlighted areas where local government financial reporting, in particular, property, plant and equipment and pensions, needs to be improved. We have also identified an increase in the complexity of local government financial transactions. Combined with the FRC requirement that 100% of audits achieve a 2A rating this means that additional audit work is required. We have set out below the expected impact on our audit fee. The table overleaf provides more details about the areas where we will be undertaking further testing.

As a firm, we are absolutely committed to meeting the expectations of the FRC with regard to audit quality and local government financial reporting. Our proposed work and fee for 2019-20 at the planning stage, is set out below and with further analysis overleaf. The proposed fee is subject to PSAA agreement.

	Actual Fee 2017-18	Actual Fee 2018-19	Proposed Fee 2019-20
Authority scale fee set by PSAA	£11,807	£9,091	£9,091
Audit fee variations – additional work required, see page 14	-	750	3,750
Total audit fees (excluding VAT)	£11,807	£9,841	£12,841

Assumptions:

In setting the above fees, we have assumed that the Authority will:

- prepare a good quality set of accounts, supported by comprehensive and well presented working papers which are ready at the start of the audit
- provide appropriate analysis, support and evidence to support all critical judgements and significant judgements made during the course of preparing the financial statements
- provide early notice of proposed complex or unusual transactions which could have a material impact on the financial statements.

Relevant professional standards:

In preparing our fee estimate, we have had regard to all relevant professional standards, including paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of the FRC's [Ethical Standard](#) which stipulate that the Engagement Lead (Key Audit Partner) must set a fee sufficient to enable the resourcing of the audit with staff of appropriate skills, time and abilities to deliver an audit to the required professional standard.

Audit fee variations – Further analysis

Planned audit fees

The table below shows the planned variations to the original scale fee for 2019-20 based on our best estimate at the audit planning stage. Further issues identified during the course of the audit may incur additional fees. In agreement with PSAA (where applicable) we will be seeking approval to secure these additional fees for the remainder of the contract via a formal rebasing of your scale fee to reflect the increased level of audit work required to enable us to discharge our responsibilities. Should any further issues arise during the course of the audit that necessitate further audit work additional fees will be incurred, subject to PSAA approval.

Audit area	£	Rationale for fee variation
PSAA Scale fee	9,091	
Property, plant and equipment	1,500	A significant audit risk area, we have increased the granularity, depth and scope of coverage, with increased levels of sampling, additional levels of challenge and explanation sought, and heightened levels of documentation and reporting.
Pensions – valuation of net pension liabilities under International Auditing Standard (IAS) 19	1,500	A significant audit risk area, we have increased the granularity, depth and scope of coverage, with increased levels of sampling, additional levels of challenge and explanation sought, and heightened levels of documentation and reporting.
Increased challenge and depth of work	500	To meet the higher threshold set by the FRC, we will be required to undertake additional work and challenge in the following areas, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information provided by the entity (IPE) • journals • management review of controls • accounting estimates • financial resilience and going concern • related parties and similar areas
New standards / Local developments	250	New standards have been introduced since PSAA's original scale fee was set in March 2018. We did not raise fees in 2018-19 but we are no longer able to sustain this position for 2019-20.
Revised scale fee	12,841	(To be approved by PSAA)

9. Independence & non-audit services

Auditor independence

Ethical Standards and ISA (UK) 260 require us to give you timely disclosure of all significant facts and matters that may bear upon the integrity, objectivity and independence of the firm or covered persons relating to our independence. We encourage you to contact us to discuss these or any other independence issues with us. We will also discuss with you if we make additional significant judgements surrounding independence matters.

We confirm that there are no significant facts or matters that impact on our independence as auditors that we are required or wish to draw to your attention. We have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and we as a firm, and each covered person, confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

We confirm that we have implemented policies and procedures to meet the requirements of the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and we as a firm, and each covered person, confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements. Further, we have complied with the requirements of the National Audit Office's Auditor Guidance Note 01 issued in December 2017 and PSAA's Terms of Appointment which set out supplementary guidance on ethical requirements for auditors of local public bodies.

Other services provided by Grant Thornton

For the purposes of our audit we have made enquiries of all Grant Thornton UK LLP teams providing services to the Authority. No other services were identified.

The firm is committed to improving our audit quality – please see our transparency report - <https://www.grantthornton.co.uk/globalassets/1.-member-firms/united-kingdom/pdf/annual-reports/interim-transparency-report-2019.pdf>

Appendix A: Audit Quality – national context

What has the FRC said about Audit Quality?

The Financial Reporting Council (FRC) publishes an annual Quality Inspection of our firm, alongside our competitors. The Annual Quality Review (AQR) monitors the quality of UK Public Interest Entity audits to promote continuous improvement in audit quality.

All of the major audit firms are subject to an annual review process in which the FRC inspects a small sample of audits performed from each of the firms to see if they fully conform to required standards.

The most recent report, published in July 2019, shows that the results of commercial audits taken across all the firms have worsened this year. The FRC has identified the need for auditors to:

- improve the extent and rigour of challenge of management in areas of judgement
- improve the consistency of audit teams' application of professional scepticism
- strengthen the effectiveness of the audit of revenue
- improve the audit of going concern
- improve the audit of the completeness and evaluation of prior year adjustments.

The FRC has also set all firms the target of achieving a grading of '2a' (limited improvements required) or better on all. We have set ourselves the same target for public sector audits from 2019-20.

Other sector wide reviews

Alongside the FRC, other key stakeholders including the Department for Business, energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) have expressed concern about the quality of audit work and the need for improvement. A number of key reviews into the profession have been undertaken or are in progress. These include the review by Sir John Kingman of the Financial Reporting Council (Dec 2018), the review by the Competition and Markets authority of competition within the audit market, the ongoing review by Sir Donald Brydon of external audit, and specifically for public services, the Review by Sir Tony Redmond of local authority financial reporting and external audit. As a firm, we are contributing to all these reviews and keen to be at the forefront of developments and improvements in public audit.

What are we doing to address FRC findings?

In response to the FRC's findings, the firm is responding vigorously and with purpose. As part of our Audit Investment Programme (AIP), we are establishing a new Quality Board, commissioning an independent review of our audit function, and strengthening our senior leadership at the highest levels of the firm, for example through the appointment of Fiona Baldwin as Head of Audit. We are confident these investments will make a real difference.

We have also undertaken a root cause analysis and put in place processes to address the issues raised by the FRC. We have already implemented new training material that will reinforce the need for our engagement teams to challenge management and demonstrate how they have applied professional scepticism as part of the audit. Further guidance on auditing areas such as revenue has also been disseminated to all audit teams and we will continue to evolve our training and review processes on an ongoing basis.

What will be different in this audit?

We will continue working collaboratively with you to deliver the audit to the agreed timetable whilst improving our audit quality. In achieving this you may see, for example, an increased expectation for management to develop properly articulated papers for any new accounting standard, or unusual or complex transactions. In addition, you should expect engagement teams to exercise even greater challenge management in areas that are complex, significant or highly judgmental which may be the case for accounting estimates, going concern, related parties and similar areas. As a result you may find the audit process even more challenging than previous audits. These changes will give the Authority– which has overall responsibility for governance - and senior management greater confidence that we have delivered a high quality audit and that the financial statements are not materially misstated. Even greater challenge of management will also enable us to provide greater insights into the quality of your finance function and internal control environment and provide those charged with governance confidence that a material misstatement due to fraud will have been detected.

We will still plan for a smooth audit and ensure this is completed to the timetable agreed. However, there may be instances where we may require additional time for both the audit work to be completed to the standard required and to ensure management have appropriate time to consider any matters raised. This may require us to agree with you a delay in signing the announcement and financial statements. To minimise this risk, we will keep you informed of progress and risks to the timetable as the audit progresses.

We are absolutely committed to delivering audit of the highest quality and we should be happy to provide further detail about our improvement plans should you require it.



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DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK

ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2019/20 and PROPOSED INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2020/21

Section 1 - ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2019/20

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The following report sets out the background to audit service provision, review work undertaken in 2019/20, and provides an opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's internal control environment.

1.2 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 specify that all Authorities are required to carry out a review at least once each year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control, and to incorporate the results of that review into their Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which must be published with the annual Statement of Accounts.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Service Provision

2.1.1 The Internal Audit (IA) Service for Dartmoor National Park Authority is delivered by the Devon Audit Partnership. This is a shared service arrangement between Devon, Torbay, Plymouth, Torridge and Mid-Devon councils constituted under section 20 of the Local Government Act 2000.

2.2 Regulatory Role

2.2.1 There are two principal pieces of legislation that impact upon internal audit in local authorities:

- **Section 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) Regulations 2015** which states that:

“.....A relevant authority must, each financial year—

- (a) conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and
- (b) prepare an annual governance statement”

- **Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972**, which requires every local authority to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs.

2.2.2 'Proper practices' have been agreed and defined by the accounting bodies including the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and the Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors as those set out in the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

2.2.3 In addition, Internal Audit is governed by policies, procedures, rules and regulations established by the Authority. These include standing orders, schemes of delegation, financial regulations, conditions of service, anti-fraud and corruption strategies, fraud prevention procedures and codes of conduct, amongst others.

3 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

3.1 This report presents a summary of the audit work undertaken; includes an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's internal control environment. The report outlines the level of assurance that we are able to provide, based on the internal audit work completed during the year.

3.2 The Chief Audit Executive is required to provide the Authority with an assurance on the system of internal control of the Authority. It should be noted, however, that this assurance can never be absolute. The most that the internal audit service can do is to provide reasonable assurance, based on risk-based reviews and sample testing, that there are no major weaknesses in the system of control. In assessing the level of assurance to be given the following have been taken into account:

- the audits completed during 2019/20;
- any significant recommendations not accepted by management and the consequent risks;
- internal audit's performance;
- any limitations that may have been placed on the scope of internal audit.

4 INTERNAL AUDIT COVERAGE 2019/20

4.1 Devon Audit Partnership carried out a review of the Authority's Financial Systems in October and November 2019 and presented our final report to the Audit and Governance Committee meeting held in February 2020.

4.2 As a result of our review we were able to give an audit opinion of "High Standard". This means the system and controls in place adequately mitigate exposure to the risks identified. The system is being adhered to and substantial reliance can be placed upon the procedures in place. We found that staff had a good knowledge of the financial controls and requirements of regulations and policies and our findings reflect the hard work and dedication that is input by all staff involved in the financial management of the Park Authority.

4.3 We have developed good relations with the Head of Business Support, the Authority's Chief Financial Officer and Section 151 Officer, and are available to be consulted on matters relating to control mechanisms. The individual assurance opinions issued in respect of our assignment work were as follows: -

Areas Covered		Level of Assurance
1	Main Accounting System - including Bank Reconciliations and Budgetary Control	High Standard
2	Investments	High Standard
3	Purchasing/Ordering and Creditor Payments	High Standard
4	Payroll and Travel Expenditure	High Standard
5	Debtors – Income and Cash Collection	High Standard
6	Inventories / Disposals	High Standard

4.4 The Park Authority continues to use Devon County Council's HR One to administer its payroll. It is noted that the County Council introduced a new HR and Payroll system in November 2019 called MHR iTrent. Discussions took place during the audit visit regarding the new system, however, at that time the system had not yet been introduced. Testing and a review of the Authority's use of the new payroll system will therefore take place in 2020/21 financial year. Devon Audit Partnership has been part of the DCC Project Team who implemented the new system, advising and monitoring progress as implementation was rolled out and performed a review and testing of the system as part of the annual review of the County's HR/Payroll system in March 2020.

4.5 Our report highlighted two minor issues which we discussed with senior management. The first concerned errors in the recording of staff absence and completion of the various procedures/forms required. It was recommended that, as well as ensuring that all documentation is completed accurately and consistently, consideration be given to streamlining the recording of staff absence as, at the time of the audit visit there were three different systems used. Management investigated the errors raised and have put in place an action plan to prevent future input errors. Opportunities for streamlining recording arrangements have been identified but, in some cases, rely on the new iTrent payroll system providing the functionality needed. It appears that functionality is currently lacking but an eye will be kept on any developments with iTrent and the potential to utilise just one system.

4.6 The second issue highlighted in our report dealt with the Authority's central inventory database. It was noted that the database had not been fully updated to reflect the annual inventory checks that had taken place. This was due to finance staff resource shortages and the training of a staff member has since taken place so that they can assist with updating the database which has now been done.

5 INTERNAL AUDIT OPINION

5.1 In carrying out systems and other reviews, Internal Audit assesses whether key, and other, controls are operating satisfactorily within the area under review, and an opinion on the adequacy of controls is provided to management as part of the audit report.

5.2 Our final audit reports also include an action plan which identifies responsible officers, and target dates, to address control issues identified during a review. Implementation of action plans are reviewed during subsequent audits or as part of a specific follow-up process.

5.3 Management has been provided with details of our work completed in 2019/20 to assist them when considering governance arrangements. The expectation is that if significant weaknesses are identified in specific areas, these should be considered by the Authority in preparing its Annual Governance Statement; there are no such "significant weaknesses" arising from our work in 2019/20.

5.4 Overall, and based on work performed during 2019/20, Internal Audit is able to provide Full Assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's internal control environment.

Full Assurance	Risk management arrangements are properly established, effective and fully embedded, aligned to the risk appetite of the organisation. The systems and control framework mitigate exposure to risks identified & are being consistently applied in the areas reviewed.
Significant Assurance	Risk management and the system of internal control are generally sound and designed to meet the organisation's objectives. However, some weaknesses in design and / or inconsistent application of controls do not mitigate all risks identified, putting the achievement of particular objectives at risk.
Limited Assurance	Inadequate risk management arrangements and weaknesses in design, and / or inconsistent application of controls put the achievement of the organisation's objectives at risk in a number of areas reviewed.
No Assurance	Risks are not mitigated and weaknesses in control, and /or consistent non-compliance with controls could result / has resulted in failure to achieve the organisation's objectives in the areas reviewed, to the extent that the resources of the Council may be at risk, and the ability to deliver the services may be adversely affected.

Section 2 - INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2020/21

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Under the Local Government Act 1972, the Chief Financial Officer has a statutory duty to ensure that all financial systems in the Authority are secure. Assurance that this is the case is given through the reporting of Internal Audit. Audits will be carried out under the terms of Accountancy and Audit Regulations 2015.

1.2 As the Internal Auditors for Dartmoor National Park Authority it is our responsibility to ensure that all financial systems are operating effectively and in line with the Authority's financial regulations.

1.3 For Dartmoor National Park Authority, the role of Chief Financial Officer and Section 151 Officer is undertaken by the Head of Business Support.

2 THE AIM OF THE PLAN

2.1 The plan is reviewed and agreed on an annual basis, incorporating the key risks identified through the Authority's risk register and areas identified by Internal Audit. The plan also incorporates the requirements of the External Auditors in reviewing finance systems.

2.2 The main objectives of the plan are to provide assurance to the Section 151 Officer and the external auditors that all financial systems are: -

- Secure;
- Effective;
- Efficient;
- Accurate;
- Complete;
- Compliant.

2.3 In order to confirm this, system reviews and compliance testing are completed at the Authority's HQ (Parke), High Moorland Office and Visitor Centres located throughout the Park, as required.

3 THE PLAN

3.1 The audit plan for the financial year 2020/21 allows for up to 20 days of internal audit support.

3.2 All but one of the 20 days will cover the financial audit reviews required as part of Internal Audit responsibilities in reporting to the Section 151 Officer. This also satisfies your external auditors of the security and effectiveness of the financial systems. As your Internal Auditors we will provide the documentation required by external audit to ensure they are satisfied with operations.

3.3 We liaise with your external auditors to discuss the testing planned to ensure this satisfies their requirements and reduces their need for review of these financial systems. The remainder of the planned days incorporates reviews of specific systems as identified through an audit risk assessment process, the Authority's risk register and liaison with management.

3.4 The plan includes a review of the following key financial systems: -

- Ordering and Payments
- Income and Cash Collection
- Bank Reconciliation / Investments/Cheque Control
- Main Accounting System
- Budget monitoring
- Payroll & Travel Expenditure
- AGS

Note – these reviews may change to take account of the needs of External Audit.

3.5 As stated in Paragraph 4.4 of Section 1 above, with the introduction of the new Payroll/HR system at Devon County Council, particular attention will be paid to ensuring that the controls and procedures followed by the Park Authority in this area are robust.

3.6 Any major findings (if applicable) from the previous year's audit plan will be reviewed to ensure that agreed recommendations have been implemented and are effective. An annual report for your Audit and Governance Committee will be produced in good time and for the expected May 2021 meeting.

3.7 As part of the audit plan we will also provide assistance and advice and be a central contact point for the Head of Business Support. We would be happy to consider undertaking special project work as and when appropriate and required.

4 TIMETABLE

4.1 The audits will be completed at specified times of the year through consultation and prior agreement of the Head of Business Support. This will also take into account the timetable of external audit where applicable.

4.2 All findings will be reviewed with the Head of Business Support at the end of each audit programme and prior to the issue of any draft reports.

4.3 A copy of all final reports will be presented to the Audit and Governance Committee and made available to your External Auditors for their information.

5 2020/21 PLAN

5.1 The following table sets out the planned internal audit work for 2020/21. Other issues and systems are sometimes identified during the course of the audits and if found will be discussed with the Head of Business Support. These issues may be incorporated into future audit plans dependent upon priority and risk assessment.

Audit	Days
Material Systems	
Financial Systems	19
Other Work	
Planning / attendance at Audit & Governance Committee	1
Total days	20

5.2 The cost of these 20 days will be £5,800 (plus VAT). Additional support will be provided as and when required. Our standard daily rate for this work will be £290, although specialist support may be at a different rate. Please contact us for further details. (Please note that this is an increase on last year's rates due to Pay related increases).

Robert Hutchins
 Head of Devon Audit Partnership
 May 2020



NPA/20/013

Dartmoor National Park Authority

12 June 2020

2019/20 FINANCIAL OUTTURN

Report of the Head of Business Support

Recommendation: **Subject to any amendment Members see fit to propose:**

- (i) that the content of this report is noted;**
- (ii) that the Authority transfers the 2019/20 revenue surplus of £179,957 and a Capital Receipt of £20,769 into Reserves;**
- (iii) that the Authority approves the transfer of grants and contributions received with specific conditions or restrictions and monies set aside for contractual commitments into earmarked reserves, as set out in section 4.4 (table 10) of the report; and**
- (iv) that it is unnecessary to include a note in the Statement of Accounts relating to the remote possibility of a contingent liability, as set out in section 5 of this report.**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Authority is required to set a balanced budget at the start of each financial year and robust budget management and financial control has been maintained throughout the year; which is essential to ensure that priorities are delivered in accordance with the Authority's plans.
- 1.2 The Audit & Governance Committee has received detailed financial management reports on a quarterly basis and has therefore been kept up to date regarding in-year variances and the forecast outturn.

2 The 2019/20 Financial Outturn

- 2.1 A summary of the financial outturn as at 31 March 2020 can be found at Appendix 1. After transfers, to and from, reserves for matters approved in-year and at the setting of the budget, the outturn surplus is £179,958 (£70,494 in 2018/19). A surplus of £116,998 was forecast at month 9; the increase has occurred mainly as a result of increased income and because stock for resale in the Visitor Centres has been deferred until they are able to re-open.
- 2.2 The Authority has once again proved successful in generating additional income; as set out in the following two tables; generating increased external grant income of

£101,789 and other income including fees and charges of £184,938 against original budgets.

Table 1: External Grant Income Analysis	£
Public Rights of Way - Devon County Council	(43,000)
Public Rights of Way – Mend our Mountains crowd funding	(20,000)
Public Rights of Way – Defence Infrastructure	(2,000)
Public Rights of Way – Duchy of Cornwall	(10,000)
Public Rights of Way – Heritage Fund	(24,221)
Environmental Land Management Test & Trials - Defra	(13,530)
Access – HQ Dartmoor Training Area	(4,000)
Dartmoor Headwaters Project – Environment Agency	(190,000)
Education - National Parks Partnerships LLP	(1,500)
South West Peatland Project – Duchy of Cornwall	(15,000)
South West Peatland Project – Ministry of Defence	(5,000)
South West Peatland Project – Dartmoor Preservation Assoc.	(5,000)
Welcome to Widecombe Project – Heart of the South West LEP	(5,000)
Postbridge Visitor Centre Interpretation – Heritage Fund	(37,873)
Conservation Apprentices – Heritage Fund	(7,409)
Eco Skills Project – Woodland Trust	(5,000)
Tourism - Discover England Fund (via the Peak District NPA)	(2,000)
Clif Bar via National parks Partnerships LLP	(2,500)
Access to work	(934)
Hill Farm Project - Facilitation Fund - Rural Payments Agency	(15,003)
Hill Farm Project - Duchy of Cornwall	(12,267)
Hill Farm Project - Heritage Fund	(8,867)
Hill Farm Project - Princes Countryside Fund	(6,655)
Hill Farm project – Resilience Fund	(5,249)
Archaeology: Wigford Down PAL survey – National Trust	(500)
Archaeology: Powdermills – Duchy of Cornwall	(2,500)
Archaeology: Monument Management Scheme, Historic Environment Record Audit and Heritage at Risk Field Advisor Post – Historic England	(28,418)
Archaeology: Monument Management – English Heritage Trust	(750)
Forward Planning - Ministry of Housing & Local Government - New Burdens & Custom Build	(17,446)
Discovering Dartmoor's Wild Stories – Heritage Lottery Fund	(4,880)
Communities Fund - South Hams District Council	(32,808)
Communities Fund - West Devon Borough Council	(6,562)
Communities Fund – Teignbridge District Council	(20,000)
Biodiversity - Mires Restoration Monitoring – South West Water	(5,861)
Biodiversity – Fencing repairs - Sticklepath Parish Council	(250)
Biodiversity – Knotweed treatment – Devon County Council	(200)
Total Grant Income	562,185

In 2018/19 external grant income was £325,201

Table 2: Fees & Charges, Sales and other Income		£
Land Management	Filming on DNPA land and officer support	(1,100)
	Other income: wayleaves etc	(1,138)
Hill Farm project	Moorskills	(3,543)
	Donations	(900)
	Course Fees	(3,651)
	Membership	(1,663)
Archaeology	SHINE	(3,325)
	Walks / talks	(50)
Uppacott	Events & donations	(1,335)
Visitor management	Vending licences	(20,449)
	Car park charges	(75,214)
	Donations	(1,133)
	Sponsorship Love Moor Life	(3,000)
	Insurance claim	(801)
Conservation Works	Sale of equipment	(28,432)
Rangers	Recharges for private mileage	(397)
	Sale of equipment	(205)
Visitor Centres	Sales	(181,209)
	Gallery sales commission / other	(312)
Communications	Enjoy Dartmoor advertising	(23,020)
	Signboards advertising	(4,914)
	Moor Otters Sponsorship	(28,300)
	Copyright fees	(450)
Education	Junior Rangers	(350)
	Ranger Ralph	(970)
	Youth Rangers	(350)
	Guided walks	(180)
	Donations	(50)
	Education walks	(2,940)
	Events	(500)
Development Management	Planning fees	(268,477)
	Enforcement appeals	(2,975)
	Search fees	(135)
	Non material amendments	(3,118)
	Discharge of conditions	(6,122)
	Pre-application advice	(12,817)
	Viability Assessments recharged to applicants	(7,550)
Corporate & Democratic Core	Investment income	(23,726)
	Donate for Dartmoor	(26,734)
	NPPL LLP	(3,500)
Information Technology	Recharges for external works	(3,846)
Central running costs	Recover of charges	(625)
Human Resources	Cycle scheme	(1,216)
	Recharge of Officer time	(186)
Premises	Room booking, recharges & rent	(3,680)
	Renewable Heating Incentive	(18,091)
Other		(244)
Total Other income		772,922

In 2018/19 fees, charges, sales and other income was £750,736

- 2.3 The Authority was the lead accountable body for the five year, £3.8m, Heritage Fund (HF) Landscape Partnership Project: “Moor than Meets the Eye”. All partners have completed their projects and the final grant claim has been submitted along with all the supporting evidence to show that the Scheme has successfully completed the agreed purposes and outcomes. The above table shows only some of the income from NHLF to distinct projects managed by the Authority; the income and expenditure relating to the scheme as a whole has been accounted for separately and is therefore not included in our Statement of Accounts. An end of Scheme report is being reported separately today.
- 2.4 Staff turnover (in-year) has resulted in a total salary budget saving of £18,413. It should be noted that additional capacity has been brought in during the year when needed and recruitment has taken place in a timely manner.
- 2.5 The Authority’s expenditure budgets are robustly monitored through-out the year; efficiency savings are encouraged and welcomed; the budget and spending plans are anticipated to be flexible and agile, reflecting the way we work. The main variations are set out against each service in Appendix 1; further detail is set out in table 3 below.

<i>Table 3 : Significant variations – running costs and project spend</i>	Under spend £	Over spend £
Travel & Transport: minor variations across all services; Increased repair and maintenance costs due to an aging vehicle fleet.		15,531
Premises: Maintenance and repairs re-scheduled (e.g. Uppacott cottage roof and Parke Parapet)	(12,862)	
Biodiversity underspends: fencing at Hawns & Dendles and the invasive non-native species works are re-programmed; request for carry forward made.	(15,481)	
Access & Recreation underspends: expired access agreements not yet renegotiated. Materials cost savings by use of existing materials	(12,156)	
Public Rights of Way underspends: Purchase of pantograph machine delayed; request for carry forward	(7,116)	
Visitor Centres underspends: Stock purchase (and year-end balance sheet adjustment) training and interpretation.	(32,185)	
Education underspends: training, guides, events, and resources.	(8,281)	
Communications underspends: Interpretation, design, Enjoy Dartmoor branding & Donate for Dartmoor	(8,417)	
Conservation Works Service: training & equipment	(5,586)	

Development Management overspends: Housing viability assessments, and planning appraisals.		10,398
Forward Planning: Local Plan review commitments and Communities Fund Balance to be carried forward.	(25,961)	
Support Services and Operational Running costs: Commitment to introduce Office 365 delayed; request to carry forward. Savings: postage, stationery, training, Legal & HR running costs	(31,201)	

Note: Requests for budget carry forwards can be found in table 10

One-off Special Projects – Expenditure and Funding	Total spend all years £
Postbridge Visitor Centre Interpretation Project: a Moor than meets the eye project. HF Grant Funding Revenue budget / Reserves	108,199 (48,213) (59,986)
Costs remaining of £10,044 to reinstall the interpretation in the refurbished building will be met from reserves in 2020/21	
Postbridge Visitor Centre: Refurbishment project - architect, project management fees etc. (budget £140,000). Costs to date. Revenue budget / Reserves	111,935 (111,935)
Costs remaining of £17,667 for project management and architect fees will be met from reserves in 2020/21	
Postbridge Visitor Centre – Building extension (capital) project – budget is £479,947 Asset under construction – value of work done at 31 March Rural Development Programme England Capital Grant	305,712 (305,712)
Expected project completion is June/July 2020	

2.6 The Authority currently has £350,000 in its bank account relating to a Section 106 agreement for the Chagford Masterplan developments. This money is ring-fenced and held outside of our revenue accounts.

2.7 A Project Fund (unallocated) budget of £115,445 was approved by the Authority at the start of the year. In-year allocations from the Fund are set out in table 4 below. Some allocations have not yet been fully spent and are therefore included in the carry forward requests set out in section 4.4 of this report (table 10).

Table 4: Project Fund	£
Opening Balance	115,445
Telephone System upgrade	(8,034)
Dartmoor Connectivity Assessment	(1,650)

Postbridge Pathways Project	(20,500)
Taste of Dartmoor Exhibition	(5,000)
Joint National Parks Communications Team	(5,400)
Buckfastleigh Trust: Bronze age landscape & local heritage workshops	(250)
Meeting room blinds	(780)
iDOX (information management system) upgrade	(1,475)
Penetration Testing	(1,500)
WEB accessibility audit	(3,600)
Asset Register – cloud hosting	(2,600)
*Conservation Volunteer Workers (Eco Fund)	(5,000)
Climate change action plan – consultancy support	(2,810)
Feasibility study – Pine Martin reintroduction	(5,000)
Postbridge VC – removal of skylight	(2,736)
Web mapping server migration	(995)
*Nature recovery support for Ecology	(8,000)
*Princetown Railway Access Agreements 2020/21	(5,552)
*Car parking meters – card readers	(10,200)
Balance	24,363

*Items subject to carry forward requests

- 2.8 In 2016 we launched the Donate for Dartmoor campaign. Table 5 below shows donations received each year and how those donations have been spent or are being allocated (in 2019/20).

<i>Table 5: Donate for Dartmoor</i>	£
2016/17 Donations and Mend our Mountains	(19,994)
Nuns Cross Path and new footbridge across the River Teign on the Two Moors Way in 2016/17 & 2017/18	19,994
2017/18 Donations	(18,295)
Buckfastleigh Path project in 2018/19	15,000
Southern damselfly monitoring project in 2018/19	1,500
2018/19 Donations	(22,084)
Amicombe path repairs in 2018/19	5,000
Southern damselfly monitoring project in 2019/20	2,000
Survey and repair of Historic features in 2019/20	5,550
Path Network improvements in 2019/20	11,329
2019/20 Donations	(26,734)
Nun's Cross path in 2019/20	1,670
Public rights of way work at Lambsdown in 2019/20	3,000
Horseshoe Bats in 2020/21	500
Southern damselfly monitoring project in 2020/21	2,000
Archaeology minor works programme in 2020/21	8,000
Miles without stiles project in 2020/21	5,000
Works at Longtimber Wood in 2020/21	2,000
Balance to be allocated in 2020/21	4,564

- 2.9 In 2018 we introduced car parking charges at Haytor, Postbridge and Meldon (they were introduced at Princetown in 2013). The charges replace the previous system of voluntary donations. We have promoted it as 'pay and conserve/pay and enjoy' rather than 'pay and display'. Income from the car park charges is used to fund car park

maintenance and conservation projects. In the past voluntary donations received at these car parks averaged circa £13-14,000 per annum. In table 6 a car parking (charging) income and expenditure reconciliation for 2019/20 is set out, with a comparator for the previous year.

Table 6: Car Parking	2019/20 Income	2018/19 Income
Pay & Conserve Ticket Income	£	£
Princetown	(23,089)	(24,355)
Meldon	(12,722)	(10,364)
Haytor Lower	(15,222)	(14,008)
Haytor Top	(8,915)	(8,232)
Postbridge	(15,318)	(15,018)
Donations	(1,133)	(3,579)
Total Income	(76,399)	(75,556)

Running costs	10,680	28,725
Banking	1,353	1,049
Maintenance	69,179	55,944
Total expenditure*	81,212	85,768

**Does not include any officer time*

Net Deficit	4,865	10,212
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Income from car park charges does not cover the full cost of maintenance; the current Medium Term Financial Plan includes commitments for car park repairs and maintenance at an estimated total cost of £227,000 (for the years 2020/21 to 2022/2023).

3 Capital Programme and Prudential Indicators

- 3.1 The Authority did not set a formal capital programme at the start of the year. However, during the year the Authority was successful in a bid to the Rural Development Programme England (RDPE) to build an extension to the Postbridge Visitor Centre; 100% capital funding was approved. As at 31 March this results in an Asset Under Construction on the Balance Sheet, valued at historic cost. When the extension is complete and the whole of the Visitor Centre is operational; the building will be revalued in accordance with our accounting policy and the Code.
- 3.2 As the Authority has no external borrowing, the other prudential indicators do not apply.

4 Reserve Balances

- 4.1 The level of reserve balances held is determined by our on-going work programmes and projects and by using a risk based analysis and methodology as set out at Appendix 2. Reserve funding is allocated or matched with expenditure according to project / programme requirements, but it should be noted that some projects straddle more than one financial year, or are dependent on partnerships where timing of spend is uncertain. This often results in carry forwards from year to year(s).

- 4.2 The net transfer to Reserves as at 31 March is £244,006 i.e. our reserves balances will be increased by this much. A summary of the total opening and closing Reserve Balances is set out in table 8 below, with a more detailed analysis set out in Appendix 3 and in tables 9 and 10.

2018/19 £	Table 8: Earmarked Reserve Balances	2019/20 £
(2,252,350)	1 April Opening Balance	(2,233,565)
372,975	Reserves used in year (table 9)	327,738
(404,190)	Transfers to earmarked reserves at year-end for specific purposes (table 10)	(550,975)
50,000	Transfer to General Reserve	0
0	Transfer to Capital Receipts Reserve	(20,769)
(2,233,565)	Total Earmarked Reserves at 31 March	(2,477,571)
(500,000)	General Unallocated Reserve	(500,000)
(2,733,565)	Total Reserve Balances at 31 March	(2,977,571)

- 4.3 The General (unallocated) Reserve will be maintained at £500,000 as previously approved by the Authority in March 2019 (NPA/19/006) as set out above.
- 4.4 Full details of the transfers from and to Earmarked Reserves are set out in the tables below:

Table 9: Earmarked Reserve balances brought forward (used) during the 2019/20 financial year	£
Invasive Species removal Project - Moor Otters Income	9,000
All Moor Butterflies Project	5,000
Farming Year Films - work in progress	10,000
Southern Damselfly Project – Donate for Dartmoor	2,000
Premier Archaeological Landscapes Grant Income - Historic England	7,050
Historic Features Project – Donate for Dartmoor	5,550
Uppacott cottage roof - commitment	10,000
Pork Hill Car Park resurfacing - commitment	35,000
Moor than meets the eye	10,090
Erosion works - Moor Otters Income	10,000
Public Rights of Way path repairs – Donate for Dartmoor	11,326
Discovering Dartmoor's Wild Stories - Heritage Lottery Fund Grant Income	17,366
Customer Relationship Management IT system - in progress	10,000

Junior Rangers programme – Moor Otters	10,000
Volunteer prize money - income	1,000
Great Dartmoor Leaf Programme	6,900
Local plan Review	31,500
MGCLG funding for Housing Enabler post	37,173
Communities Fund	9,196
Public Rights of Way - Digital survey IT system (in progress)	6,549
Other car park repairs - work in progress	15,340
Adopt a Monument Scheme Grant Income - Historic England	252
Visitor Centres - shelving order	1,354
Discover England Experience event income	750
Monument Management Scheme Grant Income - Historic England	7,781
Invasive species removal Project - South West Water Income	5,000
Dartmoor Hill Farm Project - brought forward balance	13,495
South West Peatlands Project	39,066
Total	327,738

<i>Table 10: Amounts to be carried forward to Earmarked Reserves at 31 March 2020</i>	£
Hill Farm Project – year-end balance (partnership income)	(35,330)
Eco Skills Projects (Project Fund)	(5,000)
Eco Skills – Woodland Trust grant income	(5,000)
Nature Recovery support (Project Fund)	(8,000)
New Access Agreements (Project Fund)	(5,552)
Dartmoor Headwaters Project – Partnership income	(113,597)
Ecology Projects: commitments	(8,548)
Environmental Land Management: Test & Trials – grant income	(5,255)
Access - MoD grant income	(4,000)
Key Campaigns – commitments work in progress	(2,650)
Visitor Management – commitments work in progress	(16,930)
Public Rights of Way – commitments work in progress	(11,078)
Staddon Bridge – MoD grant income	(2,000)
Visitor Centres – commitments work in progress	(867)
Enjoy Dartmoor – commitment work in progress	(550)
Office 365 – commitment work in progress	(20,979)
Communities Fund (cash) Balance	(68,566)
Local Plan Review commitments work in progress	(8,015)
Custom Build & New Burdens Grant Income - MHCLG	(17,446)
National Park Management Plan review	(9,590)
Donate for Dartmoor cash balance - allocated to 2020/21 projects	(22,064)

Revenue Outturn Surplus to meet the budget gap in the MTFP	(179,958)
Capital Receipt: Disposal of Plant & Equipment	(20,769)
Total	(571,744)

5 Contingent Liability – Historical Management Agreement Payments

- 5.1 Members will recall that in previous years (from 2006 to 2012) we had included a contingent liability disclosure note in the Statement of Accounts relating to the possible repayment of historical management agreement payments; totalling £1.2m, which had been made by the Authority between the 1980s and 2007. These payments were subsequently identified as falling within the EU definition of state aid for farming support. This resulted in the inclusion of an Emphasis of Matter being reported by the auditors in their audit opinion every year since 2006.
- 5.2 In 2012/13, Grant Thornton (GT), who took over the external audit function from the Audit Commission, referred this matter to their technical team and invited the Authority to consider this matter each year in order to ascertain whether:
- A contingent liability should be disclosed – as the disclosure should not be made if the possibility of transfer in settlement is remote
 - Whether there is a need for the inclusion of the emphasis of matter – as a disclosure would not be required if the likelihood of repayment remains remote
- 5.3 Members concurred with the GT Auditors and considered their approach to be sensible, pragmatic and very welcome. Members concluded that the note should be removed from the 2013/14 accounts.
- 5.4 This matter has been reconsidered each year by Leadership Team and the Authority. This year we have also considered how Brexit might have an impact (now that we are the transition period). Defra advice is that we will only have a clear indication of what the position will be once the terms of the exit negotiations are finalised. In terms of 2019/20 accounts, we have concluded that the position has not changed i.e. that contingent liability note in respect of this issue should not be included in the 2019/20 accounts.
- 5.5 Members are invited to give this issue due consideration and make recommendation as to whether a contingent liability note is required.

6 Sustainability and Equality Impact

- 6.1 Consideration is always given, when deciding which areas of expenditure should be supported, to equality and sustainability issues.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 The revenue outturn surplus of £179,958 represents a minus 4.43% variance against the 2019/20 budget (£70,494 and a minus 1.71% variance in 2018/19). Prudent financial management and increased income means that we will not have to call on reserves for some key projects and that this revenue surplus can be set aside to help fund the Medium Term Financial Plan budget gap that has arisen due a real terms cut in National park Grant for 2020/21. This also means that we are able to maintain

the Match Funding and Invest to Save Reserves to take advantage of future opportunities and new projects. In particular, we are working on a major application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund which we had hoped to submit in 2021 (applications are currently not being accepted by the Fund due to a re-prioritisation due to the coronavirus pandemic). This bid will be a key component of how we respond to the 'Glover agenda'.

7.2 Considering the Authority's ambitious and often diverse work programme and the record of achievement and performance reported elsewhere on this agenda, 2019/20 has once again been one of sound financial management. There has been some slippage in programmed work, and this has been reported during the year via the Budget Management reports and the Business Plan Monitoring Reports.

7.3 Once again the Authority has experienced financial success; absorbing additional costs in year rather than using reserves and therefore maintaining financial resilience, by:

- Generating income from sales, fees and charges, sponsorship, donations and treasury
- Robust cost control and efforts to seek out the best price and value for money
- Proactively seeking and achieving efficiency savings wherever possible
- Continued success at leveraging in external grant income by working in partnership with others
- The hard work of staff

7.4 The Authority continues to maintain a robust financial position; and is demonstrating a proactive approach to building stronger partnerships, generating new income streams and financial resilience and agility. We are well placed to continue to deliver good outcomes for Dartmoor and to support and deliver against the Government's "8-Point Plan for England's National Parks" and the 25 Year Environment Plan. We have already completed a business review to respond to the 'Glover agenda', in particular, enhancing our capacity to engage with new audiences.

7.5 Members should note that the impact of the coronavirus pandemic will be felt in the current financial year and beyond. We will report on this through our budget and business plan and financial monitoring processes.

DONNA HEALY

Background Papers

NPA/19/006 – 2019/20 Net Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Plan & Capital Budget

NPA/19/007 – 2019/20 Treasury Management & Investment Strategy

NPA/AG/19/005 - Financial Outturn 2018/19

NPA/AG/19/010 - Financial Management 1 April to 30 September 2019

NPA/AG/20/001 - Financial Management 1 April to 31 December 2019

Attachments: **Appendix 1** 2019/20 Financial Outturn Summary
 Appendix 2 Risk Based Analysis of Reserve Balances
 Appendix 3 Reserve Balances

Functional Strategy	2019/20 Original Budget £	2019/20 Variation in-year £	2019/20 Revised Budget	2019/20 Outturn	2019/20 Year End Deficit/ (Surplus) £	2019/20 Variance % against Budget	Explanation of Variances
Biodiversity	129,771	5,000	134,771	131,266	(3,505)	-2.60%	Carry forwards: Hawns & Dendles fencing, Invasive Non Native Species, Grassland Survey
Land Management	78,924		78,924	79,774	850	1.08%	
Woodlands	46,705		46,705	41,878	(4,827)	-10.34%	Budget for work on own land not required
Environmental Land Management - Test & Trials Project	0		0	(5,255)	(5,255)		Defra funded project; balance to be carried forward
Facilitation Fund (Externally Funded)	0		0	(11,581)	(11,581)		Balance to be carried forward for the Hill Farm Project
Hill Farm Project	16,262		16,262	5,767	(10,495)	-64.54%	Balance to be carried forward
Dartmoor Headwaters Project (Externally Funded)	0		0	(113,597)	(113,597)		Environment Agency grant funded project: balance to be carried forward
Peatlands Project	0		0	39,066	39,066		Balance to be met from Partnership Fund held in reserves
Natural Environment	271,662	5,000	276,662	167,318	(109,344)		
Archaeology	99,332	252	99,584	109,828	10,244	10.29%	Partnership grants held in reserves to meet projects costs at year-end
Built Environment	41,055		41,055	47,162	6,107	14.88%	Extra staff capacity brought in to manage the Historic Farm Buildings Grant Scheme
Moor than meets the eye	15,907		15,907	5,515	(10,392)	-65.33%	Redundancy provision not required
Higher Uppacott	22,400		22,400	15,072	(7,328)	-32.71%	Cottage roof repair deferred. Events Income
Cultural Heritage	178,694	252	178,946	177,577	(1,369)		
Visitor Management	122,044	15,340	137,384	116,995	(20,389)	-14.84%	Car parking income; HoTSW grant income for Welcome to Widdecombe Project, Sponsorship income from Mole Valley Farmer for Key Campaigns project to be carried forward
Access	116,224		116,224	106,068	(10,156)	-8.74%	Access agreements expired. MoD income to be carried forward
Public Rights of Way	124,836	27,049	151,885	141,758	(10,127)	-6.67%	Purchase of Pantograph delayed - carry forward. MoD income to be carried forward
Sustainable Transport & Tourism	17,638	750	18,388	18,075	(313)	-1.70%	
Recreation Management, Traffic & Transport	380,742	43,139	423,881	382,896	(40,985)		
Visitor Centres	195,922	4,090	200,012	171,866	(28,146)	-14.07%	Closure of Postbridge for rebuild - reduced income and salary savings. Purchase of retail stock for Easter and Moor Otters II delayed due to Covid 19 Lockdown
Postbridge Visitor Centre Interpretation Project	0		0	2,457	2,457		Funded from reserves and Heritage Fund grant income (Moor than meets the eye)
Postbridge Visitor Centre Extension Project	0		0	48,620	48,620		Revenue costs funded from Reserves
Discovering Dartmoor's Wild Stories	17,363		17,363	18,355	992	5.71%	Partnership balance held in reserves
Communications	224,041	3,600	227,641	214,595	(13,046)	-5.73%	Interpretation boards, Brand development & Donante for Dartmoor expenditure budgets not fully utilised. Enjoy Dartmoor Advertising revenue shortfall
Moor Otters II	0		0	27,665	27,665		Funded from reserves
Education	149,735		149,735	160,018	10,283	6.87%	Increased salary costs for two new posts appointed in January, being offset by income and cost savings: Youth Ranger, Guides, Events
Education, Information & Communication	587,061	7,690	594,751	643,576	48,825		
Rangers	450,431	3,754	454,185	456,617	2,432	0.54%	Increased vehicle running costs. Woodland Trust Grant for Eco Skills Project to be carried forward
Conservation Works Service	254,431	(3,754)	250,677	224,355	(26,322)	-10.50%	Redundancy costs being offset by savings: staff training and equipment. Income from sale of equipment
Development Management	318,855		318,855	209,101	(109,754)	-34.42%	In year vacancy savings and Planning Applications fee income
Forward Planning & Community	264,930	16,460	281,390	180,096	(101,294)	-36.00%	Enabler post. New Homes Bonus Grant, MHCLG Grant, Communities Fund balances to be carried forward. Commitments to be carried forward: Local Plan & National Park Management Plan reviews
Corporate and Democratic Core	303,355	5,650	309,005	282,340	(26,665)	-8.63%	Increased income: Treasury Interest, Clif Bar, NPPL. Savings: Members' training & expenses.
Information Technology	180,989	2,495	183,484	154,037	(29,447)	-16.05%	Vacancy saving in year. Carry forward commitment for Office 365
Corporate Operating Costs	131,396	9,509	140,905	135,911	(4,994)	-3.54%	Savings: postage, printing & stationery, insurance
Finance & Administration	215,761	2,600	218,361	209,307	(9,054)	-4.15%	Savings: maternity / vacancy
Legal & Democratic Services	66,231		66,231	60,042	(6,189)	-9.34%	Saving: technical subscription service expired, no longer required
Human Resources	164,165		164,165	160,600	(3,565)	-2.17%	Savings: Health & safety
Office Accommodation (Parke)	109,401	(5,920)	103,481	93,561	(9,920)	-9.59%	Savings: grounds maintenance, repairs deferred
Office Accommodation (Princetown)	35,357	6,700	42,057	44,523	2,466	5.86%	Increased internal repair costs
Business Support	903,300	15,384	918,684	857,981	(60,703)		
Project Fund	115,445	(62,330)	53,115	0	(53,115)		Project Fund cash balance, some carry forwards
Total Net Expenditure	4,028,906	31,245	4,060,151	3,581,857	(478,294)	-11.78%	
Funded By:	£			£	£		
National Park Grant	(3,825,863)		(3,825,863)	(3,825,863)	0		
Earmarked Reserve balances used during the year	(203,043)	(31,245)	(234,288)	(327,738)	(93,450)		
Amounts to be carried forward to Earmarked Reserves	0		0	391,786	391,786		
Total Funding	(4,028,906)	(31,245)	(4,060,151)	(3,761,815)	298,336		
Net (Surplus) / Deficit	0	0	0	(179,958)	(179,958)	-4.43%	Forecast at Month 9: surplus of £117k which is a -2.76% variance

2019/20 RESERVES: RISK BASED ANALYSIS	Risk Level	Rate	2019/20 Closing Balance £'000
Grants & Contributions with Restrictions carried forward: Grants & Contributions with Restrictions	N/A	Actual	(564)
Employees: Maternity / Paternity Cover / Pay Awards	Low	Est.	(52)
Costs & Awards: Appeals / Public Enquiries / Litigation	High	Est.	(250)
Loss of Income and / or Price Increases: Reduced Sales, Fees & Charges or Inflation cost	Medium	Est	(35)
Capital - Property: Repairs & maintenance (sinking fund)	Medium	Est.	(200)
Capital - Vehicles Provision for future replacement of vehicles (sinking fund)	N/A	Est.	(127)
Capital Receipts Reserve	N/A	Actual	(21)
Climate Change	N/A	Est.	(50)
Known Commitments/Contracts Local Plan Review	N/A	Est. & Actual	(65)
National Park Management Plan	N/A	Actual	(25)
Contracts - work in progress	N/A	Actual	(94)
Match Funding Reserve Moor than Meets the Eye - Cash Flow	N/A	Actual	(90)
Greater Dartmoor LEAF 2015-2020	N/A	Actual	(7)
Moor Otters Project Surplus - allocated to projects	N/A	Actual	(9)
Postbridge Visitor Centre - Extension Building Project	N/A	Actual	(140)
Public Arts Project - Moor Otters II	N/A	Actual	(120)
Unallocated fund balance	N/A	Actual	(414)
Revenue Invest to save and / or Generate Projects	N/A	Actual	(34)
Revenue Outturn Surplus - to be reallocated	N/A	Actual	(180)
General Reserve - Minimum amount to cover unanticipated costs / emergencies	N/A	Actual	(500)
Total Reserve Balance			(2,977)

GENERAL FUND RESERVE BALANCES

Appendix 3 of NPA/20/013

GENERAL FUND RESERVE BALANCES	2019/20 Opening Balance £	2019/20 Reserves used in-year £	2019/20 Transfers to reserves at year end £	2019/20 Forecast Closing Balance £	2020/21 Forecast Movements £	2021/22 Forecast Movements £	2022/23 Forecast Movements £	2022/23 Forecast Closing Balance £	Notes
Ringfenced External Grants & Contributions with Restrictions									
Hill Farm Project (Princes Countryside Fund)	(8,957)	8,957	(35,330)	(35,330)	35,330				0 Cash balances are carried forward at each year end as allocated to expenditure
English Heritage: White Horse Hill	(20,036)			(20,036)	20,036				0 Postbridge Visitor Centre
Communities Fund Grant (from District Councils)	(50,429)	9,196	(68,566)	(109,799)	109,799				0 Cash balances are carried forward at each year end as allocated to expenditure
DCLG - Neighbourhood Planning Grant	(10,000)			(10,000)				(10,000)	
DCLG - Unringfenced Grants	(104,667)	37,173	(17,446)	(84,940)	41,491	43,449			0 Allocated to Planning Enabler post & external planning support
Donate for Dartmoor Balances (public donations)	(18,879)	18,876	(22,064)	(22,067)	22,067				0 Cash balances are carried forward at each year end as allocated to expenditure
Historic England -PALS Grant	(9,891)	7,050		(2,841)	2,841				0 To be used over 3 years
Volunteer Award Prize money	(1,000)	1,000		0					0
Police & Crime Commissioner Grant	(5,000)			(5,000)	5,000				0
Historic England - Monument Management Scheme	(7,781)	7,781		0					0
Historic England - Adopt a monument	(252)			0					0
Peatland Partnership	(35,000)	(80,411)		(115,411)	100,000	15,411			0 NPA17/041 - 3 year project
Invasives Species (Soth West Water)	(5,000)	5,000		0					0
ELMS Test and Trials project	(27,500)		(5,255)	(32,755)	32,755				0 Project started late
Dartmoor Headwaters Project (Environment Agency)	(1,524)		(113,597)	(115,121)	115,121				0 3 Year Project
Woodland Trust - Eco Skills			(5,000)	(5,000)	5,000				0 Cash balances are carried forward at each year end as allocated to expenditure
Access - MoD			(4,000)	(4,000)	4,000				0
PRoW - MoD			(2,000)	(2,000)	2,000				0
Budget Management Fund - Earmarked and risk based provisions									
Employees	(52,000)			(52,000)	35,000			(17,000)	See risk assessment for breakdown - 2020/21 pay award not yet approved
Costs and Awards: Appeals/Public Enquiries/Litigation	(250,000)			(250,000)				(250,000)	See risk assessment for breakdown
Loss of Income and Inflation	(34,500)			(34,500)				(34,500)	See risk assessment for breakdown - C19 impact may mean that this is needed in 2020/21
Invest to Save and / or Generate Projects	(83,733)	50,000		(33,733)				(33,733)	
Climate Change /Emergency Declaration		(50,000)		(50,000)	25,000	25,000			0 NPA/19/020
Annual Revenue Outturn	(69,394)	69,397	(179,958)	(179,955)	96,822	50,292	32,841		0 To be allocated to meet the budget gap in the MTFP (NPA/20/005)
Capital Fund									
Vehicles - Sinking Fund - Replacement programme	(127,321)			(127,321)	33,000			(94,321)	
Capital Receipts Unapplied			(20,769)	(20,769)	17,000			(3,769)	
Property - Sinking Fund - Repairs & Maintenance	(210,000)	10,000		(200,000)				(200,000)	
Commitments and outstanding contracts									
Local Plan Review	(88,905)	31,500	(8,015)	(65,420)	55,000	10,420			0 Built into the MTFP
All Moor Butterflies	(7,500)	7,500		0					0 NPA/15/037 - 3 year programme
Farming Year Films	(10,000)	10,000		0					0 C/Fwd from 2018/19
National Parl Management Plan	(16,000)		(9,590)	(25,590)	25,590				0 C/Fwd at year end
Car park repairs	(50,340)	50,340		0					0 C/Fwd from 2018/19
Customer Relationship Manager IT system	(10,000)	10,000		0					0 C/Fwd from 2018/19
Prow IT system	(6,549)	6,549		0					0 C/Fwd from 2018/19
Shelving	(1,354)	1,354		0					0 C/Fwd from 2018/19
Historic Farm Buildings Grant Scheme Support	(14,392)			(14,392)	14,392				0 C/Fwd from 2018/19 to support the continuation of the project
Eco Skills Project			(5,000)	(5,000)	5,000				0 C/fwd from 2019/20
Nature Recovery Support			(8,000)	(8,000)	8,000				0 C/fwd from 2019/20
Ecology Contracts - work in progress			(8,548)	(8,548)	8,548				0 C/fwd from 2019/20
Acces contracts - work in progress			(8,202)	(8,202)	8,202				0 C/fwd from 2019/20
Visitor Management contracts - work in progress			(16,930)	(16,930)	16,930				0 C/fwd from 2019/20
PRoW contracts - work in progress			(11,078)	(11,078)	11,078				0 C/fwd from 2019/20
Visitor Centres contracts - work in progress			(867)	(867)	867				0 C/fwd from 2019/20
Enjoy Dartmoor contract			(550)	(550)	550				0 C/fwd from 2019/20
Office 365 Contract			(20,979)	(20,979)	20,979				0 C/fwd from 2019/20
Match Funding Reserve									
Moor Than Meets the Eye match funding & cash flow	(400,000)	203,500		(196,500)				(196,500)	Retention risk
Greater Dartmoor LEAF 2015-2020	(13,800)	6,900		(6,900)	6,900				0 NPA/14/038 for 6 years 2015-2020
Discovering Dartmoor's Wild Stories	(22,288)	22,288		0					0 Match against HLF Funding - ends 2019
Moor Otters	(38,000)	29,000		(9,000)	9,000				0 Project Surplus to be allocated to 3 projects in 2018/19 & 2019/20
Discover England Fund - Make Great Memories	(750)	750		0					0 NPA18/003 all contributions paid from within revenue budget
SW Peatland Partnership	(119,477)	119,477		0					0 Amalgamated under Grants income reserve (above)
Postbridge Visitor Centre Building Project	(140,000)			(140,000)	60,000			(80,000)	NPA18/017
Public Arts Project - Moor Otters II		(120,000)		(120,000)	50,000			(70,000)	NPA/19/015 - risk that costs will not be covered by income
Unallocated fund balance	(161,346)	(145,691)		(307,037)				(307,037)	Allocate to the national Lottery Heritage Fund bid for a Heritage Grant
Total Earmarked Reserves	(2,233,565)	327,738	(571,744)	(2,477,571)	1,003,298	144,572	32,841	(1,296,860)	
General Reserve (unallocated emergency reserve)	(500,000)			(500,000)				(500,000)	
Total General Fund Balance	(2,733,565)	327,738	(571,744)	(2,977,571)	1,003,298	144,572	32,841	(1,796,860)	



NPA/20/014

Dartmoor National Park Authority

12 June 2020

THE LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND 2019/20 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Report of the Head of Business Support

Recommendation: **That Members:**

- (i) **Consider and approve the assessment of the Authority's governance arrangements as set out in the Local Code of Corporate Governance at Appendix 1; and**
- (ii) **Approve the 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement at Appendix 2**

1 Background

- 1.1 "Governance" is about how public sector bodies ensure that they are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.
- 1.2 The Authority has based its corporate governance arrangements on the Framework "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government" produced by CIPFA (The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) and SOLACE (the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives).
- 1.3 The Framework and the core principles and sub principles that underpin the Local Code of Corporate Governance are set out so that we can demonstrate:
 - *that resources are directed in accordance with agreed policy and according to priorities;*
 - *that there is sound and inclusive decision making; and*
 - *that there is clear accountability for the use of those resources in order to achieve desired outcomes for service users and communities.*

2 Annual Review

- 2.1 The Local Code demonstrates how the Authority operates against the governance principles in the CIPFA framework. Producing an annual AGS is a requirement of the Framework and of *regulation 4(2) of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulation* in relation to the publication of a statement on internal control.

2.2 The Authority has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control; and is also required to report publicly, on an annual basis:

- its compliance with its Local Code;
- the effectiveness of its governance arrangements; and
- any planned changes.

The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of Leadership Team and other officers who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment.

2.3 The main framework (systems and processes) that make up the Authority's governance arrangements include:

- Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation, Financial Regulations, Procurement Procedures, Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, Confidential Reporting Policy (Whistleblowing) etc;
- the Business Planning process;
- Production of the annual Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan to reflect the priorities and actions in the Business Plan;
- The regular monitoring and reporting in public of performance against objectives, targets, and performance indicators;
- The monitoring and reporting of progress in relation to the National Park Management Plan;
- Performance appraisals of staff, including the setting of actions designed to deliver the objectives in the Business Plan;
- The maintenance and monitoring of the Strategic Risk Register;
- The maintenance of the Local Code of Corporate Governance;
- The continual refreshment, through review, of the Authority's suite of policy and strategy documents;
- Training delivered through the year to Members and to officers;
- External and Internal Audit.

2.4 The Authority's Local Code of Corporate Governance can be found at Appendix 1 which has been reviewed and updated to reflect the way the Authority operates. The draft Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20 can be found at Appendix 2. Members are invited to comment and / or propose amendments.

2.5 A summary of progress made against actions identified in the 2018/19 AGS are set out below:

Action	Progress
Consider, respond to and implement relevant recommendations from the Government's independent Review of Protected Landscapes (due to report Autumn 2019);	The Authority provided evidence to the review and has considered the recommendations. A business review has already been completed to strengthen areas such as outreach and engagement which were identified as priorities in the review. The Authority's Business Plan for 2020/21 and the MTFP are clearly linked to the priorities and key recommendations emanating from the review We are now inputting to the Government's response to the review which is due to be published in 2020/21
Implement the revised Member induction training programme	Completed
Review Standing Orders	Ongoing; to be completed in 2020/21
Provide procurement training to reflect revised systems and procedures	Achieved and implemented the use of an e-procurement IT system
Continue with the Local Plan review process	The Authority has approved the submission of the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in public.
Continue with the National Park Management Plan review process	Partners have been engaged in a series of Dartmoor Debates and topic groups. A draft plan was published for public consultation and it is anticipated that the final plan will be published in 2020/21 (subject to comments from the consultation process)
Review the Authority's involvement in the Heart of the South West Joint Committee and National Parks Partnerships Limited	The Authority has considered its engagement in the Heart of the South West Joint Committee and agreed to remain engaged for 2020/21 subject to budgetary pressures. Membership of National Parks Partnerships Limited is reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process.

2.6 Other significant work or improvements undertaken during the year in relation to governance arrangements include:

- Development Management: reviewed and implemented procedural changes to improve efficiency, effectiveness and customer service (July 2019) including

scheme of delegation, site visit protocols and DM Good Practice Guide for Members

- Declared a climate and ecological emergency in recognition of the global ecological crisis; agreed to work towards the Authority becoming carbon neutral by 2025; signed the Devon Climate Declaration and agreed to work and collaborate with the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group to produce a Devon-wide Carbon Plan
- Reviewed and adopted the South Hams SAC Greater Horseshoe Bats Guidance
- Approved the revised DEFRA National Park Funding Agreement issued to all National Park Authorities
- Approved revised Procurement Procedures (minor adjustments due to implementation of e-procurement It system and improved working practices
- National Parks UK Ltd: approved that the company should be voluntarily wound up (approval being required by each of the 15 UL National Park Authorities)
- Appointed a new Independent Person (in accordance with the Localism Act 2011) after the departure one of the Authority's (two) Members, it being at the end of their term of office

2.7 Whilst we continue to have strong Governance arrangements in place, to ensure continuous improvement, it is proposed that the following work is undertaken during 2019/20:

- Local Plan – Examination in Public by the independent Planning Inspectorate
- National Park Management Plan – consider the responses to the public consultation and work with partners to agree the final plan prior to adoption by the Authority
- Climate Change – deliver Year 1 of the Authority's carbon plan. Contribute to the Devon-wide programme of carbon reduction. Seek funding for further peatland restoration.
- In light of the real-terms cut to National Park Grant, identify financial savings in 2020/21 and re-work the MTFP
- Engage with the Comprehensive Spending Review
- Complete the review of Standing Orders
- Input to the Government's response to the Glover Review.

3 Sources of Assurance

3.1 Authority Members need to look for assurance that proper governance arrangements are in place, and this report is part of that process. The Local Code refers to the various sources of assurance which are made available on our Website and directly to Members via the intranet or committee reports.

3.2 Members may also wish to refer to the external auditor's audit findings report (as considered at the meeting of the Authority 26 July 2019) which led to an unqualified opinion on the truth and fairness of the Authority's financial statements and a positive audit opinion as a conclusion to their value-for-money review. The Value for money review is based on an assessment of whether the Authority has proper arrangements for securing financial resilience, and proper arrangements for challenging how economy, efficiency and effectiveness are secured.

3.3 Members may also refer to reports presented to this committee by Internal Audit during the year. The Head of Internal Audit has concluded that the Authority continues to operate at a 'high standard' - *“The system and controls in place adequately mitigate exposure to the risks identified. The system is being adhered to and substantial reliance can be placed upon the procedures in place. We have made only minor recommendations aimed at further enhancing already sound procedures.”*

3.4 The three statutory officers of the Authority (the Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer) have independent legal obligations which include reporting on any matters where the probity or legality of the Authority's actions or proposed actions is at stake. To date no such reports have been necessary. The Chair of Audit and Governance Committee has also been consulted during the annual review process.

4 Conclusion

4.1 The Authority has carried out a robust review of its Governance arrangements, and is satisfied that:

- The system of internal control is sound;
- The Authority has put in place proper and sound arrangements to detect and deter fraud and corruption;
- That adequate and effective arrangements are in place to ensure the legality of business transactions; and
- That the Authority's Local Code of Corporate Governance and governance arrangements in place are compliant with the CIPFA framework “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government”.

DONNA HEALY

**Attachments: Appendix 1 - Local Code of Corporate Governance
Appendix 2 – 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement**

2020 06 12 DH Local Code of Corporate Governance and AGS



DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Adopted: December 2009

Reviewed: April 2014, March 2017, May 2018, May 2019, May 2020

Introduction

Every local government body operates through a governance framework which brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes. Corporate governance arrangements encompass all of the policies and procedures that determine and control the way the authority operates. Good governance leads to good management, good performance, good stewardship of public money, good public engagement and, ultimately, good outcomes from the services provided.

The foundation of the Dartmoor National Park Authority's corporate governance arrangements can be traced directly to the "Good Governance Standard for Public Services" published by the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services in January 2005, and subsequently refined for local government through a framework promulgated in 2007 by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE).

In December 2009, the Authority adopted its own governance principles, customised to its own needs and circumstances from this framework. Since then, local government has been subject to continued reform to improve local accountability and engagement, and in 2016 CIPFA and SOLACE produced a revised framework "Delivering Good Governance".

This framework defines the principles that should underpin the governance of each local government body, and provides a structure which should assist individual authorities with their governance arrangements.

The Core Principles are:

- Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law;
- Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement;
- Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits;
- Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes;
- Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it;
- Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management;
- Principle G: Implementing good practice in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

In addition to the ***overarching requirements for acting in the public interest*** in Core Principles A and B, achieving good governance also requires a commitment to Core Principles C to G. In order to translate these principles into practice, the Authority needs to operate through a clear Corporate Governance policy supported by a Local Code of Corporate Governance.

The Authority's Values

Dartmoor National Park Authority will apply the following values to all its work:

1 Strong and Fair Leadership

Members and Officers will provide strong and effective leadership and provide a clear vision for the organisation, acting as champions for Dartmoor National Park, both within the Park and beyond

2 Integrity

We will strive to ensure that our relationships with the public, partners and each other are founded on honesty transparency, impartiality and consistency. We welcome and respect diversity and will demonstrate equality in all aspects of our work

3 Involvement

We will seek to be open and approachable and proactively seek participation from all sectors of society in achieving our statutory purposes

4 Accountability

We will take responsibility for our decisions and ensure all decisions and actions of the Authority are open and transparent, with clear reasons.

5 Improvement

We will endeavour to continually improve our performance in delivering National Park purposes and welcome feedback to help us achieve this

6 Valuing People

We value the people who work for us and will ensure staff, Members and volunteers are equipped to undertake their roles effectively

7 Action Focused

We will remain focused on our agreed priorities and doing what we say

Responsibilities

Members of the Authority are collectively and individually responsible for good governance. Primary responsibility lies with the Chair who has a key role in ensuring there is a culture within the organisation which reflects its values. The Chair is supported in this role by all members, but particularly the Deputy Chair and the Chairs of the committees and sub-committees of the Authority.

The Audit & Governance Committee is responsible for advising the Authority on its corporate governance policies and agenda, and implementing and managing the Authority's agreed policies in this area. It will receive an annual governance report incorporating the Annual Governance Statement. The Standards Sub-Committee is responsible for the oversight of ethical issues.

Officers of the Authority are responsible for following the policies and procedures of the Authority in support of the Governance arrangements. Particular responsibility is vested in the "Statutory Officers", namely the Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service, the S151 officer who has responsibility for the financial affairs of the Authority and the Monitoring Officer. The lead officer on Governance issues is the Monitoring Officer.

Internal and external auditors are responsible for assessing the Authority's governance arrangements and providing assurance to Members through audit reports and the Annual Governance Report.

LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law

Supporting Principles:	Evidenced by:
<p><u>Behaving with integrity</u></p> <p>Ensuring Members and Officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the Authority.</p> <p>Ensuring Members and Officers take a lead in establishing specific standard principles or values for the organisation (based on seven Nolan Principles)</p> <p>Leading by example and using the principles as framework for all actions and decisions</p> <p>Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles through appropriate policies and processes, which are regularly reviewed to ensure effectiveness</p>	<p>Member & Officer Codes of Conduct Officer and Member Induction programme Officer and Member processes appraisal Organisational Development Strategy Communications Strategy Statement of Community Involvement Mission Statement and Core Values in Business Plan & National Park Management Plan Standing Orders Register of Interests & declaration at meetings Declaration of gifts and Hospitality Record of decisions made Appointment of Independent Persons to Standards Sub-Committee Arrangements for dealing with complaints and regular review to make changes and improvements Declaration of interests made at meetings Scheme of Delegation, and records of decisions Financial Regulations & Procurement Procedures Confidential Reporting Policy - Whistleblowing Anti-fraud & Corruption Policy</p>
<p><u>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values</u></p> <p>Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the Authority's ethical standards and performance</p> <p>Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the Authority's culture and operation</p> <p>Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values</p> <p>Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the Authority act with the integrity and ethical standards expected by the Authority</p>	<p>Organisational Development Strategy Member Role Description Codes of conduct Staff and Member Appraisal process Equal Opportunities Policy Statement HR policies Fair Trade and sustainability principles embedded in procurement policy Contractor vetting Partnership arrangements backed up with robust formal legal agreements, setting out roles, responsibilities and behaviours</p>
<p><u>Respecting the rule of law</u></p> <p>Ensuring Members and Officers demonstrate</p>	<p>Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation</p>

<p>strong commitment to the rule of law</p> <p>Creating the conditions for the three Statutory Officers and Members to fulfil their regulatory responsibilities</p> <p>Striving to optimise the use of full powers available for the benefit of stakeholders</p> <p>Dealing effectively with breaches of legal or regulatory provisions</p> <p>Ensuring corruption and misuse of powers are dealt with effectively</p>	<p>Role of three Statutory Officers</p> <p>Role of Monitoring Officer to report on illegality</p> <p>Role of Chief Financial Officer to report on unlawful expenditure</p> <p>Appointment of Internal and External Auditors and reporting arrangements in place to Audit and Governance Committee</p> <p>Annual Governance Review and Statement</p> <p>Registration of Related Party Transactions</p> <p>Declarations of lobbying and of interests at committee meetings</p> <p>Transparency about business dealings between the Authority, Members and senior Staff</p> <p>Record of decisions and legal advice given</p> <p>Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy</p> <p>Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) procedures</p>
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Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Supporting Principles:	Evidenced by:
<p><u>Openness</u></p> <p>Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating our commitment to openness.</p> <p>Making decisions that are open and transparent; presumption against confidentiality without justification</p> <p>Providing clear reasoning and evidence relating to actions and decisions, and ensuring the impact and consequences are clear</p> <p>Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate courses of action</p>	<p>Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act</p> <p>Access to Information arrangements</p> <p>Agreed actions to comply with the Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014</p> <p>Agreed actions to implement the requirements of the Data Transparency Code and arrangements for the information to be available on the website</p> <p>Adoption of the ICO’s standard Publication Scheme</p> <p>Publication of agendas, reports and minutes for the Authority and its Committees on the website</p> <p>Record of decisions made published on the website</p> <p>Published calendar of meetings and internal corporate calendar to ensure timetable met</p> <p>Reports include legal, financial, and human resources (HR) equality implications where necessary.</p> <p>Record of discussion and decisions recorded in minute and published on website</p> <p>Residents (and other) Surveys</p> <p>Consultations undertaken on range of service delivery matters and strategic plans</p> <p>Formal and informal consultation</p> <p>National Park Management Plan Steering Group and Delivery Board</p> <p>Local Plan consultations</p>

	<p>Stakeholder consultations Attendance by Officers and Members at Parish Council meetings National Park Forum Dartmoor Farmers Forum Parish Council workshops Local Access Forum</p>
<p><u>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders</u></p> <p>Ensuring that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably.</p> <p>Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively.</p> <p>Ensuring that partnerships are based on trust, a shared commitment to change, and a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners; the added value of partnership is explicit</p>	<p>Communications Strategy</p> <p>Corporate Contacts database to enable engagement with stakeholders for correct purposes</p> <p>Partnership arrangements backed up with robust formal legal agreements, setting out roles, responsibilities and behaviours</p>
<p><u>Effective engagement with individual citizens and service users</u></p> <p>Establishing a clear policy on consultation with stakeholders to ensure service provision contributes to intended outcomes</p> <p>Ensuring communication methods are effective in relation to community engagement</p> <p>Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views of stakeholders including reference to future needs</p> <p>Implementing effective feedback mechanisms and ensuring inclusivity of all feedback</p> <p>Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other groups to ensure inclusivity.</p> <p>Taking account of impact of decisions on future generations of taxpayers/service users</p>	<p>Communications Strategy. Use of social media channels Statement of Community Involvement Public consultations undertaken as required, well publicised and results and feedback reported to the Authority</p> <p>Formal and informal consultation: National Park Management Park Local Plan Stakeholders Dartmoor Climate Assembly (February 2020). Climate change youth group Attendance by Officers and Members at Parish Council meetings National Park Forum Hill Farm Project Steering Group and workshop sessions. Parish Council workshops Local Access Forum</p>

Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

Supporting principles:	Evidenced by:
<p><u>Defining Outcomes</u></p> <p>Having a clear vision as an agreed formal statement of the Authority’s purpose and intended outcomes</p> <p>Specifying the intended impact on stakeholders</p> <p>Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within resources</p> <p>Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes</p> <p>Managing service users expectations with regard to determining priorities</p>	<p>The Authority’s role defined by the two statutory purposes and the duty; and the Mission Statement & Vision in the National Park Management Plan and Business Plan.</p> <p>Service Plans and individual work programmes</p> <p>The National Park Management Plan: developed together with partner organisations - sets 20 year vision and 5 year objectives.</p> <p>The Business Plan is developed from the Management Plan to implement the objectives</p> <p>Financial planning - annual budget and Medium Term Financial Plan</p> <p>Declaration of Climate and Ecological Emergency and subsequent adoption of detailed action to support ambition of becoming carbon neutral by 2025</p> <p>Risk management policy & Strategic Risk Register</p> <p>Performance Management Framework and reporting quarterly to Leadership Team and Audit & Governance Committee</p>
<p><u>Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits</u></p> <p>Consider and balance the combined economic social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions</p> <p>Taking a long term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently in the face of conflicting interests</p> <p>Determining the wider public interest when balancing conflicting interests, through consultation where possible</p>	<p>Equality, sustainability and environmental impact assessment undertaken for projects, work programmes and service delivery when relevant</p> <p>Climate Action Plan 2020-2025</p> <p>Local Industrial Strategy, Productivity Plan and rural productivity network via Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership and Joint Committee</p> <p>Member Working Panels provide opportunities for Officer / Member discussion, evaluation and assessment in advance of and to aid decision making process</p> <p>Records of decisions published on website in committee minutes</p> <p>Public consultations undertaken when required with groups as set out previously</p>

Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

Supporting principles:	Evidenced by:
<p><u>Determining Interventions</u></p> <p>Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating associated risks, thereby ensuring best value is achieved</p> <p>Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making service improvements in order to prioritise competing resource demands</p>	<p>Member Working Panels provide opportunities for Officer / Member discussion, evaluation and assessment in advance of and to aid decision making process</p> <p>Committee reports contain rationale and relevant considerations / options appraisals / Financial implications on which decisions are based.</p> <p>Equality, sustainability and environmental impact assessments considered when relevant</p>
<p><u>Planning Interventions</u></p> <p>Establishing and maintaining robust planning and control cycles for plans, priorities and targets</p> <p>Engaging with stakeholders in relation to planning and delivery; considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively, including shared risks</p> <p>Ensuring arrangements are flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances</p> <p>Establishing key performance indicators; and ensuring capacity exists to generate information needed to review service quality regularly</p> <p>Prepare budgets in accordance with objectives, strategies and the medium term financial plan</p> <p>Inform medium and long term resource planning through a sustainable funding strategy</p>	<p>Reporting cycles for Business Plan targets, priorities , financial budget, corporate governance and risk management in place</p> <p>Communications Strategy</p> <p>Residents survey, consultation exercises and Forums in place as described previously</p> <p>Risk management policy and Strategic Risk Register focuses on key risks; monitored and reviewed quarterly and plans adapted accordingly</p> <p>National Park family and local performance indicators to reflect Business Plan outcomes. Service delivery Dashboards in place for all service areas. Reviewed and reported quarterly</p> <p>Annual budget and Medium Term Financial Plan process that is aligned with Business Plan, National Park Management Plan and Defra’s Eight Point Plan for National Parks and other Government policies e.g. 25 Year Environment Strategy</p> <p>Service plans and individual work programmes produced to reflect Business Plan priorities</p> <p>Reserves reviewed and maintained on a risk based approach</p>

<p><u>Optimising achievement of intended outcomes</u></p> <p>Ensuring the budget process is all-inclusive of full cost of operations over medium and longer term</p> <p>Ensuring medium term financial strategy is responsive to external circumstances to optimise resource usage/integrates and balances resource constraints</p>	<p>Annual budget and Medium Term Financial Plan process that is aligned with Business Plan, National Park Management Plan and Eight Point Plan and 25 Year Environment Strategy and relevant recommendations of the Glover Review</p> <p>Regular budget monitoring reports to Leadership Team and Audit & Governance Committee allows realignment if required.</p>
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Principle E: Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it;

Supporting principles:	Evidenced by:
<p><u>Developing capacity</u></p> <p>Reviewing operations and resources to ensure continued effectiveness</p> <p>Improving allocation of resources so that defined outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently</p> <p>Recognising the benefits of partnership working where added value can be achieved</p> <p>Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance allocation of resources</p>	<p>Workforce planning overseen and reviewed by Leadership Team</p> <p>ICT Strategy</p> <p>Internal and external audit of processes</p> <p>National Park Management Plan review cycle</p> <p>Business Plan review cycle</p> <p>Local plan review cycle</p> <p>Budgetary control reported to Leadership Team and Audit & Governance committee</p> <p>Continuous review of Partnerships and delivery of outcomes</p> <p>Performance Indicators and benchmarking undertaken with other National Parks</p>
<p><u>Developing capability of leadership</u></p> <p>Developing protocols to ensure that shared understanding of roles and responsibilities is maintained</p> <p>Ensuring Chair and CEO have clearly defined roles</p> <p>Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions</p> <p>Developing capabilities of Members and Senior Management by giving access to</p>	<p>Codes of conduct</p> <p>Officer Job descriptions, person specification and competency framework</p> <p>Organisational Development Strategy</p> <p>Role/Protocols of Statutory Officers</p> <p>Members Role Description</p> <p>Scheme of Delegation, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations regularly reviewed</p> <p>Decisions published through Open Data requirements</p> <p>Member job descriptions</p> <p>Staff and Member induction programme</p>

<p>induction and ongoing training; Members and Officers have appropriate skills and support to fulfil roles and this is kept updated; development through shared learning and learning from identified weaknesses</p> <p>Ensure structures in place to encourage public participation in development</p> <p>Taking steps to ensure leadership's effectiveness through peer reviews and appraisals</p> <p>Holding staff to account through performance reviews</p> <p>Ensuring arrangements in place to maintain physical and mental wellbeing of Officers</p>	<p>Training and Development programmes for Members and Officers</p> <p>Staff Development & Training Days</p> <p>Bi-annual All Staff Meetings</p> <p>Focus groups</p> <p>Residents Survey</p> <p>Forums and groups as described previously</p> <p>Management Plan and Local Plan reviews</p> <p>Member and Officer Appraisals; including CEO Member Role Description</p> <p>Member and Officer personal development plans and Officer competency framework</p> <p>HR Policies and procedures</p> <p>Access to Occupational Health scheme</p> <p>Employees Assistance Programme in place</p> <p>DNPA is a registered "Mindful Employer", running regular training events to promote mental wellbeing</p>
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Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

The local code requires us to:	Evidenced by:
<p><u>Managing risk</u></p> <p>Ensuring risk management is an integral part of all decision making</p> <p>Implementing robust and integrated risk management</p> <p>Ensuring individual responsibilities for managing risk are clearly allocated</p>	<p>Risk Management Policy in place and Strategic Risk Register approved annually and reviewed by Leadership Team and Audit & Governance Committee on continual basis</p> <p>Operational risk is built into service plans and work programmes and monitored by Heads of Service</p> <p>Scheduled risk and review meetings with insurers</p> <p>Risk based approach to financial management and maintenance of Reserves and working balances</p> <p>Internal and External Audit report to Members on a risk based approach</p>
<p><u>Managing performance</u></p> <p>Monitoring service delivery effectively</p> <p>Making decisions based on clear and relevant objective analysis including risks</p> <p>Providing Members and LEADERSHIP TEAM with regular reports on service delivery</p> <p>Encouraging effective and constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives</p> <p>Ensuring consistency between</p>	<p>Robust performance management framework in place: Business Plan monitoring, Performance Indicators, Service delivery Dashboards, Risk Register and Financial Management; reviewed by Leadership Team and Audit & Governance Committee on quarterly basis</p> <p>Working Panels review and debate new policies and projects in advance of formal approval being sought</p> <p>Performance Improvement reviews are carried out by small member/officer teams including Members via Audit & Governance Committee</p> <p>Terms of Reference for Audit & Governance Committee and appropriate training provided</p> <p>Financial Regulations and financial management</p>

specification stages and post implementation reporting	
<p><u>Robust internal control</u></p> <p>Aligning risk management strategy and policies Evaluation and monitoring risk management Ensuring counter-fraud and anti-corruption measures in place Ensuring additional assurance through effective internal audit Ensuring audit committee independent of the executive</p>	<p>Risk management policy and strategic risk register in place and reviewed and monitored on quarterly basis</p> <p>Anti- fraud and corruption policy in place; regularly reviewed Internal Audit provided by Devon Audit Partnership Audit & Governance Committee in place as previously described</p>
<p><u>Managing data</u></p> <p>Ensuring effective arrangements for safe collection and use of data including sharing of personal data Effective arrangements for sharing data with other bodies Regularly reviewing and auditing quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring</p>	<p>Data Protection Policy and Procedures Compliance with Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Nominated Data Protection Officer Data Sharing arrangements made and signed off as required with third parties Access to information Policy includes storage and retention guidelines Compliance with Payment Card Industry Standard</p>
<p><u>Strong public financial management</u></p> <p>Well-developed financial management to support long term and short term financial and operational performance Ensuring financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control</p>	<p>Robust financial planning processes and procedures: Annual budget and Medium Term Financial Plan linked to the Business Plan and National Park Management Plan Quarterly budget monitoring reports to Leadership Team, and Audit & Governance Committee. Risk based approach to maintenance of reserve balances Financial implications considered and reported in all committee reports and in project management framework</p>

Principle G: Implementing good practice in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability

The local code requires us to:	Evidenced by:
<p><u>Good Practice in Transparency</u></p> <p>Writing and publishing reports in a balanced, understandable and easily accessed style Striking a balance with regard to the amount of information provided</p>	<p>Reports template used for all committees and reports reviewed and signed off by senior officers before publication All committee business published on website Freedom of Information/Environmental Information</p>

	<p>Regulations compliance Publication Scheme Open Government requirements (including delegations) Annual Review published on Website</p>
<p><u>Good Practice in Reporting</u></p> <p>Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and stewardship of resources in a clear, timely way</p> <p>Ensuring members and officers take “ownership” of the reported results</p> <p>Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the principles in this framework are applied, including an action plan for improvement</p> <p>Ensure this framework is applied to joint working/shared services</p> <p>Ensuring that performance information accompanying the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and allows for comparison with similar organisations</p>	<p>Robust performance management framework in place: Business Plan monitoring, Performance Indicators, Service delivery Dashboards; reviewed by Leadership Team and Audit & Governance Committee on quarterly basis Annual Review of performance and outcomes achieved External Audit reports to Authority annually on Value for Money and Use of Resources</p> <p>Scheme of Delegation, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations</p> <p>Continual review of systems of internal control by officers and Internal / External audit. Formal review of governance arrangements in order to produce the Annual Governance Statement to accompany the Statement of Accounts</p> <p>Annual Review report produced at year end that summarises the Authority’s performance against Business Plan objectives and outcomes. National Park family performance indicators reported annually</p>
<p><u>Assurance and accountability</u></p> <p>Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted on</p> <p>Ensuring an effective internal audit service is in place</p> <p>Welcoming peer challenge and regulatory inspections and acting on recommendations</p> <p>Gaining assurance on risks delivered through third parties and ensuring that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement</p> <p>When working in partnership, ensuring arrangements for accountability are clear</p>	<p>Internal and External audit plans and reports taken to Audit & Governance Committee and to the Authority at year end. All recommendations and actions reported publically</p> <p>Internal Audit provided by the Devon Audit Partnership who demonstrate compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards</p> <p>Benchmarking and Officer working groups in place across National Parks family to challenge, learn and share best practice. Audit report recommendations are followed up and implemented</p> <p>Formal partnership agreements are always put in place that set out roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and risk. Continual risk management undertaken and reported to Members during the year to provide assurance</p>

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

2019/20

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Dartmoor National Park Authority (the Authority) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and is used economically, efficiently and effectively. DNPA also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Authority is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of its functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

The Authority has developed a Local Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. A copy of the code is available on our website. The Annual Governance Statement explains how the Authority has complied with the Local Code of Corporate Governance and also meets the requirements of regulation 4(2) of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 in relation to the publication of a statement on internal control.

THE PURPOSE OF THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and cultures and values, by which the Authority is directed and controlled and the activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community, including residents, visitors and stakeholders. It enables the Authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Authority's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The governance framework has been in place for the year ended 31 March 2020 and up to the date of approval of the Business Plan and Statement of Accounts. The framework has been further supported by the Local Code of Corporate Governance.

THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK & LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Authority operates within a Corporate Governance Framework which ensures accountability to its users, stakeholders and the wider community to which it relates. It comprises the systems and processes, cultures and values by which decisions are made and functions undertaken to deliver the purposes and duties of the organisation.

The key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the Authority's governance arrangements are based on the 7 core principles contained in the Local Code of Corporate Governance and include the following aspects:

- The vision, objectives and priorities for Dartmoor National Park are set out in the National Park Management Plan – Your Dartmoor. This document via a process of extensive community involvement and the associated action plans are revised annually in a process involving a wide range of partners/stakeholders. A fundamental review of the National Park Management Plan is currently ongoing. As part of this process the Authority has engaged with partners to develop a series of 'Dartmoor Debates' to help develop a future vision for the National Park and key priority actions to deliver the vision. A public consultation was commenced at the end of 2019/20. The review will be completed in 2020/21 and the new National Park Management Plan will inform the Authority's future priorities and those of partners.
- The Business Plan for the Authority is a strategic document which provides a link between the National Park Management Plan and work programmes (for teams and individuals). The Business Plan, including priorities and targets, is reviewed annually and a separate annual review is produced in June to report on performance and highlight key projects undertaken in-year. The performance of individual services/teams is monitored through a series of dashboards and agreed performance indicators which are reported to Audit and Governance Committee.
- The Authority's financial management arrangements conform with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in Local Government (2010).
- The principles of decision making are set out in the Authority's Standing Orders, supported by:
 1. Financial Regulations, a Disposals Policy, a Sustainable Procurement Policy and Procurement Procedures;
 2. The Authority's adopted codes of practice in relation to Treasury Management for Investments and for Capital Finance and Accounting (the Prudential Code)
 3. Scheme of Delegation
 4. Code of Conduct for Members and Officers
 5. Job / role descriptions for Members and Officers
 6. Policies and Procedures
- Public involvement and transparency in decision making is facilitated through formal consultations, workshops, involvement in service reviews, consultative forums with

members of the community representing access, land use, conservation, businesses and community interests and public participation at the Authority and its Committees.

- Ensuring that established policies, procedures, laws and regulations are complied with is the responsibility of nominated statutory Officers, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Financial Officer, as laid down in the Authority's Standing Orders & Financial Regulations.
- A Risk Management Strategy that defines and identifies the process for ongoing risk management and the responsibilities of the various stakeholders in the risk management process.
- A Strategic Risk Register is compiled, regularly reviewed and monitored by the Audit and Governance Committee and Leadership Team. Leadership Team monitors and manages operational risks via service plans, work programs and Service Dashboards. The Authority's internal project management guidance requires identification and management of risks.
- A programme of service reviews or value for money/business reviews that look closely at and challenge service provision and delivery and discharges the Government's Value for Money requirements for the Authority.
- Comprehensive budgeting systems set targets to measure financial performance which are reviewed by the Leadership Team and reported to the Audit and Governance Committee on a quarterly basis for detailed review and scrutiny.
- Performance management is applied consistently throughout the Authority against a Performance Management Framework. Reports of progress against performance targets are reported quarterly to the Leadership Team and the Audit & Governance Committee.
- The Standards sub-Committee monitors the ethical framework for the Authority and will alert the Authority to any potential issues arising from its decision making processes.

All of the above elements are subject to independent challenge and scrutiny through Internal and External Auditors and other review bodies such as Defra.

REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Authority has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system is informed by the work of the Leadership Team and other Officers within the authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Head of Internal Audit's (Devon Audit Partnership) annual report and also by responding to comments and recommendations made by external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

The Authority's Chief Financial Officer and Monitoring Officer have also provided assurance that there have been no significant control issues that have required the need for: formal action in their respective roles; significant additional funding; had a material impact on the accounts; or resulted in significant public interest, damaging the reputation of the Authority.

Although a review of the effectiveness of the Governance arrangements is reported once per year to the Authority, the process of gathering evidence and monitoring performance is continual and is managed through reports to Audit & Governance Committee. The Actions identified to be addressed during the year were:

Action	Progress
Consider, respond to and implement relevant recommendations from the Government's independent Review of Protected Landscapes (due to report Autumn 2019)	The Authority provided evidence to the review and has considered the recommendations. A business review has already been completed to strengthen areas such as outreach and engagement which were identified as priorities in the review. The Authority's Business Plan for 2020/21 and the MTFP are clearly linked to the priorities and key recommendations emanating from the review We are now inputting to the Government's response to the review which is due to be published in 2020/21
Implement the revised Member induction training programme	Completed
Review Standing Orders	Ongoing; to be completed in 2020/21
Provide procurement training to reflect revised systems and procedures	Achieved and implemented the use of an e-procurement IT system
Continue with the Local Plan review process	The Authority has approved the submission of the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in public.
Continue with the National Park Management Plan review process	Partners have been engaged in a series of Dartmoor Debates and topic groups. A draft plan was published for public consultation and it is anticipated that the final plan will be published in 2020/21 (subject to comments from the consultation process)
Review the Authority's involvement in the Heart of the South West Joint Committee and National Parks Partnerships Limited	The Authority has considered its engagement in the Heart of the South West Joint Committee and agreed to remain engaged for 2020/21 subject to budgetary pressures. Membership of National Parks Partnerships Limited is reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process.

Other significant improvements in relation to governance arrangements undertaken during 2019/20 as follows:

- Development Management: reviewed and implemented procedural changes to improve efficiency, effectiveness and customer service (July 2019) including scheme of delegation, site visit protocols and DM Good Practice Guide for Members

- Declared a climate and ecological emergency in recognition of the global ecological crisis; agreed to work towards the Authority becoming carbon neutral by 2025; signed the Devon Climate Declaration and agreed to work and collaborate with the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group to produce a Devon-wide Carbon Plan. Agreed a Carbon Plan to become carbon neutral by 2025.
- Reviewed and adopted the South Hams SAC Greater Horseshoe Bats Guidance
- Approved the revised DEFRA National Park Funding Agreement issued to all National Park Authorities
- Approved revised Procurement Procedures (minor adjustments due to implementation of e-procurement It system and improved working practices)
- National Parks UK Ltd: approved that the company should be voluntarily wound up (approval being required by each of the 15 UK National Park Authorities). The company is now in voluntary liquidation and the company will be formally struck off in 2020/21.
- Appointed a new Independent Person (in accordance with the Localism Act 2011) after the departure one of the Authority's (two) Members, it being at the end of their term of office

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

Although the Authority has been assessed as having strong Governance arrangements in place, to ensure continuous improvement, it is proposed that the following work is undertaken during 2020/21:

- Local Plan – Examination in Public by the independent Planning Inspectorate
- National Park Management Plan – consider the responses to the public consultation and work with partners to agree the final plan prior to adoption by the Authority
- Climate Change – deliver Year 1 of the Authority's carbon plan. Contribute to the Devon-wide programme of carbon reduction. Seek funding for further peatland restoration.
- In light of the real-terms cut to National Park Grant, identify financial savings in 2020/21 and re-work the MTFP
- Engage with the Comprehensive Spending Review
- Complete the review of Standing Orders
- Input to the Government's response to the Glover Review.

In addition to the above, the Authority is responding to the coronavirus pandemic. This will require us to change our governance arrangements (for example, a move to virtual meetings and no AGM in 2020/21). We are working remotely and looking at how we continue to support staff and members through this period. We have already commenced work on a recovery plan with three key themes: how we re-open the National Park; support for the Dartmoor economy; and reaching out to existing and new audiences.

CERTIFICATION

We have been advised on the implication of the results of the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework by the Audit and Governance Committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of systems is in place.

We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

Signed:

P Woods
Chair of the Authority

Date:

Signed:

K D Bishop
Chief Executive (National Park Officer)

Date:



NPA/20/015

Dartmoor National Park Authority

12 June 2020

CONSIDERATION OF THE LANDSCAPES REVIEW

Report of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer)

Recommendation: **That Members:**

- (i) **note the content of the report;**
- (ii) **agree the Authority's position with respect to the key proposals contained in the Landscapes Review (see appendix 1); and**
- (iii) **establish a Member and Officer working group to consider the proposed changes to the Authority and make recommendations on these to the Authority for potential submission to Defra.**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In 2018 the then Secretary of State for the Environment appointed a panel led by Julian Glover to conduct an independent review of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and report to Government. The Landscapes Review was published in September 2019. Defra Ministers have indicated that the Glover review remains a priority despite the Coronavirus pandemic and their intention is to publish a Government response to the independent review by the end of 2020.
- 1.2 This report presents a summary of the 27 proposals contained in the Landscapes Review and the Authority's proposed position in response to the detailed proposals (see appendix 1).

2. Background

- 2.1 The [25 Year Environment Plan](#) contained a specific commitment to commission a review of National Parks and AONBs to consider the coverage of designations, how designated areas deliver their responsibilities, how designated areas are financed, and whether there is scope for expansion. The review was also to consider opportunities to enhance the environment in existing designations, and expand on the existing eight-point plan for National Parks to connect more people with the natural environment. Julian Glover was appointed to lead the review with support from a panel. The panel comprised of the following persons:

Julian Glover	journalist and writer based in the Peak District and London
Dame Fiona Reynolds	former Director General of the National Trust and Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge University

Lord Ewen Cameron	former Chair of the Countryside Agency
Sarah Mukherjee	former BBC journalist and was a member of the Broads Authority
Jim Dixon	former Chief Executive of the Peak District National Park Authority
Jake Fiennes	General Manager, Conservation for the Holkham Estate - he replaced James Rebanks who resigned from the panel shortly after being appointed.

2.2 The panel commenced work in July 2018. We hosted a visit by Julian Glover in July 2018, Sarah Mukherjee (panel member) attended the Junior Ranger awards in November 2018 and we hosted a visit by Lord Cameron (panel member) focused on rural development and farming. A copy of the evidence that we submitted to the review is contained in appendix 2. We also collaborated with other English National Parks on a roadmap that was submitted to the Panel (see appendix 3).

2.3 A copy of the terms of reference for the review, interim letter and final report can be accessed via:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review>

2.4 Since publication of the final report Defra have established a team of officials to prepare the Government response; appointed a Reference Group of external stakeholders; and created a Contacts Group involving four Chief Executives (National Park Officers) and four AONB Managers. Kevin Bishop is one of the four National Park Officers who sit on the Contacts Group. The Reference Group is chaired by Sonia Phippard (former Director General at Defra) and Sarah Fowler (Chief Executive of the Peak District) has been seconded by the Peak District National Park Authority, to Defra, one day a week to support the Reference Group.

3. Landscapes Review

3.1 The Glover Review is calling for ‘national landscapes’ to be a “positive force for the nation’s wellbeing” (p.9). It sets out a compelling ambition that our national landscapes should be “happier, healthier, greener, more beautiful and open to everyone”. This is an ambition that few would disagree with and the Authority would wish to actively support. The report identifies 27 proposals and a series of other suggestions/recommendations. Appendix 1 outlines the proposals and details a suggested DNPA position/response.

3.2 Several of the proposals in the final report reflect the evidence and proposals that the Authority submitted to the Review, including:

- Strengthened role for National Park Management Plans
- A central role in the new Environmental Land Management System
- A stronger mission to connect with all parts of society
- A central role in the Nature Recovery Network
- Regular assessments of the state of nature and natural capital

3.3 The central hypothesis upon which the report is based is that its big ambitions will only be made possible if the 44 areas (National Parks and AONBs) work together in

new ways to become “more than the sum of their parts”. The term ‘national landscapes’ is used to define the collective of 10 National Parks, 34 AONBs and certain non-designated landscapes. The term is also used/proposed as a new name/title for AONBs. The report argues that the ‘national landscapes’ lack collective and, at times, individual ambition to make our designated landscapes better for nature, more inclusive and home to vibrant communities. It identifies our governance and inability to work as a collective as key barriers to developing and delivering an ambitious vision.

- 3.4 As noted above, we share the ambition and vision to make our National Park a better place for nature and for people. This is the central theme of the current review of the National Park Management Plan. To deliver this vision will require new approaches, innovative thinking and wider behaviour change.
- 3.5 Whilst setting out a compelling vision and ambition, the review is weaker on the evidence or business case that underpins some of its more detailed proposals. The report essentially argues for more nature, more visitors (with a focus on inclusivity), a warmer welcome, potentially new access rights and more vibrant communities but does not identify the key tools (beyond the Environmental Land Management System) to deliver these ambitions, the potential and actual conflicts between these ambitions and the barriers to delivery. It might be ‘unfashionable’ to state this but the Report’s ambition on what needs to be done is not matched with a realistic assessment of the resources, powers and policies required. Many of the areas where the Report is calling for greater ambition and delivery are areas where we have had to reduce funding and capacity as a result of austerity: there is almost no recognition that we have, over the last ten years, seen a significant reduction in core funding and a weakening of the national policy framework that surrounds National Parks. A simplistic assertion that more needs to be done to attract commercial income, sponsorship and philanthropic donations is not based on any evidence that this is feasible nor an assessment of how this might impact on partnership working with bodies like the Wildlife Trusts, Woodland Trust, National Trust, RSPB and Dartmoor Preservation Association who rely on such income sources and whom we could end up competing with.
- 3.6 Central to many of the proposals is the establishment of a new National Landscapes Service which would bring all 44 ‘national landscapes’ together to achieve more than the sum of their parts. The report outlines a confused model for a National Landscape Service, combining: advocacy, direct delivery, accountability, promotion of collaboration, setting vision, allocating resources and raising funding. Central control and delivery of functions is not the answer, it would weaken our core strength – effective local partnership working. There is a real risk that the National Landscapes Service proposal is seen as the key flagship recommendation and the one that Defra will focus on to the detriment of other recommendations that would make a practical difference in the short-term. A National Landscapes Service that is independent, able to speak ‘truth to power’, act as a champion and critical friend and ensure an integrated approach to ‘national landscapes’ across Government could be a useful reform but extending its remit to local service delivery and, for example, employment or management of a national ranger service would not. We have worked with the other 9 NPAs in England, the National Association of AONBs and Natural England to consider the National Landscapes Service proposal. National Parks England have written to the Secretary of State and our Minister outlining a proposal for a National Landscapes Panel (see appendix 4).

- 3.7 Whilst accepting that any review has to be selective we are concerned about the lack of focus on cultural heritage and believe this to be a serious omission especially given the significance of cultural heritage to Dartmoor's 'special qualities'. The Report recognises that our National Parks and AONBs are living, working landscapes and that their landscapes have evolved through human intervention yet the importance of this cultural dimension is not always reflected in the proposals. For example, proposal 2 suggests the state of nature and natural capital should be regularly and robustly assessed but, unfortunately, ignores cultural heritage.
- 3.8 The Review seems to suggest that there is no tension between 'more people and more nature'. This is not the case, we submitted evidence to highlight a growing concern about how we manage ever increasing numbers of visitors and the irresponsible behaviour of a minority of visitors spoiling places for others. Unfortunately, 'friendly advice' is not always sufficient we are going to need to develop new ways of working, expanded partnerships and require new powers. The public's response to the easing of lockdown restrictions shows just how important National Parks are to people but also highlights some of the challenges this can bring.
- 3.9 The Review proposes some potentially far reaching changes to the governance of National Parks. It argues that the Authorities are too large to be effective; lack diversity; lack people who emphasise the purposes of securing nature and connecting people with our special places; and are heavily focused on planning. The proposal is for a smaller Authority or board (9-12 persons), chairs appointed by Defra, the board would be advised by a partnership group bring together stakeholders and the main task would be to approve ambitious Management Plans. Planning would be dealt with by a sub-committee of between 9-12 persons and chaired by a member of the main board and made up of representatives from the constituent local authorities who should agree between themselves who should be on the sub-committee. These proposals appear ill thought out. Whilst offering the potential for streamlined governance they run the risk of reducing local involvement and potentially politicising the Authority through the appointment of members and chairs by central Government. It is suggested that the Authority appoint a working group of Members and Officers to develop our own proposals for potential reform of the Authority and, specifically, to consider whether there is an opportunity to reduce the size of the Authority but retain links to constituent authorities, local communities and national representation. The working group would be informal and its purpose to develop ideas for consideration by the Authority prior to potential submission to Defra. It would be a missed opportunity if the Government's response focused on questions of governance to the detriment of more practical reforms that would aid delivery of nature recovery, improved access and more vibrant communities.

4. Sustainability and Equality Impact

- 4.1 The Landscapes Review has a clear focus on making our national landscapes more inclusive and welcoming. It also suggests that such areas should be leading the climate change agenda.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There is no robust analysis of the financial implications of the recommendations contained in the Landscapes Review. We assume that this will form part of the Government's response and be a consideration in the forthcoming Spending Review. The Landscapes Review recommended that National Park budgets should be protected in real terms for at least five years. The reality is that our core funding has been cut in real terms for 2020/21, the first grant settlement since the Review was published.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The Landscapes Review outlines a compelling ambition to make our National Parks and AONBs better for nature and better for people. This is an ambition that the Authority supports. Our concern is that this ambition is not matched with a rigorous, evidence based analysis of what is required to turn ambition into reality. We would argue that the main reason why our National Parks (and AONBs) have not delivered more for nature and people is not lack of collective ambition or action but:

- Lack of powers, policies and tools – we own very little land, we work through partnership, advice and negotiation. It should be noted that often the policy context and powers within a protected landscape are similar to those outside of it.
- Austerity – in 8 of the last 10 years we have had real term cuts to our core funding. We have been told to diversify our income base and have sought to do this but this has not been the panacea that Glover suggests. We face particular challenges given our lack of assets from which to generate income and we have been careful to 'live within our means'.

- 6.2 If the ambition outlined by the Landscapes Review is to be delivered then the National Park Authority needs to be provided with the tools and powers to meet forthcoming challenges and make the most of the opportunities that lie ahead. Our suggested priorities would be:

- Environmental Land Management System (ELMS) – as the Panel outline, a central role for the National Park in the forthcoming ELMS. A quick win would be to use the National Pilots (to commence in 2021) as a mechanism to deliver this proposal and engage with the farming community. This could also be developed to ensure Authorities have the powers and resources to act as 'environmental brokers' in the emerging market place for environmental goods and services
- Strengthened role for National Park Management Plans – potential to include this within the Environment Bill and, at the same time, to strengthen the 'have regard to duty' on other relevant bodies.
- Total place budgeting – the Authority receives circa £3.6m from Defra but we estimate that the National Park receives between £12 and £16m per annum via Basic Payment Scheme and agri-environment agreements. There is a real potential to deliver more with this money. In our evidence to the Panel we also suggested that we should take a whole place approach to the public sector estate
- Funding – the Landscapes Review called for National Park Authority budgets to be protected in real terms for five years. This has not happened, our settlement for 2020/21 is a circa 2.75% real terms cut in funding and COVID-19 will place further pressure on the public purse.

- 6.3 We are keen to work with Government to ensure that the Landscapes Review does lead to lasting, positive change that enhances Dartmoor and other National Parks for the benefit of all – local communities, existing visitors and potential new visitors.

KEVIN BISHOP

Attachments: **Appendix 1: Summary of Key Proposals in the Landscapes Review and DNPA's suggested position/response**
Appendix 2: Copy of DNPA's submission to the Review
Appendix 3: Copy of National Parks England's Roadmap
Appendix 4: Copy of National Parks England's proposals for a National Landscapes Panel

2016 06 12 KB Consideration of the Landscapes Review

Summary of Key recommendations contained in the Landscapes Review and suggested DNPA position/comment

Recommendations from the Landscapes Review	Suggested DNPA position/comment
<p>Chapter 1: Landscapes Alive for Nature and Beauty</p> <p>The report argues that national landscapes should lead the way in improving the quality of our environment with a renewed commitment to enhancing natural beauty. It is clear that we should celebrate the fact that our National Parks and AONBs are ‘Category V’ designations, where people and nature work together. Whilst highlighting the good work done within National Parks and AONBs the report highlights that “what happens in our landscapes is shaped by things over which landscape bodies have little control” (p.30) and that there has been a “lack of government commitment to this goal” (p.30).</p>	
<p>Proposal 1: National landscapes should have a renewed mission to recover and enhance nature, and be supported and held to account for delivery by a new National Landscapes Service</p>	<p>Support the ambition – our submission to Glover called for an up-dated vision or mission. Also supports the NPE ‘Roadmap’.</p> <p>Support the proposal to change the first purpose to ‘recover, conserve and enhance natural beauty, biodiversity and natural capital, and cultural heritage’.</p> <p>However, this change would need to be accompanied with the required resources and powers.</p> <p>Note comments on National Landscapes Service under proposal 25 below.</p>
<p>Proposal 2: The state of nature and natural capital in our national landscapes should be regularly and robustly assessed, informing the priorities for action</p>	<p>Strongly support but the proposal, and supporting text, largely ignore the difficulties of doing this – no suitable data sets, no agreed methodology. There is a need for investment to achieve this and leadership from those who own the existing datasets to ensure that they are bought together, shared and available at a National Park level and statistically valid.</p> <p>The recommendation is limited to ‘nature and natural capital’, it should be expanded to include cultural heritage</p>

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	<p>and 'human capital'. The omission of cultural heritage is a recurring weakness of the report.</p> <p>Austerity has reduced the level of information available at a National Park level. At a Dartmoor level, we are working with Exeter University (SWEET) to ascertain the feasibility of satellite based remote sensing provide a cost effective approach to habitat/landscape monitoring. This will help us highlight change and is something that could be rolled out to other areas. It will require resources to ground truth but enables a focussed approach.</p>
<p>Proposal 3: Strengthened Management Plans should set clear priorities and actions for nature recovery including, but not limited to, wilder areas and the response to climate change (notably tree planting and peatland restoration). Their implementation must be backed up by stronger status in law</p> <p>This section also includes text suggesting that wilder areas should be encouraged while also encouraging the continuation of cultural traditions and arguing that it is not a choice between farming and wilding, or landscape and biodiversity, but a continuum where there is space for all (p.44).</p> <p>There is a suggestion that some Ministry of Defence land is particularly suitable for 'wilder areas' (p.44).</p>	<p>Support. We called for an enhanced role for the National Park Management Plan (NPMP) in our submission to the Panel (recommendation 2). We also argued for management to be accordance with the NPMP (recommendation 3) and a duty to further National Park purposes (recommendation 1).</p> <p>This proposal also responds directly to NPE's Roadmap.</p> <p>There is a close correlation between Proposal 3 and Proposal 2 – to set targets and actions against which performance can be measured will require more robust and regular datasets that are able to track changes to the environment.</p> <p>We are using the current NPMP review to embed many of the 'Glover recommendations' – a clear focus on enhancing the environment and engaging with more people. We would robustly argue that our issue has never been lack of ambition nor the willingness of partners to engage, but the difficult of securing resources to deliver.</p> <p>Agree that it should not be a choice between cultural traditions and biodiversity and farming and wildlife but we</p>

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	<p>must recognise that in National Parks there are strong views about each. It takes time and resource to get agreement and consensus which means trusted staff and time to engage and co-develop plans is crucial. This may mean that sometimes progress feels slow and those with single interest object but we believe our National Park model is about delivering multiple benefits and not a narrow focus on just one purpose.</p>
<p>Proposal 4: National landscapes should form the backbone of Nature Recovery Networks – joining things up within and beyond their boundaries</p>	<p>Support. A key question is whether we currently have the tools to achieve this (see below). There is also a need to ensure that there is a close relationship between NPMPs and the proposed Local Nature Recovery Strategies: NPMPs should fulfil the role of Local Nature Recovery Strategies for National Park areas and make the connection to the wider hinterland.</p> <p>The NPE ‘Roadmap’ advocated this approach.</p> <p>ELMS (see below) will be an important tool to help deliver nature recovery.</p>
<p>Proposal 5: A central place for national landscapes in new Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS)</p> <p>Individual management plans to be the guiding framework for setting landscape-scale priorities for future payments (p58).</p> <p>National landscapes should not directly deliver but over time some landscapes, particularly larger ones, could take a leading role in creating bespoke schemes. All national landscapes to have dedicated farm advisers.</p>	<p>ELMS is probably the most important tool for the future management of our National Parks. The recommendation responds to our calls for local ELMS for each National Park (recommendation 4). It is a useful recommendation in terms of future development of ELMS. We give our strongest support to the focus on NPMPs providing a guiding framework and need for bespoke advisers. The Review talks about full-time farm advisers in each National Park this will be an essential additional resource requirement.</p> <p>Whilst ELMS is identified as having the biggest potential impact the report says it is being dealt with “elsewhere in Government”. It is not clear how the recommendations will be taken forward by Defra.</p>

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	<p>We hope that Defra will support local delivery of ELMS with resources for advice and facilitation and an integrated approach that links environment with the wider farm business. It is also important that access and recreation are included as public benefits so that appropriate enhancement and management can be paid for via ELMS.</p> <p>The Dartmoor Environmental Land Management ‘Test and Trial’ picks up many of these recommendations and we hope that the evidence and views gathered through this will input into Defra thinking on ELMS.</p> <p>The report also highlights the risk that during the transition period to ELMS, land may come out of environmental management.</p> <p>The report is weak on the link between environment and the wider farm business – we would like to see an integrated approach that takes an outcome based approach to both building on the work we are already doing through the Hill Farm Project, the Dartmoor Test and Trial and the Facilitation Fund.</p>
<p>Proposal 6: A strengthened place for national landscapes in the planning system with AONBs given statutory consultee status, encouragement to develop local plans and changes to the National Planning Policy Framework</p> <p>The governance proposals include the idea of establishing a smaller planning committee that is separate from a Strategic Board responsible for the vision.</p>	<p>We welcome the support for the planning powers of NPAs and the conclusion that they do not restrain appropriate development. We also welcome the recommendation that “the National Planning Policy Framework should make a reality of its promise that ‘great weight’ should be given to national landscapes by issuing new advice that will secure confident delivery of this aim by both public and private sector players” (p.63).</p> <p>The supporting text also includes a suggestion that some existing permitted development rights (PDRs) should be withdrawn. This could be helpful. The report contains a</p>

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	<p>potentially helpful statement on strengthening protection for the setting of designated landscapes.</p> <p>We do not agree with the suggestion that ‘separating planning from other work’ (p.60) would lead to improvements and can see no evidence base to support this. Indeed, conversely this could lead to lack of an integrated approach. We believe planning as a positive tool does help deliver our wider statutory purposes.</p>
Chapter 2: Landscapes for Everyone	
<p>This section of the report focuses on the need to reach out and welcome everyone. It argues that current visitors (‘the Club’) are drawn primarily from the better off, less diverse sectors of society and highlights that those who miss out are the older, the young – especially adolescents – and those from lower socio-economic groups and black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. The review team commissioned the Policy Lab team in the Cabinet Office to carry out filmed ethnographic interviews which can be viewed via this link: https://youtu.be/FTKMY-TjHA</p> <p>The report argues that the current purpose is too weak and that there is an “interest rather than a burning desire to change” (p.73). The lack of diversity among those on governing bodies is highlighted as a reason.</p> <p>The opportunity to engage in the health and wellbeing agenda is highlighted and it is stated that “there is scope for them [i.e. national landscapes] to move faster to be at the heart of this developing field” (p.78)</p> <p>Other suggestions include: single website for national landscapes, improved Rights of Way markers and interpretation boards, less ‘modest’ entrance signs, extended access rights (current rights perceived to favour walking over other uses).</p>	
<p>Proposal 7: A stronger mission to connect all people with our national landscapes, supported and held to account by the new National Landscapes Service</p> <p>Second purpose to be changed so that national landscapes are required to: “Actively connect all parts of society with these special places to support understanding, enjoyment and the nation’s health and wellbeing” (p.84).</p> <p>National Landscape Service to set “levels of ambition, check local plans align to them and ensuring landscapes deliver” (p.84).</p>	<p>The first part of the proposal responds to the suggestion in our evidence that it is time to renew the ‘People’s Charter’ that underpinned the founding vision for National Parks and recommendation 5 ‘Parks for People’.</p> <p>We agree with the ambition to ‘reach out’ and connect people from all backgrounds with opportunities to enjoy and understand our ‘national landscapes’. This is an exciting agenda that has the potential to re-shape society at large.</p>

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<p>Sandford principle remains.</p> <p>Longer-term a bigger role with those who are marginalised such as “ex-offenders, looked after children, those suffering depression”.</p>	<p>There is a risk that the Review only focuses on action by NPAs and AONBs to deliver this ambition. It will require action across Government.</p> <p>Whilst the Report suggests there is a lack of ambition on the part of NPAs it fails to recognise that a lack of funding has also contributed to the current situation. For example, funding for Mosaic was time limited and whilst our delivery model was to build capacity amongst youth groups and leaders to sustain the initiative beyond the time period of Lottery funding, public sector funding cuts meant that many of those youth clubs and/or leaders lost their core funding/jobs.</p> <p>The role of the National Landscape Service and proposed changes to National Park purposes will need to be subject to further discussion. In particular, the envisaged role for the National Landscape Service is to set levels of ambition, check local plans and ensure delivery. This is laudable but does not negate the need for resources to fund delivery. We need to be clear that a National Landscape Service would add value rather than detract resources from frontline, practical delivery (see below).</p>
<p>Proposal 8: A night under the stars in a national landscape for every child</p>	<p>Support. Responds to recommendation 5 in our evidence and to the NPE Roadmap. It will be important that the ‘night under the stars’ is part of a meaningful programme of engagement that has the potential to shape the lives and values of young people and not just a ‘tick box indicator’. Working with partners, and given the right level of resources, we are confident that we can deliver a successful and effective programme.</p>

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<p>Proposal 9: New long-term programmes to increase the ethnic diversity of visitors</p> <p>New version of MOSAIC developed and brought in as a priority. National Landscapes Service to take a view across the national landscapes to ensure ambitions and actions are challenging and credible.</p>	<p>Support - responds directly to NPE's Roadmap. We would also like to see a clear focus on visits from low-income groups more generally.</p> <p>The report is not clear how these long-term programmes are to be financed. It sets out a vision and assumes resources will follow.</p>
<p>Proposal 10: Landscapes that cater for and improve the nation's health and wellbeing</p> <p>At a local level – strong links with CCGs and social prescribing link workers; more done with re-Miles without Stiles and a network of accessible, hard surface, stile-free paths that are disabled and wheelchair-friendly, deploy gates with RADAR keys and provide all-terrain mobility scooters and routes (p.88).</p>	<p>Support - responds to our recommendation 5 and NPE's Roadmap.</p> <p>The proposal is not clear on what resources might be needed or available to develop this infrastructure and service provision.</p>
<p>Proposal 11: Expanding volunteering in our national landscapes</p> <p>The report recommends a structured approach to volunteering across all national landscapes - through 'the National Landscapes Service, work collectively to ensure a consistency of approach'.</p> <p>Strong 'pro-volunteer ethos', "highly diverse, professionally supported and powerful group doing many things" (p.90) i.e. not just conservation</p> <p>Ambitious targets for attracting and retaining volunteers. Through the National Landscapes Service, work collectively to ensure a consistency of approach. Particular emphasis on forging links with communities currently under-represented among volunteers</p>	<p>We believe volunteers can play a crucial role in helping to deliver positive action for the National Park whilst providing benefits to them personally; be that health and well being, social interaction or skills and experience required for a new career path. We therefore support the principle behind this recommendation.</p> <p>We are not convinced that a 'consistent approach across all National Parks and AONBs' is appropriate or desirable. Our model of volunteer activity is different to many other National Park Authorities. We have sought to work in partnership with local volunteer groups, offering them practical and financial support, identifying volunteer opportunities and seeking to avoid a competition to recruit volunteers. This has worked well for Dartmoor and proven to be more cost effective than some other methods of volunteer engagement.</p> <p>The advantages and potential pitfalls of a national consistent approach to volunteering requires careful</p>

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	<p>consideration. This should be done in partnership with other organisations that rely heavily on volunteers to avoid potential competition.</p> <p>There is a real risk that 'national consistency' will reduce innovation and thwart local partnership working – central to the delivery of much of what we do.</p>
<p>Proposal 12: Better information and signs to guide visitors</p> <p>National Parks should take on legal responsibility to maintain rights of way and funding for this should move from local government (p.92).</p> <p>National Landscape Service to develop core principles of public access including high standards on rights of way signs and entry points.</p>	<p>This proposal, like many others, includes a series of 'sub-recommendations'. The principle of better information to guide visitors is accepted. Whether such information is always best provided by signs is debatable. We believe there are other ways to help support and guide new and less confident visitors such as events and activities and Rangers (see proposal 14 below)</p> <p>A high design and legibility standard for signs should be supported – we are seeking to develop a 'Dartmoor vernacular' for rights of way signage to demonstrate 'sense of place'.</p> <p>The proposal includes a recommendation that NPAs should take on legal responsibility to maintain rights of way and funding for this should move from local government. A key question is how much resource would we receive to manage rights of way and does the term 'manage' include responsibility for the Definitive Map. Whilst the proposal makes sense as rights of way are the key 'arteries' through which people access and enjoy our National Parks this could be a significant new burden. Our evidence indicates that a significant investment is required to address the backlog in Rights of Way maintenance (in excess of £250,000) this figure is likely to increase when we have complete survey data from the 'Big Path Survey'.</p>

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<p>Proposal 13: A ranger service in all our national landscapes, part of a national family</p> <p>1,000 strong ranger service across national landscapes with an explicit purpose to help and encourage visitors "...the friendly face". Managed through the National Landscapes Service.</p> <p>Specific reference to the 'excellent junior ranger scheme in Dartmoor' (p.93)</p>	<p>Support the ambition about increasing the number but question the thinking behind managing them through the National Landscapes Service – seems to be contrary to other points about National Parks retaining local autonomy and rangers being a key link to land managers and residents. Whilst a centralised ranger service might work well in countries like the US, our National Parks are living, working landscapes and central to the success of rangers is a close relationship with local communities.</p> <p>We would like to explore how our Rangers might reach out to urban areas linking with potential partners and developing the friendly face, raising awareness and supporting under-represented groups to access NP's. We would like a further discussion about what this proposal might deliver and how we can support that.</p>
<p>Proposal 14: National landscapes supported to become leaders in sustainable tourism</p> <p>Statement that "who comes, where they go, what they do and how they benefit from their experience can be shaped through leadership and education, and good destination management, rather than restrictions on numbers through rules or fees". (p.94)</p> <p>"We would never want to discourage anyone from visiting.....Our national landscapes do not have entry fees and nor should they" (p.94)</p> <p>Encourage to apply to become tourism zones under the Tourism Sector Deal</p>	<p>Support the proposal as worded. However, the report ignores the evidence that we submitted regarding growing trend in anti-social behaviour amongst some visitors and the very real tensions this creates with land managers, farmers and local communities.</p> <p>The focus on more visitors and 'never discouraging anyone' is likely to be contentious for parts of our local community and contribute to some difficulties we currently have in managing peak demand. The current experience of visitor pressure post easing of lockdown restrictions is graphically demonstrating the tensions between more visitors and local communities, especially when some of the visitors do not follow the Countryside Code and act with no respect or responsibility.</p> <p>We understand that the Tourism Zones concept is focused on marketing and thus is probably not the appropriate mechanism to ensure national landscapes</p>

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	become leaders in sustainable tourism. We would like to see a specific National Landscapes Tourism Fund that provides the resource to develop sustainable forms of tourism. This could be an important part of a Covid 19 recovery package given that this sector of the economy will probably be hardest hit by the pandemic.
<p>Proposal 15: Joining up with others to make the most of what we have, and bringing National Trails into the national landscapes family</p>	<p>Focus is on National Trails. In our evidence (recommendation 11) we suggested that total place budgeting and public sector land management (i.e. looking at how total public sector investment in a National Park and land-holdings) can be used to further National Park purposes. The report does not discuss this and we think this is a missed opportunity in terms of greater efficiency and effectiveness and delivering the overall vision of national landscapes that are “happier, healthier, greener, more beautiful and open to everyone”.</p>
<p>Proposal 16: Consider expanding open access rights in national landscapes</p> <p>Heavily caveated but with a focus on extending rights for “horse-riders, water users, cavers, wild campers and so-on” (p.98).</p>	<p>As the report acknowledges, needs further investigation. Likely to be contentious and not an obvious ‘quick win’ would either require legislative change or incorporation within the scope of the new ELMS.</p>
<p>Chapter 3: Living Landscapes</p>	
<p>The report is right to note that our National Parks are living landscapes where you can see evolving human history everywhere. For us the essence of Dartmoor National Park is of people, nature and culture coming together in a living, working landscape. This approach puts people at the heart of our efforts to manage the landscape. An overly centralised approach to management through a</p> <p>There is a risk that this section of the report looks purely at the problems encountered/faced by our local communities and does not consider how we can better empower them to get engaged in the management of the National Park and the future viability of their communities. Indeed, some of the governance proposals could weaken their role.</p>	
<p>Proposal 17: National landscapes working for vibrant communities</p>	<p>Central to this proposal is the recommendation that National Parks and AONBs should have a new purpose to</p>

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<p>Key to this proposal is the 'up-grading' of the duty to a statutory purpose to: "Foster the economic and community vitality of their area in support of the first two purposes".</p> <p>Also a proposal for community seats on boards of national landscapes and separation of the planning function from these boards.</p>	<p>"foster the economic and community vitality of their area in support of the first two purposes" (p.109).</p> <p>The report does not explain what difference a new purpose would have – what could we do with a revised purpose that we cannot do now? The report does state that "the purposes are fundamentally important because they tell us in law what the priorities are and are the basis on which action should happen". The risk with a third purpose is that it could weaken the very essence of National Parks as designations for conservation and recreation.</p> <p>Our evidence did not support revising National Park purposes to elevate the socio-economic duty to a new purpose unless it unlocked future resources and there was 'environmental primacy'. We proposed a 'human capital fund' as a practical way to sustain and enhance our rural communities and improved productivity in rural areas. Our preference would be a focus on tools and resources rather than legislation per se.</p>
<p>Proposal 18: A new National Landscapes Housing Association to build affordable homes</p> <p>Very little detail: 'should be debt financed and attract environmental, social and government investment funds'.</p>	<p>Interesting concept. We would like to work with partners on its development and ensure that it dovetails with local housing associations – acting in collaboration rather than competition. There are key questions about how it would be resourced and how it might act to unlock potential affordable housing sites.</p> <p>The report states that "National Parks, as local planning authorities, should consider using their powers to set conditions on new housing to ensure it remains affordable" (p.62). We are surprised by this recommendation as it ignores the fact that we (and other NPAs) already do this.</p>

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	<p>We have made practical proposals to Government (in partnership with other NPAs) for a revolving land bank to help facilitate affordable housing. We have not ‘lacked ambition’ in this area but the resources/tools to deliver.</p>
<p>Proposal 19: A new approach to coordinating public transport piloted in the Lake District, and new, more sustainable ways of accessing national landscapes</p>	<p>Support. Our evidence included a recommendation (8) to improve public transport and access to the National Park.</p> <p>Although this is to be tested in the Lake District it might have wider application and has been helpfully framed.</p> <p>We have suggested to Defra that there should be more than one pilot area – what works in the Lake District might not work on Dartmoor. We have discussed this proposal with Devon County Council (as the highway authority) and would like to propose Dartmoor as a second pilot area.</p>
<p>Chapter 4: More Special Places</p> <p>Terms of reference for the review included consideration of new designations.</p> <p>Whilst making proposals for some new designated landscapes the central tenant of the chapter (and the report as a whole) is that the separation of landscapes into two distinct families of National Parks and AONBs is unhelpful and they would like to see them as part of one family, albeit with varied powers and sources of funding.</p>	
<p>Proposal 20: New designated landscapes and a new National Forest</p> <p>The proposals are for Chilterns, Cotswolds and Dorset to be considered for NP status, with additional funding being made available.</p>	<p>Welcome the recommendation that any new National Parks are to be funded with additional resource and not from existing budget. We also need to guard against a reduction in the protection afforded to such places.</p> <p>This proposal also contains a suggestion that “new connections should be made between other [national landscapes] including the Yorkshire Dales and the North York Moors, Exmoor and Dartmoor.... This may eventually allow some designations to flow into each other so that in time much of their management becomes one. It should shape wider decisions about future</p>

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	Environmental Land Management Schemes” (p.123). It is not clear what is actually proposed.
<p>Proposal 21: Welcoming new landscape approaches in cities and the coast, and a city park competition</p>	<p>Welcome.</p> <p>We are in initial discussions to explore whether we could ‘twin’ with the new City National Parks that have been established and proposed. Such an arrangement could help with other proposals (e.g. 8, 9 and 10).</p>
<p>Proposal 22: A better designations process</p>	<p>Not a priority for us but support.</p>
<p>Chapter 5: New Ways of Working</p> <p>The report states that “there needs to be greater cohesion between the currently disconnected networks of 10 National Parks, 34 AONBs and other important landscapes and assets. These networks should develop as a system, led by the National Landscapes Service” (p.127). A programme of transformation is proposed based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new set of clearer and up-to-date statutory purposes and a regrouping of resources around these; • Closer working between all of the national landscapes on all aspects of policy and technical development, leadership, partnerships, resourcing and accountability; • A fit for purpose national governance arrangement and significant modernising of national landscapes’ boards locally; and • The widespread adoption of a new funding model that creates greater long-term financial stability, grows commercial and philanthropic giving, strengthens delivery in project management and distributes more effectively funds from central government. 	
<p>Proposal 23: Stronger purposes in law for our national landscapes</p> <p>See comments above.</p> <p>Proposes NPs and AONBs having the same purposes – the immediate and longer term implications of which need to be digested. Also, if the purposes are to be the same then why not the same governance structure and resources?</p> <p>Useful Sandford Principle remains and that third purpose is in support of the other two.</p>	<p>Need to do further work on this proposal to better understand the implications.</p> <p>As noted above, we support the proposed change in the wording of the first purpose to “recover, conserve and enhance natural beauty, biodiversity and natural capital, and cultural heritage”. For this to have an impact it will need to be matched with stronger powers and increased resources.</p>

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	<p>Support the inclusion of a reference to health and well-being in the second purpose but think it is important that the reference to 'Special Qualities' is retained.</p> <p>Please see above for comments on proposed third purpose.</p>
<p>Proposal 24: AONBs strengthened with new purposes, powers and resources, renamed as National Landscapes</p>	<p>This applies to AONBs and is to 'elevate them alongside National Parks. This could have implications for National Parks.</p>
<p>Proposal 25: A new National Landscapes Service bringing our 44 national landscapes together to achieve more than the sum of their parts</p> <p>This is probably the key proposal in the report (beyond the calls for 'more ambition').</p> <p>The report calls for the Service to be an entirely new body (not simply an arm of Natural England). It would be led by a small high calibre board appointed by Defra with a small central staff.</p> <p>The new service would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set vision and strategy from which individual Management Plans would evolve. • Hold national landscapes to account • Drive national and regional collaboration, internally and with partners • Ensure best practice becomes common everywhere • Promote high standards • Oversee the ranger service and visitor experience • Represent the 44 bodies with a single voice in Whitehall • Provide high quality essential services across the 44 bodies, reducing duplication and improving join-up, for example on evidence and research, project development, fundraising, planning support, training and careers. <p>CEOs, lead officers and Chairs would report into the National Landscapes Service</p>	<p>Requires careful thought about role, function and implications of the proposed National Landscapes Service.</p> <p>The report outlines a confused model for a National Landscape Service, combining: advocacy, direct delivery, accountability, promotion of collaboration, setting vision, allocating resources and raising funding.</p> <p>A central body that champions national landscapes across the whole of Government, enables a strong voice and helps co-ordinate research and monitoring, for example, could be helpful. At the other end of the spectrum the National Landscape Service could easily become a centralised service effectively replacing NPAs (the report does not actually suggest this but does contain the proposal that the ranger service is managed by the Service and that the Service would support training and careers and provide high quality essential services across all 44 national landscapes).</p> <p>We have worked, through National Parks England, to propose a National Landscapes Panel (based on the New Zealand model) to act as an independent champion for</p>

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<p>Suggests the Service would produce efficiencies but no worked up business case.</p> <p>Also an emphasis on the Service being entrepreneurial.</p>	<p>national landscapes across the whole of Government and with the powers to act as a critical friend to national landscapes – overseeing performance and Management Plans.</p> <p>There is a potential risk that proposals 25 and 26 could ‘politicise’ National Parks through the direct appointment of members of NPs and the National Landscape Service by the Secretary of State.</p>
<p>Proposal 26: Reformed governance to inspire and secure ambition in our national landscapes and better reflect society</p> <p>National Parks to be governed by smaller boards (9-12 persons), Chair appointed by Defra after process led by National Landscapes Service. Other members appointed by National Landscapes Service.</p> <p>Board advised by a Partnership Group bring together stakeholders</p> <p>Main task of the Board is to prepare and drive ambitious delivery of Management Plans, delivering for nature, people and communities</p> <p>National Parks will continue to have responsibility for development control. Sub-committee (9-12 persons), chaired by a member of the main board, with at least two members of the main board on it and made up of representatives from constituent authorities and parish who should “agree between themselves who they wish to see on the Sub-Committee” (p.141)</p> <p>Merit in the idea of a citizen service for selecting community representatives for main National Park board.</p>	<p>The Review is critical of the current governance structures – especially in terms of composition and actual/perceived lack of ambition.</p> <p>The proposals are at a ‘strategic level’ and not clearly thought out. We do not support them as they would lead to a lack of integration and a reduction in the ‘voice’ of the local community.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Authority establish an officer/member working group to explore these proposals in more detail and consider the potential for reform of the Authority to make it more effective and efficient.</p>
<p>Proposal 27: A new financial model – more money, more secure, more enterprising</p> <p>Throughout the report there are repeated calls for more ambition / ambitious delivery / challenging targets etc. Yet this proposal seems to lack ambition in terms of how the funds to deliver the ambition might be secured. There is a proposal to double AONB funding but nothing specific about National Park funding in the detail of this proposal (pages 142 -144). In other places the report states that National Parks should at</p>	<p>The report lacks ambition in terms of our core funding which is in stark contrast to the call for more ambition in almost every other section of the report.</p> <p>The Government have already ignored this proposal in terms of the settlement for 2020/21 – a real terms cut and not the real terms protection called for by Glover.</p>

Recommendations from the Landscapes Review	Suggested DNPA position/comment
<p>least keep current levels of funding (p.9) and that they should be secured in real terms and sustained for at least a further five year period (p.22).</p> <p>The report states that the system needs to move away from over-reliance on core grant towards more diverse, larger and more sustainable flows of funds – towards a new funding model.</p> <p>It will be the role of the National Landscapes Service to negotiate a multi-annual financial settlement with Defra which both secures existing resources, services and programmes, and also ensures a focus on growth, innovation and efficiencies (p.142).</p> <p>It is stated that efficiencies can be made from reduced costs of governance and from specialist services being concentrated and shared by the national landscapes working together. There is no substantive analysis to support these claims.</p> <p>A new funding formula is proposed but with safeguard that no landscape should lose any money.</p> <p>Local national landscapes should prepare medium to long-term financial plans that reflect a diverse range of income sources that complement core central government grant-aid with growth in philanthropic giving, trading activities and large-scale externally funded projects (p.143).</p> <p>The report is critical of the ‘failure of coordination, ambition and expertise’ in the establishment of the national charity and ‘how little has been done to turn the evident public support for or national landscapes into models which can help them financially’.</p> <p>It states that there is potential for an ambitious programme of commercial and philanthropic fundraising and that we should learn from US National Parks Foundation, established UK charities and bodies like Kew Gardens. Either a wing of the National Landscapes Service or a separate but constitutionally linked charity should be set up to deliver this programme.</p>	<p>The reality is that in 8 of the last 10 years our core funding from Government has been cut in real terms.</p> <p>The recommendation that we prepare medium to long-term financial plans that reflect a diverse range of income sources that complement core central government grant-aid with growth in philanthropic giving, trading activities and large-scale externally funded projects (p.143) ignores the fact that we already prepare an audited Medium Term Financial Plan and must be law set a balanced budget.</p> <p>There is no analysis or evidence advanced to that suggest that the proposed new funding model is realistic. Donations are not secure forms of income upon which to base ambitious work programmes. There is often no certainty over future funding streams (Lottery funding is reducing etc.). Sponsorship is not the panacea that is suggested – it is a competitive market place and we will be competing with partners. This questioning of the practical reality should not be construed as a lack of ambition to generate funds from non-exchequer sources.</p>

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S REVIEW OF NATIONAL PARKS AND AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY



December 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 We welcome the Government's independent review of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) that was announced in the 25 Year Environment Plan. The 25 Year Environment Plan sets out a bold ambition to enhance the environment and reconnect people with nature. This is an exciting context for the review being led by Julian Glover and provides the opportunity for a paradigm shift in thinking about National Parks and AONBs.

1.3 In this submission we have:

- Highlighted key opportunities and challenges facing Dartmoor National Park
- Identified an opportunity to up-date the vision for National Parks; and
- Suggested a series of recommendations that would help deliver this vision and ensure that our National Parks are sustained and enhanced for future generations to not only enjoy but be inspired by.

2. FUTURE VISION

2.1 When Lewis Silkin, then Minister of Town and Country Planning, introduced the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Bill for its second reading he called it:

"A people's charter – a people's charter for the open air, for the hikers and the ramblers, for everyone who loves to get out into the open air and enjoy the countryside. Without it they are fettered, deprived of their powers of access and facilities needed to make holidays enjoyable. With it the countryside is theirs to preserve, to cherish, to enjoy and to make their own." (Emphasis added).

2.2 In the almost 70 years since Lewis Silkin made that speech, our model of National Parks and AONBs as 'lived-in landscapes' that are important for social, cultural, environmental and economic reasons has gathered momentum. People and place are at the heart of our National Parks and the way in which National Park Authorities work. It is a model of global relevance.

2.3 Whilst the vision for English National Parks and the Broads, outlined in Circular 2010, remains relevant we feel that there is an opportunity to up-date it, make it more inspiring and refresh the 'People's Charter' that Lewis Silkin said should underpin our National Parks, thus:

A people's charter for health and happiness, where natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage are conserved, sustained and enhanced for all to appreciate and enjoy. Our National Parks provide services essential to life, including clean water, air and biodiversity. They are also places that can enrich life - a source of enjoyment, inspiration and challenge; part of our identity as a nation and essential. They provide benefits beyond their boundaries.

2.4 In light of these benefits, we would like to see a higher national profile for National Parks (and AONBs). A profile based on appreciation of their natural beauty and special qualities and their importance to the nation; but also as areas that can act as 'greenprints for the rest of the countryside' – testing ideas, innovating and demonstrating. Whilst not having a monopoly on innovation, the National Parks do have an extensive track record of experimentation and developing new approaches: from the Upland Management Experiments which helped shape Ranger services to schemes like Dartmoor Farming Futures which are being cited as a potential blueprint for the new environmental land management scheme.

2.5 We see the role of National Park Authorities as being multi-dimensional:

- We are local with firm roots into the communities we serve but also part of a global family, act at a national level and are charged with managing a national asset, valued and loved by millions.
- We are champions for our National Parks and the local communities that live within them - raising their profile, ensuring they are sustained for future generations.
- We make things happen - generating and receiving ideas; experimenting and learning; prepared to take managed risks; inspiring people to love and care for our National Parks and the wider environment but also seeking to ensure that the communities and businesses that live and operate within the National Park are vibrant and contribute to Dartmoor's special qualities.
- We work in partnership - we have few powers or direct resources, almost everything we do, we do in partnership with others. This is part of our USP and, we believe, a key strength. Effective partnership working takes time and resources – to build relationships and trust – it is not something that can be turned on, and off, like a tap.
- We seek to inspire people through the work we do and the special qualities that we help protect and enhance. This inspiration comes in different forms: people engaging, enjoying and helping to look after the National Park; demonstrating how we can live differently; encouraging people to try new things and to learn more.
- We are passionate about the place we seek to manage and working with people. This passion is shared by Members, officer and volunteers who take a pride in 'serving' for the National Park.

- 2.6 A key question for the review is what we want our National Parks to be in the future. For us the essence of our National Park model is people, nature and culture together in a living, working landscape. This approach puts people at the heart of our efforts to manage the landscape.

3. KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FACING DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK

- 3.1 Summarised below are some of the key challenges and opportunities facing Dartmoor National Park. Opportunities and challenges are often ‘opposite sides of the same coin’: for every challenge there is an opportunity.

Climate change

There is clear evidence of climate change already taking place on Dartmoor: higher daily mean temperatures, increased mean monthly precipitation and more incidents of intense rainfall. For example, average monthly precipitation has increased by 15% in comparison to the 1960-1990 climatic baseline and the average annual growing season was 15 days longer in the period 1981-2010 than in the 1971-2000 period¹. These changes could mean that we lose particular species, that farming systems will need to change, that the importance of Dartmoor as a source of drinking water and flood alleviation may increase and our infrastructure may deteriorate due to sudden extreme weather events. Indeed, as noted below the access infrastructure is already deteriorating as a result of extreme weather patterns, in particular, sudden intense rainfall.

Social changes

The population within the National Park is ageing which creates particular challenges for the sustainability of our communities (access to appropriate forms of housing, labour for local businesses etc.). Whilst average life expectancy has increased in recent years we are also seeing the advent of a less healthy society with issues of obesity and mental health and a disconnect between people and nature/the environment. The value of our National Parks to the ‘health of the nation’ is likely to increase. There are also implications for the types of leisure activity in National Parks.

Recent research by Exeter University forecasts that the number of people living in and around Dartmoor National Park is set to increase by 13 per cent between 2018 and 2039². The research predicts that the number of day visits to the National Park by these local residents will rise from an estimated level of 7.3 million visits per annum to nearly 8 million by 2039. These visits will have health benefits (both physical and mental) for the ‘self referrers’ who participate. Researchers at Exeter University estimate that these visitors will burn off the calorific equivalent of approximately 1.7 million cream teas. This increased use could also have a negative impact on the environment, and local communities, if sufficient resources are not available to manage this pressure effectively.

¹ Dartmoor National Park State of the Park Report 2017:
www.yourdartmoor.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1058749/State-of-the-Park-2017-WEB.pdf

² <https://sweep.ac.uk/population-futures/>

We are witnessing a growing trend of anti-social behavior in the National Park. This is reflected, for example, in verbal abuse of our Rangers and in some instances physical threats; increased incidences of dog attacks on livestock and livestock deaths through road traffic accidents; illegal raves; off-road motor bike scrambling; illegal camping. Whilst the visitors creating these problems are still a small minority, there appears to be a growing divide between town and country with some visitors to the countryside not knowing or accepting their responsibilities. The Country Code has low visibility and we do not use the National Curriculum to develop an appreciation of the environment, the countryside and 'social norms'.

Future of farming

86 per cent of the National Park is classed as utilisable agricultural area. Farming has shaped the landscape of Dartmoor over many hundreds of years and today the management undertaken by farmers and commoners plays an important role in the maintenance of the landscape for biodiversity, ecosystem services, cultural heritage and access. Farming and associated businesses are also a key part of the Dartmoor economy.

Farming faces an uncertain future due to Brexit. There are also calls for 're-wilding' to enhance biodiversity (see below). What is clear is the importance of the 'public pound' in terms of supporting Dartmoor farms. The 'public pound' is the difference between a significant loss or a small profit. In 2015 average farm business income figures for Dartmoor showed a loss from agriculture of £9,300 with positive contributions from the Basic Payment Scheme (£14,300) and agri-environment (£12,100). Brexit could be a positive factor with a focus on environmental land management or could usher in a period of environmental damage due to intensification or somewhere in-between.

Even without the current uncertainties associated with Brexit we have seen a significant reduction in the area of agricultural land within an environmental stewardship agreement: a reduction in excess of 20 per cent over a three year time period. We are concerned that this trend could continue during the transition period before the new environmental land management scheme is introduced.

Changing biodiversity

There is widespread recognition that nature is in trouble across the UK and the wider globe. Our National Parks remain key islands of biodiversity: the Devon Birds atlas provides clear evidence of the continued importance of Dartmoor for biodiversity – a wildlife sanctuary against an alarming decline of key bird species across Devon³. Nevertheless we recognise that there is the potential to do more to enhance biodiversity and this is reflected in Your Dartmoor – the National Park Management Plan and Living Dartmoor – the Biodiversity Action Plan for Dartmoor (both of which are being reviewed at present)⁴. We have the vision to achieve this but not necessarily the tools. There is the potential to

³ Beavan, S and Lock, M. (eds) (2016) *Devon Bird Atlas 2007 – 2013*, Devon Birds, Cornworthy, Devon.

⁴ www.yourdartmoor.org

achieve more through locally-based, co-designed environmental land management schemes learning from the experience of Dartmoor Farming Futures⁵. There have been calls to achieve enhanced biodiversity through re-wilding. We believe that this phrase has polarised the debate and ignores the fact that re-wilding is a continuum. The Moorland Vision for Dartmoor is an example of how elements of ‘re-wilding’ can be incorporated alongside traditional farming practices to achieve a mosaic of habitat types that are good for a range of species and provide other public benefits⁶. The Moorland Vision is a good example of how the National Park Authority works in partnership with a range of other stakeholders to develop consensus and action.

It is worth noting that many of our key projects to enhance biodiversity rely on external funding to match limited internal funding and are often partnership projects (see Table 1).

Table 1: Example of Projects to Enhance Biodiversity

Project	Key partners	Funding
Moorland Birds	Partnership involving Duchy of Cornwall and RSPB	Match funding from Heritage Lottery Fund and contributions from Duchy of Cornwall and RSPB.
Non-native species	Partnership with South West Water	Funding from South West Water and income generated via a public arts trail – Moor Otters (see footnote 11).
All the Moor Butterflies	Butterfly Conservation	Match funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.
Hay meadows	Moor Meadows	Led by Moor Meadows – a volunteer group - with some financial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund.
Mires Restoration	Peatland Partnership involving landowners, commoners/farmers, Ministry of Defence, statutory agencies and South West Water	Phase 1 was funded by South West Water. The monitoring is funded via contributions from the National Park and South West Water and from the Ministry of Defence for specific items. Phase 2 is funded via a capital grant from Defra but with project officer support dependent on revenue contributions from the National Park and other partners (see para 5.8).

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

Dartmoor is particularly important for the quality and density of its archeological remains and cultural heritage:

- it is one of the most important Bronze Age landscapes in Western Europe;

⁵ www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-and-working/farming/farming-futures

⁶ www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-and-working/farming/moorland-vision

- home to the longest stone row in the world (Stallmoor); and,
- has over 2,800 listed buildings, 1,000 scheduled monuments and 5,000 prehistoric hut circles.

This cultural heritage is as much a part of Dartmoor as its rich biodiversity and landscapes but archaeology and cultural heritage do not always have the same national profile as, for example, the debates about biodiversity and re-wilding. Yet, our experience indicates that there is considerable interest in archaeology and cultural heritage. The Parishscapes programme that we are currently running as part of a Heritage Lottery Funded Landscape Partnership has been providing small grants to community groups and some specialist officer support to help them discover, maintain, enhance and interpret their local heritage. Over a four year period the project has recorded in excess of 15,000 hours of volunteer time. We believe that there is a real opportunity to engage more people in understanding and caring for their local heritage but this requires an investment in staff time to facilitate and provide advice and it needs to adopt an inclusive definition of heritage (i.e. cultural and natural).

- 3.2 In summary, these challenges mean that in the future we need our National Parks to be more productive and resilient. More productive in terms of the range of benefits they provide to society and, with climate change, more resilient in terms of being able to provide those benefits to a greater number of people who may visit the National Parks without damaging the environment or impacting negatively on the communities who live in the Parks. Indeed, we need future use of the National Park to contribute to the socio-economic well-being of those who live and work in the Park. To meet these challenges we will need a new ‘tool kit’.

4. THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR ‘THE JOB’

- 4.1 The Government’s review of National Parks and AONBs provides an opportunity to ensure that National Park Authorities have the right tools and resources to do the job – to be ‘fit for the future’. We see this as a priority above any amendment to the statutory purposes and duty. The existing purposes and duty do not limit our ambition; resources and existing tools do. We have highlighted below our priorities in terms of additional tools and the resources we require to manage and enhance the National Park.

Recommendation 1: A duty to further National Park Purposes

- 4.2 At present there is a statutory duty on all ‘relevant authorities’ to have regard to National Park purposes in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect a National Park (section 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, as amended by Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995). This duty is essentially negative and represents a minimalist approach:

- it requires a process but not a positive outcome (an organisation could have regard to National Park purposes but still determine to carry out an action detrimental to them); and
- it lacks the ambition inherent in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan namely to enhance the environment.

4.3 A legal duty on relevant bodies to further National Park purposes would address these weaknesses: it is stronger, focused on adding value and delivering positive outcomes.

4.4 Consideration would also have to be given to the definition or list of relevant authorities. These have traditionally been public sector organisations but with the blurring of public/community/private boundaries (e.g. Local Enterprise Partnerships) it will be important for the Secretary of State to have the power to up-date the list of relevant authorities in terms of any amendments to Section 11A/Section 62.

Recommendation 2: An enhanced role for the National Park Management Plan (NPMP)

4.5 Section 66 of the Environment Act 1995 requires National Park Authorities to produce a NPMP (sometimes called the Partnership Plan) for their area and to review it at least every five years. These plans are for the National Park and not just the Authorities. They are meant to be the key over-arching strategic document for the National Park. Their purpose is to:

- Set out a joint, long-term vision and ambitions for the management of the National Park.
- Provide a framework for all policies and activities in the National Park, co-ordinating and integrating other plans, strategies and actions (including the Local Plan).
- Provide the basis for focusing resources and drawing in funding;
- Communicate what is important about the National Park and the priorities for action to the wider community.
- Provide a focus for the work of the Authority.
- Illustrate how partner organisations contribute to National Park purposes.

4.6 NPMPs have a clear value in terms of providing a basis for partnership working, setting out a shared vision for a National Park and identifying key actions to achieve that vision. Nevertheless, there is a need for this statutory management plan framework to be strengthened in the following ways:

- Improved evidence base.
- Duty to collaborate/co-operate in the preparation of National Park Management Plans on all 'relevant authorities'.
- Management of the National Park to be in accordance with the National Park Management.

Improved Evidence Base

- 4.7 Data sets for National Parks are often, at best, partial with very little accurate time series information on environmental trends. Management Plans need to be based on good evidence about the state of the National Park, identifying trends, highlighting issues and providing a basis for monitoring and decision-making. Having data sets cut to National Park boundaries is essential. We already collaborate with Natural England, Environment Agency and Forestry Commission on a Monitoring Protected Landscapes initiative to provide information on agri-environment coverage, condition of SSSIs, water quality etc. but other data sets (especially economic data) are rarely available at a National Park level.
- 4.8 We are also working with Exeter University on the potential to use remote sensing to provide time series data on habitat types and condition, landscape change, environmental pressures, plant disease, archaeology etc.
- 4.9 A pan-government initiative to ensure that data sets are available at a National Park level and to support the use of new data collection methods (such as remote sensing would assist in ensuring we have evidence-based plans. We also have an ambition to engage more people in 'monitoring the environment' but do not currently have the resources to facilitate this. We think a 'citizen science approach' would help provide data but also help develop understanding, passion, skills and provide health benefits for those who engage.

Duty to collaborate/co-operate

- 4.10 This would ensure that key partners such as statutory agencies, constituent authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships participate in the preparation, monitoring, review and delivery of Management Plans. It would build on the duty to co-operate between local planning authorities, county councils and other prescribed public bodies for the purposes of the preparation of development plan documents that was introduced by section 33a of the Localism Act 2011.

Recommendation 3: Management in accordance with the National Park Management Plan

- 4.11 A statutory requirement for management of the National Park to be in accordance with the National Park Management Plan would provide real weight to the Management Plan. This would provide a spatial expression to the legal obligation on relevant authorities to further National Park purposes (see above). The intention is not to seek to control the precise management of individual parcels of land but to ensure that environmental land management schemes and management at a 'landscape scale' is in accordance with the Management Plan and delivering the vision for the National Park developed through the Management Plan process. For example, applicants to the Government's new Environmental Land Management Scheme (see below) would be required to demonstrate how their individual land management plans manage and enhance the National Park's special qualities.

4.12 This strengthening of the Management Plan will also be important, as and when, private sector markets for ecosystem services such as water and carbon are developed. It would provide a transparent framework for the management of the National Park and a mechanism to ensure that the public interest inherent in National Park designation is managed alongside private payments for land management. As private sector markets develop for ecosystem services or 'natural infrastructure' it will be important that National Park Authorities have the powers and resources to act as 'environmental brokers in this new market place: ensuring that public good is enhanced alongside private interest for the benefit of local businesses and communities as well as the nation at large.

Recommendation 4: Local Environmental Land Management Schemes for each National Park

4.13 The Government has stated that it will be introducing a new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) post Brexit. ELMS should be a key tool in the future management and enhancement of our National Parks. National Parks England published a policy statement on [Farming in the English National Parks](#) (2017). This document outlined a new system of integrated, place-based delivery that is focused on the outcomes that society seeks from the National Parks but is co-designed with local land managers and other interested parties and fairly rewards the providers of public goods. The proposals centred around three, linked components:

- A National Park FARM (Farming and Rural Management) Scheme to provide a base or foundation level of environmental husbandry and public goods
- FARM Plus – locally-led agri-environment schemes for each National Park.
- Wider rural development – local resources for wider rural development

4.14 ELMS provides a potential mechanism to enhance our National Parks in terms of:

- Landscape quality
- Biodiversity
- Woodland management (and creation)
- Cultural heritage
- Water management
- Carbon management
- Access, education and wider engagement
- High quality food production

4.15 ELMS is an essential tool for the future management of our National Parks but to realise this potential the new scheme needs to be flexible enough to be designed and delivered at a local level. NPAs need to have a key role in facilitating this and providing advice to farmers, land managers and land owners. We would like to see ELMS linked to wider rural development and future farm productivity programmes – it is really important that it is not

developed in ‘splendid isolation’ but seen as part of a wider programme of integrated development for National Parks and wider rural areas.

- 4.16 Dartmoor (like many other National Parks) has submitted a proposal to test and trial the new ELMS (see Appendix 1). Our proposal builds on existing partnerships and initiatives. It seeks to involve farmers, land managers, owners and other stakeholders in the design of a scheme that is ‘Fit for Dartmoor’.

Recommendation 5: Parks for People

- 4.17 Our National Parks were designated by the nation, for the nation. We need to build on the support for National Parks in society at large to ensure that there is a better understanding about our National Parks and proactively reach out so all sectors of society have an opportunity to visit a National Park – this is critical to the long-term vision for National Parks.

Young People

- 4.18 As a family of English National Parks we would recommend a Government commitment that every child has the opportunity to visit a National Park as part of their formal education but in a way that is fun, enjoyable and memorable. We want to inspire the next generation to experience and appreciate the values of National Parks and champion responsible stewardship of the environment. A funded initiative such as this would help deliver the ambitions of the 25 Year Environment Plan. It should not be seen as a one-off but a programme of activity.
- 4.19 Whilst this formal opportunity is important we also believe that informal learning is of equal importance. On Dartmoor we use a progression route for young people to help them understand what makes Dartmoor special and to support learning outside the classroom and, importantly, outside the formal school context.
- 4.20 This engagement starts with children and their families with a family learning club catering for families with 5 – 12 year olds (the Ranger Ralph Club)⁷. In 2015 we developed a Junior Ranger initiative for young people aged 13 -16, using the Europarc Junior Ranger model as a template and linking it to the well-respected John Muir Award⁸. We are now developing a Youth Ranger programme for young people aged 16 plus which, combined with the apprenticeships we already offer, provide continuity from 5 to at least 25: a foundation that we believe will provide passion for the environment and the National Park, better understanding; help develop key social skills; and a ‘healthy start to life’.
- 4.21 The programme means that we work with relatively small numbers and small-scale means we may not have the ‘reach’ of less immersive initiatives but the depth of relations and intensity of experience has been shown through our evaluations to be transformative:

⁷ www.dartmoor.gov.uk/enjoy-dartmoor/funzone/join-our-club

⁸ www.dartmoor.gov.uk/enjoy-dartmoor/dartmoor-rangers/junior-rangers

“I have made new friends, learnt new skills and gained an award”

“I have gained a greater degree of independence”

“I have faced and overcome many challenges including learning to ride a bike”

“I found it challenging to work with people I didn’t know but I have made new

“It was great not to be treated like a little kid and given real work to do.”

- 4.22 The Ranger Ralph, Junior and Youth Ranger initiatives are supplemented by a programme of outreach activity that includes an annual Wildlife Festival (run in partnership with groups like Devon Wildlife Trust, Plantlife and the National Trust).
- 4.23 This programme of engagement and outreach could be ‘scaled up’ and potentially targeted to under-represented groups but it requires long-term resources. We are currently funding the programme through a mix of our core grant and the funds we generated through a public arts trail – Moor Otters. We would like to see a Government backed initiative (i.e. not just Defra) that provides the resources to enhance this offer and encourage its adoption by others.

Healthy People

- 4.24 Our National Parks are good for people. Getting out and experiencing the natural environment can be good fun and great for our health (both mental and physical) - a key ingredient for both health and happiness. The Dartmoor Naturally Health Project ran from 2014 – 2017 with support from Devon County Council Public Health⁹. The project explored the barriers to accessing the natural environment, explored ‘green prescriptions’ via a link with a GP practice and sought to develop a greater understanding of the health benefits, particularly mental well-being, of accessing outdoor space. Another initiative called Stepping Stones with Plymouth City Council provides further evidence on the value of having a network of green space from urban parks to National Parks for people to access and the need for some support for key groups to access these areas.
- 4.25 We believe that there is potential to develop a network of ‘Health Rangers’, based with GP practices and hospitals and funded through the Department for Health. These Health Rangers can help provide the support for ‘green prescriptions’, opportunities for carers to access the outdoors and generally build confidence. There may also be scope for these posts to help tackle the sickness absence within the health service itself. They would not be employees of the National Park Authority but could be supported by National Park Rangers through training and identification of a network of appropriate routes etc..

⁹ www.dartmoor.gov.uk/enjoy-dartmoor/outdoor-activities/naturally-healthy

Recommendation 6: Investment in Managing Access Infrastructure

4.26 Access land and the 450 miles of public rights of way on Dartmoor are an important element of infrastructure supporting over 7.3 million visits per annum and contributing to the £120m annual spend by visitors. We currently maintain the public rights of way network under a service level agreement with the highway authority (Devon County Council). We calculate that we have a maintenance backlog on public rights of way and key access sites requiring an investment in excess of £250,000. This compares with annual budget of circa £43,000 via the service level agreement with Devon County Council. This maintenance backlog is being exacerbated by extreme weather occurrences (e.g. sudden intense rainfall).

Recommendation 7: Managing Visitors

4.27 Not all visitors enjoy the National Park in a responsible manner. We need new powers and resources to tackle the small but growing proportion of society who show a lack of respect for the place and no responsibility for their actions. We are looking at having to equip our Rangers with body cams for their personal safety and to forge new links with Devon and Cornwall Police but they, like us, have limited resources. We already operate a Community Safety Accreditation Scheme with Devon and Cornwall Police and are in the process of establishing a rural crime partnership with other stakeholders. We would like to see new powers to tackle these issues: a streamlined process for reviewing byelaws and enforcing them – tougher and potential fixed notice penalties. There is a fine line to tread between the friendly and supporting role that our Rangers provide and the need to enforce against inappropriate actions in the countryside.

Recommendation 8: Public transport and improving access to the National Park

4.28 For 15 years until 2008 the National Park Authority and Devon County Council worked together to provide a network of summer bus services to support recreational use and to provide opportunities for residents to visit town and cities outside of the National Park. Over those 15 years we established a patronage of circa 20,000 visitors on our key routes and 30% of those passengers could have used a car for their journey. The cost per passenger was approximately £3.60. This was a great achievement because we know that changing travel habits, especially for those with access to a car, is difficult. With shrinking resources we are now left with just one recreational service across the Moor. As we look forward and recognise the projected growth in visitors we should be looking to the development of public transport services as part of a sustainable management solution, planning ahead for this growth. We recognise that this will be expensive to deliver and currently resources from any potential partner are shrinking therefore it is probably one area where we are not able to take forward our vision. The Linking Communities grant operated by the Department for Transport was a good model of specific capital funding being made available to National Parks to support the development of 'green travel corridors' – cycling, walking and riding facilities. This capital investment

has also helped develop our local economy – new businesses established on the back of the investment in green travel corridors.

Recommendation 9: Support Vibrant Communities and Businesses

- 4.29 Vibrant local communities are a key part of the National Park. We are not in favour of revising National Park purposes to elevate the socio-economic duty to a new purpose unless it unlocks future resources. Our key priority is the resource base to work with local communities to help them help themselves – a ‘Human Capital Fund’ that can support rural and community development.
- 4.30 Much of the current debate is focused on ‘natural capital’ this is important but we also need to consider ‘human capital’. Investing in human capital is often key to sustaining and enhancing our rural communities and improving the productivity of rural areas. An easy to access fund that focuses on outcomes rather than prescribing eligible items of expenditure would help us support rural communities. It should be modelled on the former Sustainable Development Fund and could provide an investment fund for community initiatives and wider business development.
- 4.30 Working in partnership with Exmoor National Park we developed a Rural Productivity Network proposal in response to the Government’s Rural Productivity Strategy. Key to our proposals was investment in a rural productivity manager – an animateur to work with rural communities and businesses and help turn ideas into projects. We have also developed a revolving land bank proposal to address the lack of affordable housing to rent and buy (see Appendix 1).¹⁰

5. THE RIGHT RESOURCES FOR ‘THE JOB’

- 5.1 Over the period 2010/11 to 2015/16 the Authority’s income reduced by over 40 per cent in real terms and our staffing levels were reduced by 25%. National Park Grant (our core funding from Defra) reduced by £1,404,984 in cash terms and we also saw significant reduction in secondary income, for example, the sum of money we receive from Devon County Council for the management of public rights of way in the National Park reduced by 33%; Housing and Planning Delivery Grant was abolished and ‘replaced’ by New Homes Bonus which is paid to the districts/boroughs and county councils and not to us as a local planning authority. Since 2015/16 we have had a welcome period of financial stability albeit that our core grant has continued to reduce in real terms versus cost inflation.
- 5.2 The funding model for National Parks advocated by a series of Ministers has been of a small core grant supplemented by fees and charges and commercial sponsorship and philanthropic donations.

¹⁰ Further details on the Revolving Land Bank are available if required. We are still waiting a decision from Government – two years after first submitting our ideas.

- 5.3 We have responded to this agenda by introducing ‘Donate for Dartmoor’ (a voluntary donations programme); introducing charges were legal, feasible and possible; developing innovative initiatives such as [Moor Otters](#) and supporting the development of [National Parks Partnerships Limited](#) (NPPL) at a UK level as a vehicle to attract commercial sponsorship¹¹. These initiatives, whilst valuable, have not filled the ‘funding gap’ and we do not hold out any realistic vision that they will do so. They also have potential unforeseen consequences. For example, the drive to attract commercial sponsorship means that we can end up in competition with stakeholders that we seek to work in partnership with – altering our relationship. NPPL has not yet provided a real return on the investment the Authority has made in the partnership and we will be evaluating its performance during 2019 to determine whether to make any further investment.
- 5.4 There are legal limits to the amount of money we could generate from assets and some charges are set a national level. For example, car park charges are meant to off-set direct costs of provision and planning fees are set at a national level.
- 5.5 As well as seeking to secure external funding we have a continuing programme of efficiencies and effectiveness – each year we effectively zero-base our budget and scrutinise all expenditure.
- 5.6 Our financial position means that we are running on the minimum in terms of staff resource. It is often the case that if one professional officer (such as a Biodiversity Officer) is off sick or on leave then we have no cover. It also means that our capacity to do new things, work up funding bids etc. is severely limited. This is a statement of reality rather than a lack of ambition or passion. Indeed, it is often the ambition and passion of our staff, Members and volunteers that helps us develop new work programmes.

Recommendation 10: Enhanced and sustained funding for National Park Authorities

- 5.7 If the Government is serious about sustaining and enhancing our National Parks for future generations then it needs to ‘enhance and sustain National Park Grant’. This could then be the springboard for new programmes to engage with people and enhance the National Park in practical ways (e.g. working with the farming community and landowners to improve biodiversity and cultural heritage) and the capacity to work up other funding bids.
- 5.8 The Defra Peatland capital grant is an interesting example in this respect. The Authority leads a peatland partnership on Dartmoor and joined forces with Exmoor and Bodmin Moor to develop a South West Peatland bid submitted by South West Water (SWW). The bid for Dartmoor was based upon a previous pilot restoration project (funded by SWW) which we have been evaluating through a contract with University of Exeter. Experts at the University were also commissioned to identify the extent and condition of our peatland resource and

¹¹ www.dartmoor.gov.uk/wildlife-and-heritage/our-conservation-work/moor-otters-projects and www.nationalparks.co.uk/

priorities for future intervention. Only 1% of Dartmoor's peatland area is still intact, healthy bog, whilst much of the remainder has been severely damaged by drainage, cutting, drying and erosion. Our current restoration programme is ambitious and delivery is challenging: we are doing the work with limited human resource, the Defra capital grant included no revenue funding for staff to deliver the programme or for engagement and outreach work such as citizen science. We lost our dedicated team who delivered the pilot project due to lack of core funds and therefore we are now trying to deliver more with less staff resource. In some respects it would have been easier to step back from the Defra grant but our staff, Members and partners had the ambition and passion to take this forward.

- 5.9 The ability of each National Park Authority to generate income through charges and sponsorship etc. is varied. For example, we do not have the network of car parks in honey pot locations that some other National Park Authorities have nor extensive land ownership that might then provide the asset base for other forms of income generation.
- 5.10 We are conscious that external forms of funding such as the National Lottery and Rural Development Programme are subject to reductions and change. The funds available to the Heritage Lottery Fund are reducing due to the decline in Lottery sales and funds like LEADER that have helped support rural communities are likely to disappear post Brexit with no certainty that the proposed UK Shared Prosperity Fund will have a clear rural focus/remit. The demise of the Landscape Partnership programme operated by the Heritage Lottery Fund is of particular concern as this initiative helped fund integrated projects at a landscape scale, it also served to bring partners together. We believe that there may be scope for National Park Authorities to develop a role as local delivery agents for the Lottery.

Recommendation 11: Total place budgeting and public sector land management

- 5.11 As important, as funding for the National Park Authority, is public funding for the National Park itself. Based on Defra figures we estimate that between £12 and £16m is invested in Dartmoor National Park per annum in terms of Basic Payment Scheme and Agri-environment agreements. The Authority has little influence over the use and allocation of this money and it is questionable as to whether this investment of public money is actively contributing to National Park purposes. We would like to see a 'total place' budgeting process for National Parks so it is clear how that public investment is helping to deliver National Park purposes and the duty to foster the socio-economic well-being of local communities. This aligns closely to our recommendations regarding a duty to further National Parks and management in accordance with the National Park Management Plan.
- 5.12 Total place budgeting could also be extended to look at the public sector estate in National Parks: an initiative to examine whether there is a more cost effective way to manage the public estate to deliver National Park purposes and duty. At a Dartmoor level we believe that there is an opportunity to use the public sector

estate to 'kick start' a landscape-scale approach and we are currently working on this with local partners.

6. GOVERNANCE

6.1 We appreciate that the Review will receive differing views on the governance model for National Parks. Our current model of governance combines national and local representation; involves local communities through a clearly defined process of parish elections; builds links with our constituent authorities (i.e. district, borough and county councils); is effective and cheap to run. We would suggest that current governance arrangements score highly against IUCN's principles of good governance (see Table1). Whilst there is scope for improvement we do not think the current model is broken – it is effective and worthy of retention.

Table 1: IUCN Principles of Good Governance¹²

Principle	Description
Legitimacy and voice	There is a broad acceptance and appreciation of how the National Park is governed. In 2008 we conducted a survey of residents based on the national Place Survey: 34% of respondents had been involved in decisions affecting the local area in the past 12 months compared to a national average of 14% or a rural Devon average of 19%. The survey is run every three years but the Place Survey has ceased. There is a National Park Forum open to all parishes and other stakeholder groups which provides a fora for open dialogue and an opportunity to question the Authority. Most of our key projects have their own governance arrangements often involving a partnership approach.
Direction	The Authority has a clear strategic direction provided through our legislative purposes and duty and the vision for the National Park. The vision for the National Park (part of the National Park Management Plan) was developed through consultation and engagement and is subject to review every five years.
Performance	We report performance to the Authority and to an Audit and Governance Committee. This information is all in the public domain and we benchmark our performance/the State of the National Park against other National Parks and Authorities.
Accountability	All of our Committees meet in public with public speaking rights. Information on our performance, finances and compliments/complaints can be found on our website. We fall under the remit of the Local Government Ombudsman.
Fairness and rights	We respect human rights and actively promote a governance model based on participation. For example, involving stakeholders in steering groups for individual projects, Providing opportunities to engage through the National Park Forum and an annual Steering Group meeting for the National Park Management which has a wide invitation list.

6.2 Our current governance arrangements are cost effective: Member allowances, expenses and hospitality amounted to 1.5% of National Park Grant in 2017/18. Taking the CIPFA Sercop definition of Democratic Representation and Management (i.e. you include subscriptions to national organisations, joint committees and officer related support costs for Members) then the figure rises

¹² <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/PAG-020.pdf>

to approximately 5% of National Park Grant (2017/18). It should be noted that the national organisations are not just focused on Members and governance: National Parks Partnerships Limited (see below) is a delivery vehicle for commercial sponsorship.

- 6.3 A key concern of those who criticise the current governance arrangements is the lack of democratic accountability – the inability to be able to appoint or remove a Member of the National Park Authority through the ballot box. Whilst this is true it ignores the fact that the majority of the Authority’s Members are elected to their appointing council. There is a role description for the National Park Authority Member which appointing councils should consider when making their appointments. The simple system of parish council appointees provides a cost effective means of giving local representation alongside national appointments. The Authority works with the Devon Association of Local Councils to actively promote this route to local residents who are interested in becoming a Member of the Authority. Our Parish Members provide an important direct link to the local communities within the National Park.
- 6.4 Given that we spend public money and that the English National Parks were designated in the ‘national interest’ it is important that there is a degree of national overview (i.e. that our governance includes the national interest). The Secretary of State national appointments provide a mechanism for ensuring that the national interest is represented on the Authority. In practice, all the Members of the Authority are clear about their role in governing a National Park that is both a local and national asset. We do not see any merit in a nationally appointed Chair for the Authority or for an elected mayor type model of governance for National Parks.
- 6.5 There is an opportunity to improve the diversity, age and gender balance of the Authority. This is an issue that does not just pertain to Dartmoor or to National Park Authorities but, we would suggest, to public sector governance at all spatial levels. We have sought to address this through the Secretary of State national appointments when we have been asked to contribute to the adverts for such vacancies and in how they are advertised.
- 6.6 In summary, the current governance arrangements provide an effective model of checks and balances, enable effective scrutiny of performance and a good way to build links to constituent councils (from parish to county council). The following principles should be considered when reviewing governance:
- Retain local and national appointments.
 - One size does not fit all – governance arrangements need to reflect the unique characteristics of each National Park.
 - Ensure a range of experience and skills.
 - A clear emphasis on all Members being required to pursue National Park purposes and the duty (i.e. they are not representatives of their appointing authorities and the Authority normally operates in a non-political sphere).
 - No one category of member should be in the majority.
 - Retain independence of the National Park Authority from central government.

- Improve diversity, gender and age balance.
- Ability to secure particular skills.
- A clear expectation that Members should be strategic and visionary in terms of National Park purposes.
- Any amendments to National Park governance should be fully funded by central government (e.g. if direct elections were to be proposed and introduced they should only be for a proportion of Members and the cost of the elections funded in addition to current National Park Grant).

6.7 As a family of English National Parks we work through National Parks England to raise the profile of National Parks and ensure there is a supportive policy and resource framework for National Parks and the work of the authorities. There is a network of profession-based working groups that facilitate knowledge exchange, policy development and professional development. We also collaborate at a UK-level through National Parks Partnerships Limited and, currently, National Parks UK¹³.

6.8 We are aware that there are concerns, expressed by some, that the governance model for the National Park Authority could be improved. This was raised as an issue at the National Park Forum held on 23 November 2018 (by representatives of two organisations). In particular, there is a concern about a lack of direct accountability – that no members of the Authority are elected directly to the Authority. People have also commented on the size of the Authority compared to the budget it ‘governs’. We would welcome the views of Members on how the governance of the Authority might be further improved. It should be noted that successive external audits of our governance statement have not identified any concerns but the auditors do not have within their remit the ability to ask questions about the composition of the Authority.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The 25 Year Environment Plan and the terms of reference for the Glover Review set out an ambitious vision of enhancing the environment and engaging people with the environment. National Parks should be at the fore of this. For us enhancement should not be defined narrowly in terms of a particular species or even biodiversity in total but in terms of all of the environmental and cultural benefits that National Parks can provide, including, in no particular order:

- Landscape
- Archaeology
- Cultural heritage
- Carbon management
- Water management
- Biodiversity
- Access

¹³ National Parks UK is in the process of being wound-up as a formal company and will be replaced by a Chairs Forum. The Chief Executives meet up to twice per annum at a UK level. Some of the other professional officer groups area also UK wide (e.g. communications) and others, that are England focused, will include Welsh and Scottish Parks as ‘corresponding’ members.

- 7.2 The aim should be to maximise the ‘supply of these benefits’ to society and to ensure that local communities benefit from this. There may be spatial priorities and potential conflicts but the National Park Management Plan process should help to minimise these conflicts and set a shared vision of how to deliver multiple benefits from an area of land in an integrated way that is resilient to future pressures.
- 7.3 There is now a better understanding of the link between nature and culture: healthy landscapes are shaped by human culture as well as the forces of nature, rich biological diversity often coincides with cultural diversity; and conservation can not be undertaken without the involvement of those closest to the resources.
- 7.4 We believe that our National Parks are generally fit for the next 70 years but the recommendations outlined above would provide us with the tools and, importantly, the resources to meet forthcoming challenges and make the most of the opportunities that lie ahead.
- 7.5 We would be happy to expand further on any of the points made in this submission and/or to provide further evidence/examples of our work.



Future of Farming and Rural Development: Opportunities on Dartmoor

Expression of Interest to Defra



1.0 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this Expression of Interest is to demonstrate the relevance of existing initiatives on Dartmoor to the Government's agenda for the future of farming and wider rural development (see appendix 1), and to seek Defra support to develop this work further to:

- **Trial a 'plan-based approach'** to the new environmental land management system and consider how a universal scheme might also provide an opportunity for local tailoring.
- **Undertake practical evaluation** of different potential mechanisms for the payment for public benefits.
- **Demonstrate how to deliver an integrated package** of: environmental land management, tailored advice, support for rural productivity and wider rural development.

Our ideas build on some of the thinking outlined in the National Parks England paper on [Farming in the English National Parks](#) (2017).

There is a strong record of partnership working and learning on Dartmoor with respect to farming and land management. We already have a farmer-led network (Dartmoor Hill Farm Project) and a steering group for the Farming Futures pilot (see appendix 1) that involves the farming community and organisations such as

the Rural Payments Agency, Dartmoor Commoners' Council, Duchy of Cornwall, Natural England, RSPB etc. These initiatives and the framework of existing partnerships with the farming community provide an excellent foundation upon which to test the new environmental land management system and how it might be designed to provide farmer engagement, local tailoring and integration.

Key themes of what we propose are:

- an evidence base for what works and what does not;
- evaluation of the costs of different delivery mechanisms;
- a focus on enhancement of a range of public benefits; and
- co-design with farming, landowning and commoning communities and wider stakeholder engagement.

We would appreciate an opportunity to discuss our ideas with Defra to see how we might link our local initiatives with work on the new environmental land management scheme and wider rural productivity.

2.0 OPPORTUNITIES TO TEST AND PILOT

We see an opportunity to work with Defra, Natural England and other stakeholders, in partnership with the farming and landowning community on Dartmoor, to explore and test a number of areas. The on-going initiatives currently benefit from steering groups comprised of all relevant stakeholders, this resource can be extended to address all the proposals:

Examine the interplay between future regulatory base, universal scheme and local tailoring. The ending of Basic Payment Scheme means that the cross compliance driver for basic environmental husbandry will be lost; the form of the regulatory framework to replace this will be an important foundation for the future universal scheme and to ensure the maintenance of the National Park's special qualities. How do you design a new environmental and animal welfare 'standard' that is easy to understand, cost effective and efficient, provides a basis for enhancement but is not an unfair financial burden on farm businesses?

Work with the farming and landowning community, and other stakeholders, to develop a universal scheme offer for Dartmoor and consider how this might include 'local tailoring'. This would look at 'base options' (ie components of the universal scheme) to maintain and enhance an array of public benefits; and 'enhanced options' that might be specific to a locally tailored scheme and focus more on enhancement and costs of delivery. We are interested in working with the farming/and landowning community to look at funding options designed to deliver environmental enhancement and how we might incentivise collaborative action, knowledge transfer and skills development.

Work at a landscape-scale. Farming Futures already works at a landscape scale but there is an opportunity to extend this model to home farms and commons. The experience of collaborative working within the commons may well provide valuable lessons on how to transfer and incentivise such an approach to farmland.

Explore an outcome based approach and alternative ways of paying for public benefits. We are particularly interested in exploring how a payment by results (or performance) system might operate on common land. We would also look at potential mechanisms to pay based on value rather than profit foregone. We have started this discussion with an initial workshop with experts from the University of Exeter's SWEEP programme. We are also in discussions with South West Water, commoners and landowners about the development of paid ecosystem services and so-called 'blended finance'.

Examine local governance, audit and value for money considerations. How would you build self-monitoring into a future scheme, do you pay for this as a separate, identifiable element of a scheme or is it a requirement of participation? What needs to be done in terms of skills development (see below). Do you operate a fixed audit arrangement or a risk-based one; could you trial agreement holders appointing their own auditors? Does this have potential economic development opportunities and improve engagement and delivery of environmental outcomes. Would audit cover financial and environmental performance or do you separate out? Farming Futures has started to address some of these issues but there is an opportunity to extend this work further.



Renewing the link with the public. The Government's ambition is effectively for a new 'contract for the countryside' with the public paying for public goods. It will be important that we better explain to the public (the 'payers') the management undertaken by farmers to help sustain and enhance the landscape they come to enjoy. We see this as a very important issue and one that requires significant effort but is particularly relevant to the skills and experience held by the National Park.

Facilitation and advice. To test and cost new approaches that integrate environmental and economic/farm business advice, with a clear focus on enhancement:

- A whole farm assessment tool that farmers can use to identify and map their public goods (i.e. natural and cultural capital).
- Advice that seeks to look at how you can combine environmental and economic productivity.
- Working across boundaries – how you get farmers and landowners to collaborate.

There is the potential for this to build on work that the Authority is doing on a natural capital approach to the National Park Management Plan and the Duchy of Cornwall's plans to develop integrated (natural capital based) assessments for its estate and individual tenancies.

Skills development and knowledge transfer.

The Government's ambition for the future of farming, and to leave the environment in a better state than it inherited it, is ambitious and will require improved mechanisms for skills development and knowledge transfer. Does the farmer network approach, developed by the Hill Farm Project, offer a cost effective and efficient way of delivering skills development and knowledge transfer? Skills development is not just about attracting new entrants or new apprenticeships but also about how you improve the skills of existing farmers and providing them with the opportunities to learn from others and the capacity to work collaboratively.



Animal welfare - we believe that there are a particular set of issues pertaining to the welfare of livestock on commons (and the link to home farms) that need to be considered. We already have some experience of running a 'healthy livestock initiative' through the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project (see appendix 1) and would be keen to extend this to evaluate initiatives that improve the quality of livestock and help address wider health concerns. A particular focus would be zoonoses - infectious diseases of animals that can naturally be transmitted to humans – such as Lyme Disease. We are also interested in the opportunities to link environmental enhancement and improved animal welfare to food markets: the scope for a moorland blend feed that might encourage cattle into areas dominated by Molinia and also improve their mineral balance. This could be for 'standard' management, organic and pasture fed systems and linked to the carrying capacity of areas in environmental and animal welfare terms.

Existing initiatives include the TB Control Plans designed on Dartmoor in close cooperation with APHA and now used elsewhere in England. This initiative demonstrates the ability to combine practical solutions with the demands of regulation.

Many of the issues and questions identified above could be addressed by extending the existing Farming Futures pilot to the home farm and to other commons. There is an existing steering group mechanism and support from the farming community to do this. It would provide ready access to a network of farmers and would provide a basis from which to:

Key themes of what we propose are:

- Identify what works and what does not.
- Evaluate the costs of different delivery mechanisms.
- Assess how to maximise the enhancement of a range of public benefits.
- Ensure co-design with farming, landowning and commoning communities and with wider stakeholder engagement.



Wider Rural Development/Productivity

Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks have already submitted a Rural Productivity Network proposal to Defra in response to the Rural Productivity Strategy published in 2015 (see appendix 2). It is important that the new environmental land management system is not designed in 'splendid isolation' but in a way that supports rural development. We are keen to test such an integrated approach:

Key themes of what we propose are:

- Link future grant windows with skills development and phase this to ensure maximum environmental and economic gain. For example, programmes for the restoration of stone walls, traditional buildings etc. linked to an apprenticeship/ skills programme to ensure that there is local skilled labour.
- Healthy livestock initiatives that improve the quality and welfare of livestock and help address wider health concerns e.g. tick-based disease.
- Providing superfast broadband and mobile networks is important but so is the provision of training and support to use these technologies. Potential for 'farm angels' to work with clusters of farmers to develop these skills.
- What opportunities are there to link environmental enhancement and improved animal welfare to food markets?
- How do we provide transport, childcare, housing (for workers and retirees) and other public services in rural areas to support businesses and the wider community?

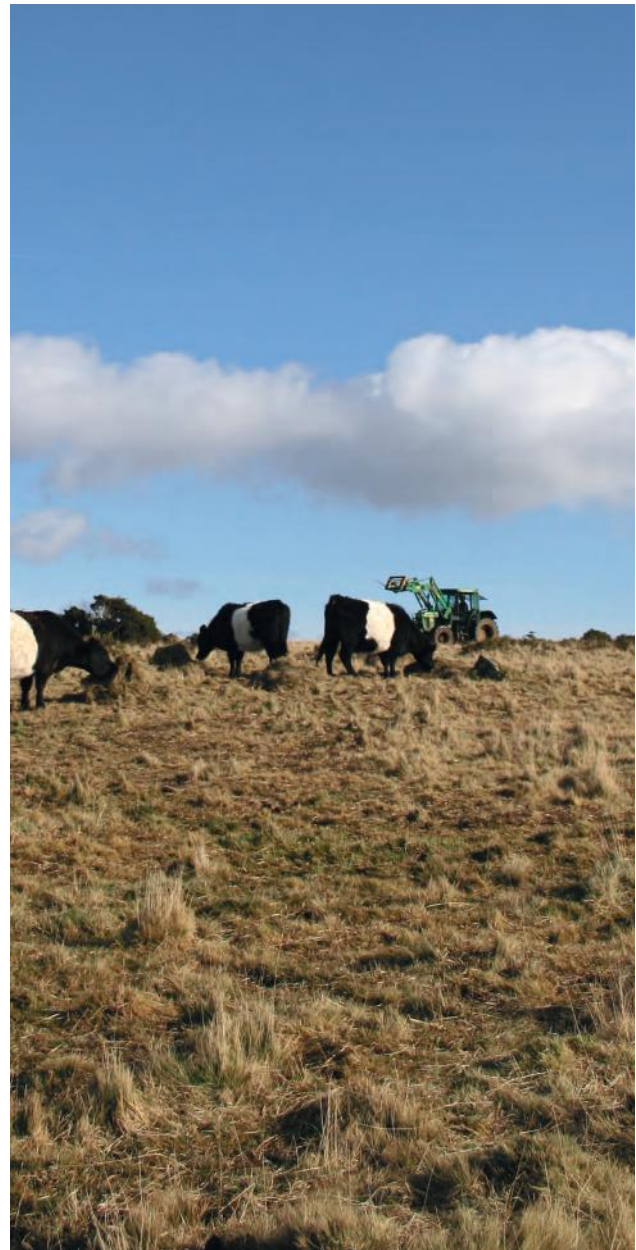
The Rural Productivity Network proposal outlined a series of offers and asks. Many of these are still relevant and could be taken forward through the appointment of a Rural Productivity Enabler to work with local businesses.

3.0 CONCLUSION

We have outlined in this Expression of Interest some key questions and issues that we are keen to explore as part of the Government's programme of work to develop the new environmental land management system and support wider rural development.

The next step would be to discuss how some of our ideas might link into Defra's work programmes. Such a discussion would enable us to identify what we can do within existing resources; the opportunities to 'soft test' ideas and build on existing initiatives; and, explore the potential for a more detailed pilot post 2020.

There is a willingness and appetite from Dartmoor farmers, the Dartmoor Commoners' Council and Dartmoor Common Owners Association to be involved in the 'co-design' of a new environmental land management scheme. We have already worked with our farmers, commoners and landowners to develop a set of principles that we would like to see guide the design and implementation of a new environmental land management system (see appendix 3).



Appendix 1

Current Land Management and Farming Initiatives on Dartmoor of relevance to the Government's ambition for the Future of Farming

Dartmoor Farming Futures

[Dartmoor Farming Futures](#) (DFF) is a pilot project to manage better the public and environmental benefits associated with the moorland areas of the National Park.

The initiative was developed by a partnership comprising Dartmoor commoners, Dartmoor Commoners' Council, the National Park Authority (NPA), the Duchy of Cornwall and Natural England with support from the RSPB and South West Water. There is an agreed vision (or plan) for the management of the moorland areas of the National Park that was agreed through a process facilitated by the NPA that engaged the farming community, statutory agencies and other stakeholders. The vision sets out, in map form, the public benefits that are being sought from the moorland areas and priorities for particular areas. Commoners for the two DFF pilot areas used this framework to propose a range of environmental outcomes that they would deliver; the outcomes were agreed with Natural England and the National Park Authority. The commoners were then given responsibility for designing the management to deliver the outcomes and are involved in monitoring the outcomes. They undertake an annual monitoring programme and report this to a steering group with periodic site visits by Natural England and NPA staff.

The most [recent evaluation](#) focused on the impact of the scheme on farmer behaviour, perceptions and farm businesses. Several key strengths were identified: improved understanding of the species, habitats and archaeological features found on the commons; improved understanding of outcomes and pride in delivery of environmental outcomes; and empowerment of commoners to take ownership of outcomes, management and monitoring. Farming Futures has demonstrated the value

of local partnership and engagement in an outcome focused approach to agri-environment which we are keen to expand beyond the two pilot commons.

The initial DFF concept included a proposal to consider payment mechanisms and rates; now would be an opportune time to revisit this (see below).

Dartmoor Hill Farm Project

[Dartmoor Hill Farm Project](#) is currently hosted by the National Park Authority, it has a membership base of Dartmoor farmers (paying a subscription) and is also supported by the Duchy of Cornwall and HRH The Prince of Wales' Countryside Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund. It has its own staff resource (FTE) to help farmers work collaboratively, keep farmers up-to-date with regulatory requirements, new technology and innovation, share good practice and provide training and knowledge transfer. The Project has supported co-operative working including the establishment of Dartmoor Farmers' Association, Moorskills (an upland apprenticeship scheme), a Healthy Livestock Initiative and, more recently, through the Prince's Resilience Fund a programme to promote farm business benchmarking and succession planning.

In addition to these projects the National Park is also involved in some other initiatives that have the potential to contribute to future thinking on a new environmental land management system and a 'plan-based approach', including:

Renewing the vision - we are in the process of evaluating and refreshing the agreed [vision for the moorland area of the National Park](#), this is a vision of a grazed landscape that delivers an array of public benefits. This work is being taken forward through the review of the [National Park Management Plan](#) (a statutory document) and as part of this we are working with the [SWEEP centre at Exeter University](#) to develop a natural capital approach. The opportunity for Defra is to consider how the Management Plan might link to its system of local plans and delivery and whether the natural capital approach (both advocated in the 25 Environment Plan) can work at a local level; and the potential for such local plans/visions to act as a framework for local delivery and collaborative action at a landscape scale.

Common Cause

The '[Our Common Cause](#)' project aims to conserve and enhance the heritage of commons and commoning in upland England, it is being led by the Foundation for Common Land, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Dartmoor is one of four case study areas. Through the project, learning and best practice will be shared between commoners from different parts of the country. It will look at the best ways to engage a wide range of people to increase understanding of the cultural, environmental and historic significance of the selected commons and strengthen the sense of local pride and ownership of those commons.

There are three themes:

- A) Enabling Collaborative Management
- B) Reconnecting People with Commons
- C) Improving Public Benefits

The Dartmoor pilot will be developing a vision and action plan for three commons – a basis for a landscape-scale and/or plan based approach to agri-environment. This process will also help us identify the environmental outcomes/public benefits that can be delivered on a common by common basis and the project as a whole provides a framework for re-engaging with the public (through a 'charter for common

land management', delivery of John Muir Award for young people and a series of familiarisation days.

Facilitation Fund

The Dartmoor Facilitation Project will help 34 farm business (6,500 ha) and land managers work together across three catchments to improve the natural environment at a landscape rather than single-farm scale and achieve greater improvements than individual holdings could on their own. In particular we aim to:

- Link common land with the home farm and between farms as well as with the common
- Integrate delivery
- promote innovation

Our aim is to explore, identify and implement ways to improve and integrate enhancement across the following CS priorities:

Wetland

- Blanket bog (maintenance and restoration)
- Upland fen and flushes (maintenance and restoration)
- Riparian habitats associated with priority rivers including wet woodland
- Purple moor grass and rush pasture (maintenance and restoration)
- Flood and Coastal Risk Management with focus on natural flood management and soils

Species

- Curlew
- Marsh fritillary
- Willow tit
- Bog hoverfly

Grassland

- Purple moor grass and rush pasture (maintenance and restoration)
- Hay meadows (maintenance)

Species

- High Brown fritillary
- Pearl bordered fritillary

Woodland

- Ancient and native woodland (maintenance and restoration)
- Explore opportunities to bring more woodland into sustainable management and creation where appropriate. Options for natural regeneration in river valleys

Historic environment

- Premier Archaeological Landscapes (PALS) - This is a Dartmoor designation established to protect historic landscapes that include a number of associated and often internationally important monuments
- Designated features
- Scheduled Monuments
- Designated and undesignated traditional farm buildings and non-domestic historic buildings

Landscape

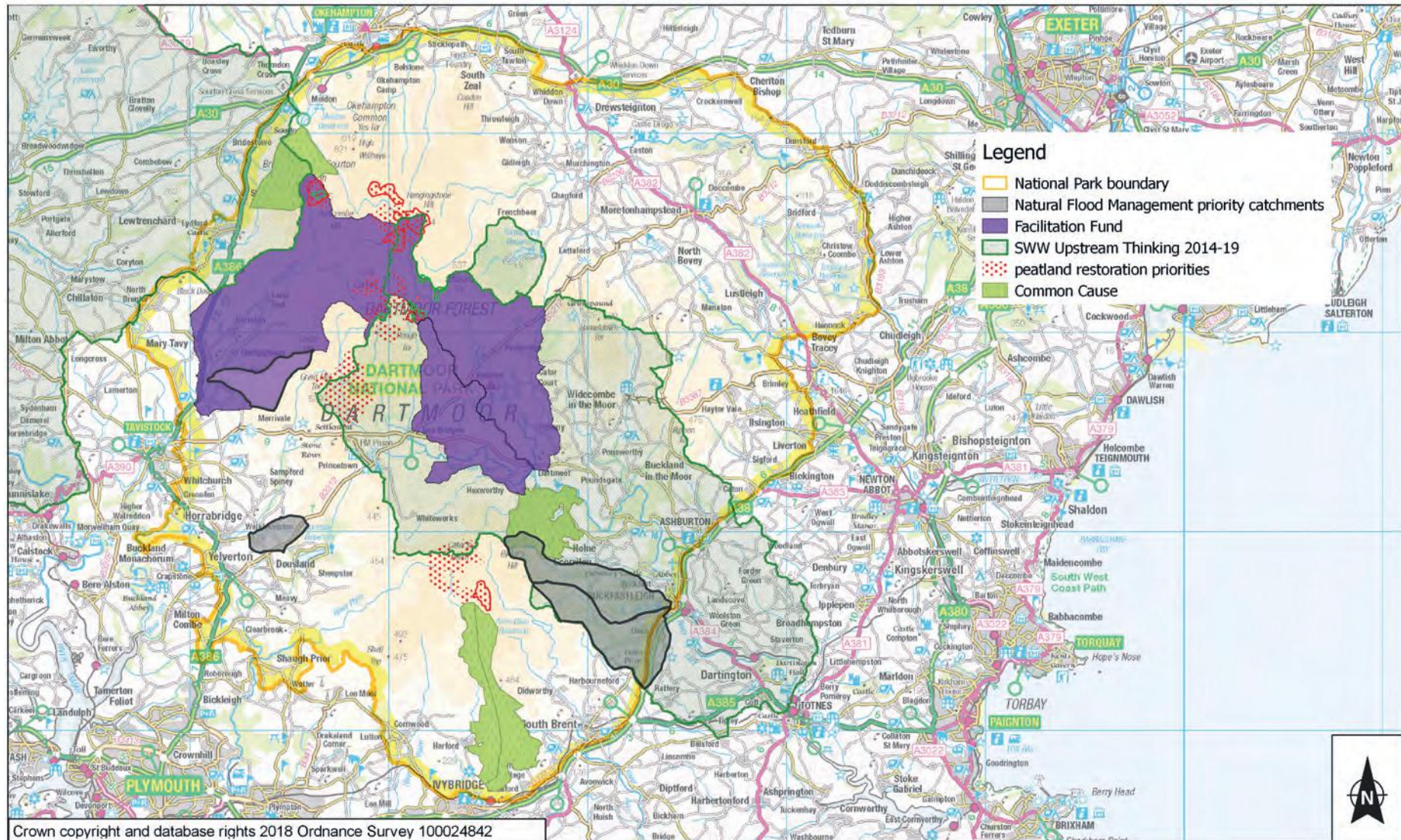
- Historic field boundaries
- Stone-faced banks, earth banks, stone walls, hedgerow trees
- Fundamental landscape features as recognized in the Dartmoor Natural Character Assessment and Dartmoor Landscape Character Assessment.

Natural Flood Management, Upstream Thinking and Peatland Restoration

We are working with the Environment Agency on a Natural Flood Management initiative that we hope will commence later in 2018. It will target three catchments and work with the farming and landowning community to develop natural approaches to flood management. This project will supplement work being funded by South West Water under their 'Upstream Thinking' programme. We have also submitted a Peatland Restoration Project to Defra and received an indication that it will be awarded funding. If successful this will be a partnership project to enhance targeted areas of degraded peatland.

The spatial coverage of the natural flood management, facilitation fund, peatland restoration and common cause projects is illustrated in figure 1.

Figure 1 Land Management Projects



Future of Farming and Rural Development: Opportunities on Dartmoor

Rural Productivity Networks for Dartmoor and Exmoor

A proposal to Defra



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Summary

This paper outlines a proposed demonstration initiative to deliver improved rural productivity and growth focused on Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks. The inspiration for this was drawn from the Rural Productivity Plan¹ published by H M Treasury and Defra in August 2015.

The **Dartmoor and Exmoor Rural Productivity Network** (RPN) will deliver a new approach to rural growth and productivity: one based on local engagement; that will use the natural and cultural capital of the areas; build on existing initiatives and work with businesses and communities to develop local solutions.

At its heart is the concept of 'place-based, facilitated innovation' – helping local businesses to help themselves by supporting growth and productivity. The RPN will take forward the themes in the Rural Productivity Plan through such activities as:

- Knowledge transfer
- Collaborative action
- Improved connectivity
- Making the most of our resource base
- Clusters and supply chain integration

The initiative would build on existing work and help to:

- **Improve productivity** in economic and environmental terms. In an economic sense – improved GVA. In environmental terms – a landscape that can deliver multiple benefits (a natural capital approach).
- **Foster a sustainable rural economy with strong local roots** using and developing local skills, fostering entrepreneurship and knowledge transfer
- **Enhance resilience** to environmental change and economic pressures.
- **Act as a demonstrator project** for Defra's Rural Growth and Productivity policy and the forthcoming Environment and Food and Farming Strategies – a model of integrated delivery.

We are seeking support from Defra to develop the RPN as a demonstrator scheme for integrated rural growth and productivity.

The following document provides more detail on the concept which has been developed with local stakeholders from the business, land and community sectors. As a model, it builds on our strongest assets: the people, communities and spectacular environment of the National Parks.

Background

Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks are unique and special places that make a positive contribution to the sustainable economic growth of their surrounding areas.

An economic prospectus for the two National Parks demonstrates that they are world class environments, enjoyed by millions and generating millions: they are home to over 3,000 businesses with an annual turnover in excess of £770million. There is a strong opportunity to increase their contribution; however, mainstream economic tools tend to have an urban bias where high business densities make them more effective.

Our aim is to develop a new rural growth model, designed by rural areas, for rural areas – **'The Dartmoor and Exmoor Rural Productivity Network'**. It builds on activity already underway in the two National Parks to promote rural growth and improve productivity and to do this in ways that also deliver environmental benefits and support local communities.

Examples of the proactive work we have been doing include:

Hill Farm Projects

There are separate Hill Farm Projects for both National Parks that work with the farming community to promote collaboration, innovation and knowledge transfer in order to improved productivity. They have a proven track record of delivery and have provided the basis for this proposal.

Superfast Broadband

The two Authorities (working with Connecting Devon and Somerset) are helping to deliver superfast broadband to 96% of all premises in the two National Parks. We envisage that this network will be in place by the end of 2016. A significant part of this coverage will be via a new wireless network. We are also exploring the feasibility of this network providing improved mobile coverage

Pro-active management of the National Park landscapes

This management, often in partnership, provides a sustainable resource for enjoyment and business development – 5 million visitor days per annum worth in excess of £230m per annum.

The proposal also builds on other evidence that supports the need for a "tailored, place-based approach that meets local constraints and opportunities"^{2,3}. The approach is supported by the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (HoSWLEP), Devon and Somerset County Councils and other stakeholders including National Farmers Union, district/borough councils, private businesses and LEADER groups.

¹ Defra and H M Treasury (2015) Towards a one nation economy: a ten point plan for boosting productivity in rural areas, Defra, London. ² Phillipson, J and Turner, R (2013) Rural areas as engines of economic growth, Rural Economy and Land use Programme, Newcastle upon Tyne. ³ Nesta (2013) Impacts of innovation policy: synthesis and conclusion, Working paper 13/21, Nesta, London.

The five themes (and associated ten points) identified in the Rural Productivity Plan, have been used to shape the RPN proposal:

Connections

Rural areas fully connected to the wider economy – broadband, mobile communications, transport.

Skills

A highly skilled rural workforce – training, apprenticeships, knowledge transfer.

Growth

Developing strong conditions for business growth – building on existing networks, clusters and collaborative action.

Living

Easier to live in rural areas – housing, affordable childcare, access to services.

Devolution

Greater local control – devolution and local engagement/empowerment.

At the heart of the RPN is the concept of 'place-based, facilitated innovation' – helping local businesses to help themselves by supporting growth and productivity through such activities as:

Knowledge transfer

Building on existing links with Universities to ensure 'hands on' and practical knowledge transfer. Ensuring that businesses learn from each other (not just farmers talking to farmers; but how farmers might learn from some of the creative and software-based businesses in the two National Parks and wider hinterland and vice versa). Using the knowledge and experience of older people who have retired to the area but have skills that could be shared through mentoring and networking.

Collaborative action

Two-thirds of rural businesses are micro businesses and these need particular attention. The RPN would help rural businesses organise themselves to create a critical mass in terms of buying or supplying (e.g. shared back-office for some of our smaller businesses so that they might benefit from reduced costs). Assisting with project development: from ideas to action.

Improved connectivity

Ensuring, for example, that people are aware of the opportunities that superfast broadband can provide and are able to make the most of these.

Making the most of our resource base

Developing new markets and services from the special qualities of the two National Parks.

Clusters and supply chain integration

Working with businesses to establish and expand local, and resilient, supply chains that enable businesses to develop. For example, potential development of food clusters around common services.

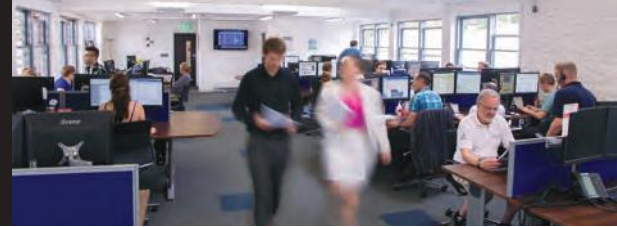
Discussions with the partners involved in developing this proposal have highlighted the importance of a facilitation resource – the capacity to act as a catalyst, taking ideas and helping to develop them, getting people to work together, identifying opportunities to learn and innovate etc. This capacity is particularly important in rural areas, like the two National Parks, where the economy is dominated by micro and small enterprises.

In the following pages, we set out our offer, the opportunity and our 'ask' in relation to the five themes that will underpin the network.

Our 'offer' and 'asks'

Connections

Rural areas fully connected to the wider economy (broadband, mobile, transport)



Our offer:

- Dartmoor and Exmoor will achieve 96% superfast broadband coverage by the end of 2016. A significant part of this coverage will be via a new wireless network
- Co-ordinated management and appropriate promotion of world class environments to ensure that the environment can provide a sustainable resource for growth and productivity

The two National Park Authorities will:

- Manage and enhance recreational routes as a driver to the visitor economy
- Engage with broadband and mobile infrastructure providers to extend coverage

Through the Rural Productivity Network we will:

- Exploit opportunities presented by superfast broadband coverage to over 96% of premises by encouraging business and household take-up of digital technologies to drive productivity improvements (e.g. digital livestock monitoring) and skills development
- Maximise private sector investment in innovative and integrated mobile solutions linked to superfast broadband network; promote the two National Parks as pilot areas for new technology in terms of communication
- Test innovative transport solutions in support of economic activity

- Support local businesses to use the world class environment as a driver for business development but in a way which does not damage the resource people seek to enjoy

Our asks:

- C1. DCMS** – Be a test-bed for innovative solutions to ultrafast broadband in rural areas (including driving up wireless broadband speeds through software improvements)
- C2. LEP** – Planned digital business support to recognise the unique challenge of delivery in the National Parks; engagement with the National Parks in the deployment of Mobile 4G infrastructure project
- C3. DCMS** – Gap funding to pilot integration of mobile telephony with superfast broadband
- C4. DfT/LEP** – Improved signage for National Parks from major trunk roads and enhanced transport links to Exmoor (via improvements to the A358 and around Taunton)
- C5. DfT/LEP** – Seed funding for innovative transport solutions to improve rural accessibility within the productivity network (e.g. wheels to work, community transport solutions, on-line training materials)
- C6. Innovate UK/Local Partners** – A test-bed for applied digital innovation (rural)
- C7. Defra** – Make EAFRD tourism infrastructure funds open to public and voluntary sector applications.

Skills

A highly skilled rural workforce (training, apprenticeships)



Our offer:

- We have an established delivery mechanism for skills training of the farming communities in both National Parks that we can build upon. For example, Dartmoor farmers have already established their own company – Moorskills Ltd – to run be-spoke apprenticeship and training programmes
- Evidence base of skills gaps and shortages in relation to key sectors that are currently inhibiting business growth
- Work to bring together different sectors and to involve young people in knowledge transfer (through, for example, the Next Generation Group of farmers on Dartmoor)

The two National Park Authorities will:

- Develop their own apprenticeship programmes and look to involve the private sector in these through placements etc.
- Help to assist with knowledge transfer by building on existing links with Universities and developing cross-sector networks

Through the Rural Productivity Network we will:

- Increase participation of farming, tourism and other businesses in training and development programmes and provide opportunities for knowledge transfer and exchange of best practice
- Bring together businesses, education and FE sectors to train the next generation workforce (collaboratively and in partnership with local providers such as the Colleges and Skills Group) to meet the needs of the area: an employer rather than education-led programme of apprenticeships

Our asks:

- S1. Defra** – Devolution of Countryside Productivity skills funding to roll-out the successful 'Moor Skills' model of apprenticeships and skills development to ALL key sectors in the National Parks
- S2. Defra** – to consider how EAFRD growth programme could be used to support an employer-led training model and work with the LEP to bring forward this activity
- S3. Defra** – support for Farm and Food Network to deliver integrated actions to increase farm profitability within environmental limits

Growth

Developing strong conditions for business growth



Our offer:

- Distinctive local businesses and products that build on the unique environment within the two National Parks
- A track record of successful local collaboration (e.g. farming and tourism networks) that will provide a firm foundation for the Rural Productivity Network
- To develop a new type of Rural Productivity Network, for each National Park, based on collaboration both between and across clusters. The network will utilise a cluster facilitation approach (similar to that employed by the successful Hill Farms Projects) to support key sectors, working with businesses to, for example:

The two National Park Authorities will:

- Seek to develop their proactive approach to positive planning – using it as a tool to support development that both sustains the resource and supports local growth
- Use their role as place-based leaders, enablers and catalysts for change to host and support the Rural Productivity Network

Through the Rural Productivity Network we will:

- Test and develop a new approach to integrated development that is based on collaboration, local engagement, bringing together local businesses to support their development, improve their productivity and develop new markets and products

Our asks:

- G1. Defra** – to support the LEP and wider ESIF committee to bring forward a call under measure 16.4 (co-operation in supply chains) to allow the Parks to bid in for EAFRD resources for revenue funding to facilitate the establishment of the Network
- G2. Defra** – commitment to use Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks as test beds for development of innovative models to boost rural productivity
- G3. Defra** – work with us to explore Protected Geographical Status for key products from the two National Parks
- G4. Local partners** – to work with us to explore options for long-term financial sustainability through local devolution process
- G5. LEP** – resources (via the Local Growth Fund) to unlock workspace infrastructure requirements
- G6. DCMS** – DMO recognition for Exmoor / Dartmoor

Living

Easier to live in rural areas
(housing, affordable childcare)



Our offer:

- Positive planning practices are in place and the National Parks have been pilot authorities in the Government's Vanguard Self-build project
- Underemployment within the Parks is compounded by limited childcare options
- Housing stock old and difficult to treat for energy efficiency, leading to fuel poverty

The two National Park Authorities will:

- Continue to provide a flexible planning policy framework to help deliver new homes that meet the needs of local communities and employers
- Develop a collaborative approach to rural housing delivery and respond positively to the strong demand for self-build housing as part of the Vanguard pilot

Through the Rural Productivity Network we will:

- Develop collaborative childcare solutions in support of employment
- Continue and develop innovative approaches to energy in homes and communities (including woodfuel)

Our asks:

- L1. Homes and Communities Agency** – funding to create revolving self-build fund to assist with site acquisition and infrastructure provision to address the shortage of affordable housing and the need to retain a stock of affordable homes for local needs
- L2. DfE/Local Partners** – Seed funding to develop collaborate childcare models to address the difficulties of providing childcare in rural areas
- L3. LEP/ESIF Committee** – to bring forward call in relation to rural renewables

Devolution

Greater local control (devolution) and working with our neighbours



Our offer:

- National Parks provide a model of integrated delivery combining the management of ecosystem services (such as biodiversity, public access and water management) with wider economic development
- The existing Dartmoor Farming Futures pilot project has successfully involved farmers in the design, delivery and monitoring of an agri-environment agreement. This model of local empowerment and partnership working offers potential cost savings and a better evidence base for policy making
- Existing 'Green Prescription' models being piloted to improve mental and physical well-being and save money in the long-term

The two National Park Authorities will:

- Integrate local delivery of land management initiatives
- Actively work with Local Nature Partnerships and the voluntary sector to enhance biodiversity and support the aims of Defra's 25 year Environment Plan and link this with the Food and Farming Strategy
- Expand provision of health and well-being services within the National Parks, supporting the health of the wider area.

Through the Rural Productivity Network we will:

- Engage with businesses and communities to realise the opportunities for growth and productivity provided by high quality natural environment; developing a model where productivity applies not just to the economy but also to the environment
- Monitor natural capital in the National Parks and the contribution it makes to the wider economy and quality of life in the Heart of the South West area

Our asks:

- D1. Defra** – To work with us to join-up nationally led activity (including RDPE) at a local level, following the Farming Futures model
- D2. Defra** – To allow local schemes such as LEADER to set local priorities and criteria for EU funding streams within EU eligibility framework.
- D3. Neighbouring Authorities** – To work with us to develop a new model that helps cross subsidise environmental management in the National pParks from development on the boundaries that will increase visitor and other forms of pressure
- D4. Clinical Commissioning Groups and Neighbouring Authorities** – To work with us to further develop health and well-being proposals, building on the Green Prescription pilot work and devolution opportunities

What next?

We are seeking assistance from Defra to develop the Dartmoor and Exmoor RPN as a demonstrator project that will help deliver the Government's productivity agenda and achieve this in a way that integrates with the forthcoming Environment and Food and Farming Strategies.

As a model, the RPN builds on our strongest assets: the people, communities and spectacular environment of the National Parks. Our current networks are pioneers of collaborative approaches (e.g. hill farming and tourism) and local businesses clearly have an appetite to come together to tackle problems. We have worked with local businesses and stakeholders to develop this concept.

The HofSWLEP has also been actively involved and supports the proposal. The concept is also embedded in the 'Devolution for the Heart of the South West: A Prospectus for Productivity'. The HofSWLEP has confirmed that, at present, there is no opportunity for funding via the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development though it could be eligible for funding (for example, under Measure 16.4).

The initiative offers Defra the opportunity to pilot a new approach that will help demonstrate how:

- Rural productivity can be improved through, for example, collaborative action to foster entrepreneurship, promote innovation and knowledge transfer
- A high quality, resilient environment and cultural heritage can be at the heart of rural growth and productivity
- New models of service provision and delivery can be developed to ensure the long-term sustainability of our rural communities
- Rural areas can provide effective and economic services to other areas (for example, health and water management)
- Traditional land-based industries can be developed to improve productivity and growth but also to deliver a range of environmental services

Our aim is for the initiative to become a recognised model of good practice that others can learn from. The proposal has the potential to fill a 'market gap': many of the examples of potential productivity and growth opportunities identified by local businesses are unlikely to happen without the capacity to support micro and small enterprises and get them to work together. The Network would provide capacity to do this.

Our key ask of Defra is to help us secure funding to establish and develop the RPN (perhaps through the Rural Development Programme for England).

Appendix 3 Principles for a New Environmental Land Management System

We have worked with a task and finish group of farmers/commoners/landowners on Dartmoor to develop a set of principles that we think should guide a future environmental land management system. These are outlined below.

Principle	What does it mean?	Outcome	Examples/Opportunity to Test/Demonstrate and potential problems
1. Scheme design would encourage farmer engagement at all stages.	<p>Farmers are encouraged to provide their considerable expertise to develop a scheme that is relevant to the local area.</p> <p>They would also participate in the development of a monitoring programme and be engaged in monitoring progress towards achieving the outcomes.</p> <p>Scheme design would encourage direct farmer participation and avoid third party participation in the application process.</p> <p>Scheme must enable farming to remain practicable.</p>	<p>Secures improved ownership and understanding, by the farmer, of the agreement.</p> <p>The resulting scheme would be better understood, supported by the farmer, be more realistic and deliverable.</p> <p>Helps facilitate a pride in delivering public benefits.</p>	<p>Evidence from the assessment of DFF.</p> <p>Evidence of better understanding of agreement by those who prepared the application compared to those farmers that used an agent.</p>

Principle	What does it mean?	Outcome	Examples/Opportunity to Test/Demonstrate and potential problems
<p>2. There would be a shared Vision for the landscape area (eg National Park).</p>	<p>The Vision would be inclusive of the main public benefits and its boundary relevant to potential delivery, e.g. a water catchment or National Park.</p> <p>The vision would relate to national and local priorities.</p> <p>The principal objectives and resulting outcomes would be recognised and supported by the main stakeholders (including farmers). These outcomes would be relevant to the area and some would be common to all agreements in a defined landscape area.</p>	<p>Joint ownership of the vision would ensure better delivery of multiple benefits whilst giving confidence to the farmers that all stakeholders shared the same ambition(s) for a discreet area of land.</p> <p>A publically available vision could enable better public understanding of why certain farming activity was supported and to demonstrate value.</p> <p>Transparent method for targeting and ensuring a link between national priorities and local delivery.</p>	<p>Refresh the Dartmoor Moorland Vision and extend it to enclosed land.</p> <p>Create opportunity to review how 'on and off farm education' could improve understanding and bring benefits to farmers and public.</p> <p>Dartmoor integrated Rhôs pasture plan/map could be basis for testing work.</p> <p>Mardle tributary of the Dart - natural flood management catchments.</p>
<p>3. An agreement would be predicated on a set of outcomes that deliver a range of public benefits.</p>	<p>There is a clear contractual agreement to deliver a range of public benefits that are relevant to the farm/common that are achievable, ambitious and clearly described.</p> <p>There is a presumption that food production would be included in the list of outcomes that farmers can deliver against.</p> <p>An approach that is not complicated and avoids often confusing prescriptions by focusing on outcomes.</p>	<p>Moving beyond maintenance to improvement where required.</p> <p>Clear link between public payment and public benefit.</p> <p>Maximises public value</p> <p>No need for complex options and prescriptions.</p> <p>Continuity of mapping.</p>	<p>Dartmoor Farming Futures (DFF) provides an example of this approach.</p> <p>Opportunity/need to test at the farm level.</p>

Principle	What does it mean?	Outcome	Examples/Opportunity to Test/Demonstrate and potential problems
<p>4. Full integration of environmental objectives into the farm's business.</p>	<p>We want to see environmental improvement to be a core part of a farm business whilst ensuring the business is profitable. To secure this change (for most farmers) this will require a simple, map-based, walk over the farm process by the farmer to identify the potential outcomes and farm practices required to deliver them.</p> <p>It is essential that the farmer who will deliver the agreement completes the application (with additional advice if required).</p>	<p>Improves awareness of environmental and cultural 'assets or special qualities' at a farm level. Encourage better integration of environmental outcomes into the farm business.</p> <p>The environment (protection and enhancement) is seen by the farmer as integral to their future business.</p> <p>If the farmer shapes the agreement then the agreement is more likely to deliver the outcomes.</p>	<p>Need to test this approach as it could be resource hungry.</p> <p>Would need to have a practical value to farmer and relevant to their business. Promote as a business opportunity.</p> <p>Potential option to offer grant to farmers to produce farm environmental audit and business plan. This then gets them to identify outcomes they can deliver to enter scheme.</p> <p>Will need to ensure that there is access to clear and trusted advice.</p>
<p>5. The agreement would be relevant to local conditions.</p>	<p>Scheme design must enable the character of different places, the weather (and future weather), visitor pressure, local culture etc. to be reflected in the selection of outcomes and the financial reward. This can be achieved within a national framework that sets broad objectives and priorities.</p> <p>The governance should reflect local circumstances – commons, tenants.</p>	<p>Will secure a more resilient scheme/agreement and integrated delivery.</p>	<p>May require some form of base line assessment (ie links to monitoring programme).</p> <p>Could be tested through the Dartmoor Farming Futures pilot.</p>

Principle	What does it mean?	Outcome	Examples/Opportunity to Test/Demonstrate and potential problems
<p>6. Agreements to be an appropriate length.</p>	<p>The length of a scheme must be sufficiently long to provide confidence to the agreement holder that delivery of the outcomes is achievable and also to facilitate changes in farming practice where these are required to deliver the outcomes.</p> <p>An agreement for a common/moorland should be a minimum of 10 years but longer if possible (20 years) with a roll over to ensure continuity of actions and benefits.</p> <p>There would need to be annual reporting (and monitoring) to demonstrate delivery and progress towards the outcomes.</p> <p>Need to consider how price inflation is factored into an agreement.</p>	<p>A long term agreement is likely to be more attractive and more likely to deliver real change. Confidence is improved by longer term agreements.</p>	<p>Dartmoor Farming Futures demonstrates annual reporting as a measure of achieving the outcomes.</p>
<p>7. Sufficient resources for providing advice at the correct time.</p>	<p>Provision of advice focuses on the selection of the most appropriate outcomes for the farm/common, then providing technical advice on aspects of the outcomes and support for monitoring. Provide integrated delivery/solutions 'one voice'.</p> <p>Facilitate knowledge sharing across and within different areas, amongst the deliverers of the agreements.</p> <p>Ensure learning - leads to more effective and efficient delivery.</p>	<p>Access to expert advice.</p> <p>Clarity.</p> <p>Co-ordinated advice.</p> <p>Improved, more efficient delivery.</p>	<p>Link to local conditions and have a clear shared vision for the 'place'.</p> <p>Moorland Management Forum, Dartmoor Hill Farm Project and access to local advice.</p> <p>Upstream Thinking, Dartmoor Moorland Bird Project, DNPA Archaeologists, vegetation monitoring programmes.</p> <p>Opportunities to test this linked to principles 1 and 4 above.</p>
<p>8. Encourage & Enable Innovation.</p>	<p>Encourage new ideas. Help stimulate innovation and productivity.</p> <p>Consider how best to support next generation.</p>	<p>Fairness.</p> <p>Value for money.</p> <p>Maintain cash flow.</p> <p>Support for local economy.</p>	<p>Need to find a practical resolution to this issue. Potential solution to pay for activities but what happens if you enable the actions?</p> <p>Test on a new Dartmoor Farming Futures trial.</p>

Principle	What does it mean?	Outcome	Examples/Opportunity to Test/Demonstrate and potential problems
9. Reward those that do the work.	<p>Ensure the correct level of reward is received by those that contribute to achieving the outcomes and/or enables it to happen.</p> <p>Payments made in a timely manner.</p> <p>The agreement must be with the principle deliverer (of the outcomes). This would also apply to agreements on common land and tenanted land.</p> <p>Collaborative action (ie farmers working together to deliver landscape scale management and enhancement) should be incentivised.</p> <p>Need to consider alternative payment mechanisms.</p>	<p>Fairness.</p> <p>Value for money.</p> <p>Maintain cash flow.</p> <p>Support for local economy.</p>	<p>Need to find a practical resolution to this issue. Potential solution to pay for activities but what happens if you enable the actions?</p> <p>Test on a new Dartmoor Farming Futures trial.</p>
10. Accountability & Transparency.	<p>Better information available to the public relating to what public money is paying for.</p> <p>Farmers clear on what they are delivering in return for public funding.</p> <p>Acknowledge success to the agreement holder when outcomes are achieved.</p>	<p>Improved understanding by all (farmers & public) that would lead to better public support.</p> <p>It could result in encouraging collaborative working to deliver the outcomes.</p>	<p>Opportunity to test through National Park Visitor Centres, outreach programmes and use of websites and social media.</p> <p>Improved mechanism for the distribution of funding on commons between commoners.</p>

Footnote: 'Scheme' refers to overarching national plan/framework established to facilitate delivery.
'Agreement' refers to individual (or group) contracts to deliver specific objectives within a scheme for a defined number of years.



National Parks England: A Roadmap for the Future of National Parks

Introduction

The announcement of the Designated Landscape Review, together with the unique social and political context created by Brexit and a growing public concern for the environment, has created a space for us to consider the future of our National Parks. National Park Authorities in England have collectively been engaged in these discussions and have created what we believe is an ambitious Roadmap for the future of England's National Parks.

Our submission to the Glover Review of Designated Landscapes in December of 2018 identified five key opportunities outlining our collective ambition for the future of our National Parks. These Five Opportunities, while not encompassing the entirety of the work of National Park Authorities, represent important areas of work that will greatly enhance the realisation of our Statutory Purposes and Duty. Taken together, they have the potential to significantly improve the environment and people's experience of our National Parks.

Five Opportunities

Opportunity 1 – National Parks as bigger and better places for nature, connected through wildlife corridors to each other and resilient to climate change

Opportunity 2 – Bespoke farming and land management schemes that work for National Parks and underpin wider rural development

Opportunity 3 – A strong new partnership with the NHS to improve people's health, well-being, and recovery

Opportunity 4 – A Government commitment that every child has the opportunity to visit a National Park to enjoy outstanding learning experiences during their time at school

Opportunity 5 – Harnessing a passion for our National Parks

This document builds on the Five Opportunities and identifies key actions, programmes, resources, and decisions required for their delivery in the form of a Roadmap. These proposals capture our collective vision and ambition for the next 70 years of England's National Parks and are deliberately bold. The Government has committed to enhancing National Parks in the 25 Year Environment Plan and these proposals are crucial to delivering that objective¹. It is important to note also that National Park Authorities are partnership-based organisations and

¹ [25 Year Environment Plan – Chapter 2, Item 2.](#)

while we can provide strategic leadership and play a central role in delivery, partnerships will also be key to achieving our collective vision.

Essential Levers for Delivery

The Standing of National Parks

The strengthening of two specific pieces of legislation is essential for delivering the Five Opportunities. First the Section 62 duty on relevant authorities to “have regard” to National Parks should be strengthened². Second, relevant authorities should also be required to cooperate in the development and implementation of National Park Management Plans³. While National Parks were originally designated with the purpose of protecting and enhancing the landscape, the only statutory powers National Park Authorities currently have relate to the built environment rather than the natural environment. Early discussion and decisions around these amendments will be essential given the forthcoming Environment Bill.

Resources

The challenges identified in this paper are not easy tasks with quick fixes. Delivering our vision for National Parks will take significant resources, in terms of staffing, programmes, and funding, and require collaborative sustained action over time. It is important to remember that our National Parks are national assets, and investment in them yields myriad benefits for society, including economic benefits.

We project that implementing the Five Opportunities will require approximately £238 million annually. However, the majority of this is not new money. It is estimated that based on historic levels of investment, over £178 million of this should come through future ELMS and future rural development programmes and growth deals. We are seeking a refocusing of these funds towards the delivery of the Opportunities set out in this Roadmap. The remaining £60 million, while a substantial increase, is a fraction of the funds flowing into National Parks and would only result in raising per capita funding for National Parks to £1.60 per year. Some of the £60 million could also be achieved through a transfer of funds from other bodies, rather than new spending. Further, not all funding would necessarily have to come from the Treasury if Government gives strong support to schemes such as payments for ecosystem services.

² Amendments would be required to Section 11(A)(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949; and Section 17A of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988

³ This would require an amendment to the Environment Act 1995.

Our Vision⁴

Vision for the English National Parks and the Broads

By 2030 English National Parks and the Broads will be places where:

- There are thriving, living, working landscapes notable for their natural beauty and cultural heritage. They inspire visitors and local communities to live within environmental limits and to tackle climate change. The wide-range of services they provide (from clean water to sustainable food) are in good condition and valued by society.
- Sustainable development can be seen in action. The communities of the Parks take an active part in decisions about their future. They are known for having been pivotal in the transformation to a low carbon society and sustainable living. Renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, low carbon transport and travel and healthy, prosperous communities have long been the norm.
- Wildlife flourishes and habitats are maintained, restored and expanded and linked effectively to other ecological networks. Woodland cover has increased, and all woodlands are sustainably managed, with the right trees in the right places. Landscapes and habitats are managed to create resilience and enable adaptation.
- Everyone can discover the rich variety of England's natural and historic environment and have the chance to value them as places for escape, adventure, enjoyment, inspiration and reflection, and a source of national pride and identity. They will be recognised as fundamental to our prosperity and well-being.

The Five Opportunities do not exist in a vacuum. They are underpinned by, and designed to advance, the National Parks' Vision, Statutory Purposes, and Duty. They are closely interlinked with the delivery of, and the achievement of each other. For example, sustainable environmental land management and rural development schemes underpin thriving resilient landscapes, wildlife and nature which in turn provide opportunities for health, wellbeing, education, and engagement.

Statutory Purpose 1 – Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Parks

Statutory Purpose 2 – Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public

Duty – In pursuit of these purposes, National Parks have a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Parks

⁴ [English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010](#)

Opportunity 1 - National Parks as bigger and better places for nature

Getting nature recovery right in our National Parks is foundational to achieving all Five Opportunities set out in this Roadmap. National Parks should be places where nature and wildlife can be seen and experienced at their best. Unfortunately, decades of land use change and agricultural intensification have undermined wildlife and biodiversity in National Parks. However, it is clear that the agri-environment payments coming into National Parks play a fundamental role in maintaining the fabric of these landscapes. Today, our National Parks also face new pressures from climate change, extreme weather, imported tree diseases, and non-native invasive species.

If the Government's ambitions set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan are to be realised, then National Parks must be at the heart of nature recovery. Our submission to the 25 Year Environment Plan inquiry contained ambitious proposals to do this. The actions and programmes identified in the Roadmap expand on that submission and are underpinned by the principles established in the Lawton Review⁵ of more, bigger, better, and more joined up wildlife habitat. Many of these actions link to Government's ambition for a new Nature Recovery Network. We want to build on and enhance the existing natural capital in National Parks to increase the resilience and natural regeneration of habitats and species.

Opportunity 2 – Bespoke farming, land management, and rural development schemes that work for National Parks

Farming and Land Management

Sustainable farming, land management, and rural development schemes go hand-in-hand with delivering robust nature recovery in our National Parks. Our paper "Farming in the English National Parks"⁶ set out a model for environmental land management and the importance of taking an integrated, place based approach that could deliver multiple benefits. The proposed Environmental Land Management System (ELMS) is an essential tool to enhance our National Parks – making them even better for:

1. Nature – supporting nature recovery but also landscape, cultural heritage and other public benefits and ecosystem services in an integrated, cost-effective way.
2. People – involving farmers and land managers in the design, delivery and monitoring of the system, supporting improved access, better interpretation, and providing funding for volunteer engagement, CARE farms, and more.
3. Economy – Supporting a dynamic mix of small businesses, farmers, land managers, contractors, the wider supply chain, and our towns and villages, by offering a fair reward for public goods.

⁵ [Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network](#)

⁶ [Farming in the English National Parks](#)

We would like to see local environmental land management and rural development schemes operating in all our National Parks. These schemes should combine national and local priorities. They should be informed by – and be a key tool for delivering – the objectives set out in National Park Management Plans.

Rural Development

Our National Parks are unusual in the world of protected areas in that they are lived-in, working landscapes. We should see this as a strength. We are keen to develop a new approach to rural development that uses the assets of our national parks to contribute to wider economic growth and productivity, whilst supporting vibrant and thriving communities in and around National Parks. This can and should be a key feature of the English National Parks. Our ambition is set out in the paper “Rural Development in England’s National Parks”.

Our proposed model would act as an exemplar for development in the most rural parts of England and elsewhere in the UK. It would be based on an approach that harnesses:

1. Natural capital – using the rich natural assets and natural beauty of England’s finest landscapes to enhance business development, productivity and employment.
2. Economic capital – extending the reach of economic support initiatives to drive growth and productivity, enhancing the ambition and robustness of rural businesses in key sectors such as agriculture, tourism, services and processing.
3. Social capital – securing and building on the important human and community assets in these deeply rural areas, e.g. to support the visitor economy or help innovate new solutions in key areas, such as supporting an ageing population.

Opportunity 3 – A strong new partnership with the NHS to improve people’s health and well-being and recovery

In promoting opportunities for public enjoyment, our ambition is to fully realise the restorative and preventative potential of National Parks to enhance the nation’s health and wellbeing, tapping in to one of the very reasons that National Parks were created. National Parks should play a key role in the new social prescribing model being developed by the NHS. They should be understood as places where mental and physical health is supported and enhanced.

We envision establishing National Parks as hubs for excellence in nature and landscape-led health and wellbeing. Key to this is improving understanding, both among healthcare professionals and within the wider public, of the opportunities and resources that exist in National Parks and expanding the capacity and expertise of National Park Authorities to play a convening and enabling role. Much of the physical infrastructure is already in place to support this, organisational capacity and focus can help unleash this latent potential.

Opportunity 4 – A Government commitment that every child has the opportunity to visit a National Park to enjoy outstanding learning experiences during their time at school

National Park education staff play a central role in enriching learning experiences and work as expert-advocates for outdoor learning in partnership with schools to deliver activities directly to school children. In 2016, 26 National Park FTEs directly engaged with 70,000 pupils at salary costs of approximately £0.91m⁷ and operational costs of approximately £0.1m⁸. Alongside direct delivery, we build capacity for outdoor learning and understanding of protected landscapes through networks and ambassador programmes, providing training and support for education centres and school teachers within and beyond National Parks.

Every child an Outdoor Citizen

National Parks support the Institute for Outdoor Learning's Outdoor Citizen Campaign and our protected landscapes can provide vital moments of inspiration to support young people in their journey to becoming motivated individuals and active citizens. To support their progression in engagement from learning about protected landscapes remotely, to outdoor learning day visits and the benefits of residential stays, the geographical reach of our well-established models of working must be extended. Our ambition is to engage with all children during their time at school, an additional 555,000 pupils annually. This requires, at least, an additional budget of £8m⁹.

Opportunity 5 – Harnessing a passion for our National Parks

Our National Parks are a key part of our national heritage and identity and delivering on each of the other Opportunities is essential to reigniting the shared passion, pride in place, and sense of common rights and values that originally led to their creation. We know visitors and those who live in and near our National Parks are passionate about them and are drawn to experience the natural beauty, tranquillity, wellbeing, and outdoor learning and recreation opportunities these landscapes offer.

Harnessing and expanding this passion nationally will underpin the delivery of and likewise be reinforced by the robust nature recovery, economic development, wellbeing, and education programmes outlined in Opportunities 1-4. We need therefore to open the potential for our National Parks to truly be for everyone and a source of national pride and passion. While it may not be feasible for everyone in the UK to visit our National Parks, more can be done to increase access for underserved communities.

⁷ Average £35,000 on-costs per FTE staff member

⁸ Average £10,000 operational budget per park

⁹ There will be little benefit from economies of scale as engagement increases. Per head engagement with new audiences will likely be more expensive than existing audiences owing to increased barriers, e.g. confidence, motivation and transport costs. Distribution of additional funding would be carefully considered, taking into account distribution of school populations and target audiences alongside other practical considerations.

Expanding transport and access opportunities will be key to this, however, there is a primary need to expand our public engagement efforts to increase awareness, understanding, and appreciation of what is special about our National Parks and how they can benefit people. As we look to the future, this means doing things differently and focusing our efforts on improving outreach to and dialogue with communities we have previously not engaged with to a great extent, particularly urban and disadvantaged communities.

Roadmap

This section encapsulates the actions and programmes that would be required to achieve the ambition outlined by the Five Opportunities. It also outlines the resources and key decisions that are needed to facilitate and adequately support those programmes.

Opportunity 1 – Landscape and Biodiversity

Actions and Programmes Required¹⁰

1. Nature Improvement Programme
 - a. Identify zones within National Parks for intensive habitat improvement to reverse habitat losses.
 - b. Compile a priority list of species to be safeguarded, and reintroduced, to strengthen natural biodiversity.
 - c. Create new habitats to ‘make space for nature’, cope with climate change, and for their own sake.
 - d. Increase broadleaf tree planting in support of habitat and wildlife improvement, and natural flood management.
 - e. Map and establish green and blue corridors linking the National Parks, National Forest, and AONBs.
 - f. Long term invasive non-native species programme targeted at top 3 species.
2. Landscape Improvement Programme
 - a. Identify and remove eyesores or activities which detract from natural beauty or threaten biodiversity in National Parks.
 - b. Improve built and ‘natural’ landscapes, including historic environment features.
 - c. Adapt built, natural, and historic environment in response to climate change.

Resources and Decisions Required

1. A commitment to achieving the National Park vision for robust nature recovery in the Government’s successor strategy to Biodiversity 2020.
2. Practical, policy, and organizational support from Defra, Natural England, and other statutory bodies with a role in the natural and historic environment.

¹⁰ See the Government’s [25 Year Environment Plan](#), Chapter 2.

3. New powers to enhance biodiversity and protect wildlife in National Parks, including:
 - a. A remit for NPAs to deliver new Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS) in National Parks.
 - b. A review of whether the wildlife powers of organisations working in National Parks should be transferred to National Park Authorities.
4. Additional funding for habitat improvement, and species reintroduction in National Parks, beyond that which is flowing into Parks through ELMS:

Resource	Annual Cost for 25 Years *For 10 years only
Staff (facilitators, ecologists, delivery officers)	£5,600,000
Habitat Loss Reversal	£24,000,000
Species Re-introduction	£1,200,000*
Declining Species	£1,000,000*
New Habitats/Climate Change Adaptation	£12,000,000
Broadleaf Tree Planting	£9,600,000
Invasive Non-Native Species Removal	£3,000,00*
Total	£56,400,000

Opportunity 2 – Agriculture and Rural Development

Actions and Programmes Required

1. Local tests and trials to develop the local delivery model facilitated and resourced through the Defra Environmental Land Management Test and Trials process (2019 – 2021). Learning to be embedded in national ELMS work and the national pilot including a local delivery element (2024).¹¹
2. Trial new approaches to paying for public goods – performance related payments/payment by results and incentives for landscape scale, collaborative action (again facilitated through the Defra Environmental Land Management Test and Trials process) (2019 – 2021).
3. Development of a ‘Rural Strategy for England’ in collaboration with Defra which includes a specific focus on national parks as key rural assets (2020/21).

Resources and Decisions Required

1. Parliament
 - a. Agriculture Bill provides legislative framework to allow for local delivery (2019).
 - b. A clear regulatory framework to ensure that there is no net environmental loss as the transition from the Common Agricultural Policy and Good Agriculture and Environment Condition to the new Environmental Land Management System (timing dependent on Brexit).

¹¹ See the [Future of Food, Farming, and the Environment](#) for further details.

- c. A commitment to the development of a ‘Rural Strategy’ in the Government response to the House of Lords Rural Economy report.
2. Treasury
 - a. Adequate funding for the transition period to ensure that land remains in environmental land management.
 - b. Adequate, public sector resourcing for facilitation and advice – this should be seen as an investment that will enable cost effective and efficient delivery.
 3. DCMS
 - a. The role of National Parks should be specifically recognised, and National Park Authorities asked to contribute to the emerging ‘Tourism Sector Deal’ to reflect the importance of National Parks to rural tourism and reflecting the recent growth and success of the ‘National Parks Experiences Collection’ work with Visit England/Visit Britain (2019).
 - b. Adequate resources to expand mobile and broadband access in National Parks.
 4. BEIS
 - a. Requirement for all Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) to have a specific chapter in their Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) to address rural opportunities in the context of the five foundations and Grand Challenges of the Industrial Strategy (From 2019 onwards during development of relevant LISs).
 - b. Ensure all local growth deals have where relevant a specific focus on rural areas, and national parks where appropriate (From 2019 onwards).
 - c. Ringfence funds within the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for rural growth.
 - d. Require LEPs to work with National Park Authorities to co-author and co-deliver bespoke programmes of support based on the economy and value of the natural capital in and around National Parks (2021 to 2036)¹².

Resource	Annual Cost
Transition funding for AE Schemes	£53,357,846 ¹³
Transition funding for BPS	£94,000,000
Rural Development Funding	£18,000,000 ¹⁴
Total	£165,357,000

Opportunity 3 – Health and Wellbeing

Actions and Programmes Required¹⁵

1. To draw on the restorative benefit of National Parks through social prescribing in partnership with the NHS:

¹² See [UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#).

¹³ See Natural England [ES Agreement Data](#).

¹⁴ Will include funding from UK Shared Prosperity Fund, growth deals and sector specific deals.

¹⁵ See joint NPE/PHE [accord on health and wellbeing](#).

- a. Develop robust, evidence-led and scalable social prescribing offers in National Parks, including volunteering, walking, cycling and other outdoor and nature connection activities targeted to match health sector outcomes.
2. National Parks as places where mental and physical health is supported and enhanced – preventative health in practice:
 - a. Develop a nationally significant programme to directly benefit young people’s mental health through supported experiences in National Parks.
 - b. Build capacity in existing National Park activity providers to deliver health benefits in Parks to targeted groups.
 - c. Increase the visibility of the health and wellbeing benefits offered by protected areas within the health sector.
3. Develop National Parks as hubs for excellence in the natural health service:
 - a. Creating NPA/Public Health England clusters to further collaboration.
 - b. Piloting innovative approaches in National Parks that embed preventative behaviour change to improve physical health and mental wellbeing.
 - c. National Parks to be places of inspiration, training venues, and research centres for this activity, for the benefit of the wider environment and health sectors.

Resources and Decisions Required

1. Drawing on the restorative benefits of National Parks:
 - a. Agree a partnership with the NHS that places National Parks at the heart of the ‘natural health service’ with Parks acting as test beds for new approaches to sustaining health and wellbeing. This to be included in the national implementation programme for the NHS Long Term Plan¹⁶.
 - b. In partnership with the NHS, Social Prescribing Link Officers to be hosted in each National Park over a minimum of 5 years to enable health professionals to be able to direct patients to services/ groups operating in National Parks.
2. Embedding preventative health through National Parks:
 - a. Additional health and wellbeing resources in each NPA. £70k per Park per year added to core budget to deliver additional activity providers, training resources, and engagement with the health sector.
 - b. Funding to deliver bespoke programme for young people, specifically to benefit their mental health. £200k per Park per year for 3 years.

Resource	Annual Cost
Health and Wellbeing Resources (Social Prescribing Link Officers, and Prevention Officers) 2 FTE per Park over 5-year period	£1,500,000 over 5 years
Youth Mental Health Programme	£6,000,000 over 3 years
Total	£7,500,000

¹⁶ See [NHS long-term plan](#).

Opportunity 4 – Every Child in the Parks

Actions and Programmes Required¹⁷

1. Outdoor learning programmes that provide opportunities for all school children to experience National Parks through a ladder of engagement, from day visits, to overnight and weekly stays, to volunteer and apprenticeship opportunities.
2. Strengthened relationships with partner organisations, e.g. local nature reserves, urban parks, YHA, John Muir Trust, National Citizen Service centres and youth groups, to collectively promote understanding of and engagement with protected landscapes.

Resources and Decisions Required

1. A requirement for children to learn about protected landscapes must be explicitly referenced in the National Curriculum and endorsed by the Department for Education. We recommend protected landscapes are included in both the Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 curriculum supported¹⁷ by notes and guidance that encourage fieldwork and field trips.
2. Additional funding for direct pupil engagement:

Resource	Annual Cost		
	2016	2025	2035
Direct pupil engagement	70,000	280,000	555,000
Total cost	£0.92m	£3.7m	£8m¹⁸

Opportunity 5 – Harnessing Passion

Actions and Programmes Required

1. Broader engagement with the public through:
 - a. Staffing at strategic sites and centres in the hearts of towns and cities to promote National Parks and AONBs, explicitly addressing gaps in awareness, helping everyone, including young people, to build their understanding of our network of protected landscapes.
 - b. Community engagement officers in National Parks to enhance outreach programmes to under-represented groups, linked with existing communications professionals in each of the Parks to widen the appeal of National Parks.
2. Transport and access programmes and facilities to address the physical barriers for disadvantaged communities getting out into National Parks.
3. A strong communications and marketing campaign with clear branding and common messaging to build engagement with and passion for National Parks themed around:
 - a. National Parks as places which define and shape the nation as places of national pride.

¹⁷ See Defra [funding commitments](#) to increase access to the environment for school children.

¹⁸ Includes funding for staffing at strategic sites and outreach centres (Opportunity 5, Action 1a).

- b. National Parks and the link to the nation’s physical and mental health and well-being.
- c. National Parks as test beds for sustainable living – showcasing innovation and demonstrating how the population can live within our carbon limits.

Resources and Decisions Required

1. Resources in each National Park Authority to support enhanced community engagement; 10 additional FTEs across National Park Authorities.
2. An emphasis on disadvantaged groups, including transport grants that communities can apply for, administered by each of the Park Authorities.
3. A strong branding and marketing campaign across all National Parks.

Resource	Annual Cost
Community Engagement – 10 FTEs	£400,000
Transport Grant Scheme	£500,000
Branding and Marketing Campaign	£150,000
Total	£900,000

Funding

Refocussed Funding Supporting National Parks (Existing)

Annual Funding £ in Thousands	2020	2025	2030	2035
Agriculture and Rural Development				
▪ Transition Funding for AE Schemes	£53,357	-	-	-
▪ Transition Funding for BPS	£94,000	-	-	-
▪ New ELMS Funding	-	£160,000	£160,000	£160,000
▪ Rural Development Funding ¹⁹	£18,000	£18,000	£18,000	£18,000
Total	£165,357	£178,000	£178,000	£178,000

Funding for National Park Authorities (Additional)

Annual Funding £ in Thousands	2020	2025	2030	2035
Wildlife and Biodiversity				
▪ Staffing	£5,600	£5,600	£5,600	£5,600
▪ Habitat Loss Reversal	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000
▪ Species Reintroduction	£1,200	£1,200	£1,200	-
▪ Declining Species	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	-
▪ New habitats/climate change adaptation	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000
▪ Broadleaf tree planting	£9,600	£9,600	£9,600	£9,600
▪ Alien species removal	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	-
Health and Wellbeing				
▪ Social Prescribing Link Officers, and Prevention Officers - 2 FTE	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500
▪ Youth Mental Health Programme	£200	-	-	-
Every Child in a Park				
▪ Direct Pupil Engagement	£920	£3,700	£5,850	£8,000
Harnessing Passion				
▪ Community Engagement – 10 FTEs	£400	£400	£400	£400
▪ Transportation Grant Scheme	£500	£500	£500	£500
▪ Branding and Marketing Campaign	£150	£150	£150	£150
Total	£60,070	£62,750	£64,800	£61,750

¹⁹In development, will include funding from UK Shared Prosperity Fund, growth deals and sector specific deals.



National Landscape Service

A proposal from National Parks England

May 2020

Summary

1. We welcome the priority that Ministers have attached to taking forward the broad agenda set by the Landscapes Review. We hope that this is shared across Government since securing buy-in for some of the significant ambitions and programmes contained in the report will need their active support. NPE is keen to work with Government through the Contact Group and the Reference Group that has been established and is working with a range of partners outside of these structures to make progress in the interim.

2. The proposal to establish a National Landscape Service (NLS) has been described as a ‘flagship’ recommendation. We think it is important that this adds value to the existing framework, and would advocate the establishment of an independent panel that could be established quickly, provide a national champion for protected landscapes, and constructive challenge to protected landscapes, Government departments, and its agencies. Below we set out in more detail what a National Landscape Panel (NLP) might achieve, and how it might operate. We would be very happy to discuss our ideas with Ministers and Officials in greater depth.

National Parks England is seeking support for action across the Glover Report...

3. The Glover Review set out an ambitious agenda for Protected Landscapes to be even better for people and nature. We are keen to work with Government and many others on the broad range of ambitions – and particularly around four priorities:

- National Parks for all
- Nature recovery
- Climate leadership
- Sustainable farming and land management

4. These will continue to be our priorities and we are urging Government to further these in the decisions it takes. We do not want a focus on the NLS to mean action on these other priorities takes a back seat or becomes predicated on the formation of a new quango.

The need for change and challenge

5. Internal discussions to date within NPE on this topic suggest that, once duplication has been removed, there remains a strong case for:

- an advocate and champion for national landscapes at national level with sufficient profile and powers to be listened to;
- a forum which can speak truth to power and reconcile the competing pressures on national landscapes from government departments and other public bodies by integrating policy;
- a unifying advocate able to bring together – and speak for - landscape, biodiversity, access, cultural heritage and natural beauty;
- a powerful partner for the fund-raising work of National Parks Partnerships and the NAAONB Charity and individual national landscapes;
- a national scrutineer of national landscape Management Plans able to challenge omissions, increase ambition, transfer best practice and enhance accountability;
- a co-ordinator able to ensure that Office of Environmental Protection (OEP) standards are applied across all designations;
- a national voice able to relate to NGOs and national representative bodies (eg NFU, CLA, NHF, RTPi) on an equal basis; and
- a source of independent review and challenge for both government and the landscapes.

6. A number of commentators who sit on the Reference Group have already highlighted the distinction between a strategic and more operational role and the risks in a NLS trying to cover both. National Parks England would agree. We do not support a Service that has a direct delivery role.

7. If above represents its functions, it is suggested that a number of principles should underpin Government's thinking. Any change should:

- Facilitate integrated decision making across government, agencies and policy agendas - supporting the wide role that landscapes play across policy agendas including net zero, the economy and people's mental and physical health.
- Support integrated local delivery and local responsiveness – with the national level providing a flexible framework within which local delivery partnerships can flourish, and reconcile competing pressures.
- Encourage independent evidence-based advice and recommendations to decision makers, informed by practical knowledge and expertise from the ground.
- Be cost effective – clearly adding value to existing arrangements and avoiding duplication of roles and responsibilities.
- Promote cohesion, collaboration and effective partnership working.
- Achieve impact – provide clear accountability and enable government's vision and ambition to be translated into action.

The merits of a National Landscapes Panel...

8. National Parks England have looked at a range of options that might achieve these functions and be consistent with the principles above. The potential duplication with existing bodies could be avoided and the outcomes above delivered at reasonable cost by the creation of a non-statutory National Landscapes Panel (NLP).

9. A non-statutory National Landscapes Panel might work on the following model:
- a board of (say) 8 - 4 recruited by advertisement, 2 central government representatives, one AONB Chair and one NPA Chair - able to provide national leadership under a Chair who is independent of Natural England and a widely acknowledged national figure;
 - a small secretariat provided by the hosting organisation;
 - a remit that encompasses the roles described above;
 - a non-statutory requirement to consider, comment on and approve NPA and AONB Management Plans as part of the statutory process of approval by individual NPAs and AONB Partnerships; and
 - the power to launch independent reviews and require action from both landscapes and government departments.
10. The NLP could be separately resourced but would not be a new quango. The strengthened section 62 and Section 85 duties to require other public bodies to support Management Plans in caring for national landscapes – as advocated by Glover - would be its key lever. It would cover England only.
11. If the principle of a NLP was agreed, then one would need to look at how this maps across existing (and newly introduced) bodies. There are various options available for hosting it. In order to preserve independent challenge, there is an argument to say that the NLP should **not** be hosted by Defra but it could be:
- a) hosted by NE but clearly separate from it (like its independent scientific committee);
 - b) hosted by NE and part of it (as the Government's existing statutory advisor on landscape);
 - c) entirely independent with its own budget from Defra;
 - d) hosted by the soon to be formed Office of Environmental Protection.
12. There are pros and cons with each. What is clear is that any NLP and its leadership would need to be independent in mind – and able to challenge different government departments, its agencies (including Natural England) as well as the family of protected landscapes.

The benefits of a National Landscapes Panel

13. There are a number of benefits:
- it can be delivered quickly without the requirement for legislation which could take years;
 - it would enable Ministers to launch it as part of a wider package on the Glover Review;
 - it would avoid lengthy delays and uncertainty in making progress in other areas of Glover until the NLS was in place;
 - it would provide leadership and raise the political and policy support for protected landscapes;
 - reinforce collaboration between the protected landscapes at a national level.
14. A National Landscapes Panel could be hosted by Natural England, with NE providing the secretariat, and we have been exploring that option. But we feel it is important that the Panel is independent and seen to be independent of any one part of the existing landscapes community.



NPA/20/016

Dartmoor National Park Authority

12 June 2020

FINAL REPORT ON COMPLETION OF THE MOOR THAN MEETS THE EYE LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP

Report of the Strategic Planning and Projects Manager

Recommendation: **That Members:**

- (i) **note the successful delivery and closure of this programme; and**
- (ii) **formally thank our partners, communities, volunteers and the National Lottery Heritage Fund which helped to ensure that this scheme was a success**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 *“...MTMTE has been a successful Landscape Partnership. It chose to be bold, often challenging the partners to take on innovative types of work and to try out new delivery models.”¹*
- 1.2 This report summarises the key points on background, achievement of programme delivery, benefits derived from the programme and ongoing legacy development.

2 Background

- 2.1 Moor Than Meets the Eye Landscape Partnership (MTMTE/the Partnership) is a diverse Partnership comprising a range of small community and special interest groups; non-governmental organisations and government agencies. The Partners have worked to conserve and enhance Dartmoor’s heritage, help people better access, understand and engage with it and to support the development of heritage skills and volunteering. The lead Partner is Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA). The geographical area of a Landscape Partnership is limited by the major funder (National Lottery Heritage Fund, NLHF) and is focused on the east of Dartmoor National Park.
- 2.2 NLHF granted up to £1.9m towards the Partnership’s total budget for delivery of £3,843,183 giving an Intervention Rate of 49.4%. The remaining funding comes from the MTMTE Partnership. The delivery of the Landscape Partnership’s project began in July 2014 and closed at the end of March 2020.
- 2.3 There were 28 projects delivered by the Partnership, with each Project being led by one of the 15 Partners. As Lead Partner, Dartmoor National Park Authority

(DNPA/the Authority) is responsible for the general administrative, financial and project management functions of the programme.

- 2.4 Governance for the Partnership is provided through a Partnership Board (made up from representatives of the Partners), Community Stakeholder Group as well monitoring provided by an independent consultant on behalf of the NLHF.

3 Achievement of programme delivery

- 3.1 Moor Than Meets the Eye LP achieved 99% maximum programme budget, on close being valued at £3,798,034. This was supported by a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) of £1,865,914 the remainder being contributed by the Partnership. All Partners met their commitments to funding the Partnership.
- 3.2 Partners successfully delivered across the programme, in many cases projects provided significant value over and above expectations. As can be expected for a programme of this size, some projects proved not to be viable and were replaced with successful alternatives. The 'Dartmoor Diploma' and 'Rural Skills at East Shallowford' were remodelled into three projects which when combined delivered greater benefit, these were 'Heritage Skills Training', 'Conservation Apprenticeships' and 'Dart Valley in Focus'.
- 3.3 The Landscape Partnership delivered against six outcomes, a detailed breakdown of delivery against these outcomes by project is shown in Appendix 2. These outcomes were derived from the shared vision of the Partners and the requirements of the NLHF, being the major funder. On balance the Partnership has achieved more than originally expected, a few outputs have not been fully met but they are offset by equivalent greater achievement elsewhere.

4 Benefits to Dartmoor and the Authority

*"The stakeholders interviewed all felt that the heritage of Dartmoor had benefited considerably from MTMTE. The mix of projects; natural, cultural, built and archaeological was seen as a real strength as it highlighted the range of fascinating heritage in this area of Dartmoor."*ⁱⁱ

- 4.1 Investment for Dartmoor – The Landscape Partnership provided a significant mechanism for the delivery of the National Park Management Plan (NPMP) 2014-19. In cash terms MTMTE delivered against five of the six NPMP priorities:

- £165k for The Future of Farming and Forestry
- £212k for Spectacular Landscapes, Natural Networks
- £598k towards Making the Most of Cultural Heritage
- £1.62m towards Enjoying Dartmoor
- £351k for a Prosperous Dartmoor

In addition to this cash investment for Dartmoor, the Partnership convened 4,600 days given by local volunteers and a further £104k 'in kind' time provided by Partners.

- 4.2 Strengthened partnerships – relationships between DNPA and each of the Partners, are even better now than at the start of MTMTE. This is evidenced by the good collaborative working maintained throughout the delivery programme, feedback from independent evaluation and the current enthusiasm for further partnership working.

“MTMTE has also had an impact on the way people and organisations work. Stakeholders interviewed were largely positive about the partnership working that has developed from the scheme, recognising that for some of them this was a new way of working and whilst not always easy had produced some very beneficial results”ⁱⁱⁱ

4.3 Another crucial partnership is that between DNPA and the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), one of the largest funders in our sector. NLHF have been impressed by the competence and innovation shown by DNPA and the MTMTE Partnership, they are actively encouraging DNPA to submit further bids and we have established ourselves as a trusted ally in both the conservation of heritage and ability to engage a larger and more diverse audience with heritage.

4.4 Strengthened relationship with Dartmoor’s communities – The community-led approach was exemplified by Parishscapes, where the Partnership provided funding and professional support for projects conceived and led by parish communities.

“They felt that critical to this success was the fact that both money and expertise were made available to local groups and organisations, particularly valuing that professionals and volunteers worked together on many projects. This theme of collaborative working was commented on by many people consulted as another real strength of MTMTE.”^{iv}

Our Partnership comprised a number of local voluntary organisations who delivered projects with passion and professionalism and they too exceeded their original outputs. Through projects such as Moorland Birds and Heritage Skills the Partnership engaged the farming community and the public.

4.5 Developing our ways of working – MTMTE sought to engage a wider range of people with Dartmoor’s heritage, trialling communication through different channels and with different types of event & activity.

“A number of projects set out to cater for a more ‘hard to reach audience’ and there is evidence of success...”

DNPA has a good past record of working in partnership and with support from external funders, MTMTE was arguably the most diverse partnership led by the Authority to date and also represents one of the largest non-governmental grants received. Working at this scale and diversity has provided a valuable opportunity for the organisation to further develop its competence in this area. The NLHF has proved to be a positive and supportive funding partner.

5 Continuing legacy of the MTMTE Partnership

5.1 Overview of next steps – all of the MTMTE projects have legacy in the tangible outputs that remain beyond the funding timescale. A number of projects are being taken forward with new funding or form part of developing bids, highlights include:

- Moorscapes – this proposed project builds on the success of MTMTE’s Parishscapes and is more ambitious in its reach in terms of audience and heritage. Moorscapes is valued at £250k and will be submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in autumn 2020.

- Moor Boots – led by the Dartmoor Preservation Association (DPA) this project helps young people from lower income households take part in Duke of Edinburgh and other outdoor activities on Dartmoor through provision of outdoor equipment. DPA aim to continue the project for at least a further three years.
- Postbridge Visitor Centre – with additional funding through RDPE the project to re-develop the Postbridge Visitor Centre (started under MTMTE) has grown significantly. The developed centre, with state of the art interpretive displays that tell the story of prehistory in the surrounding landscape, is due to open summer 2020.
- EcoSkills - was a highly successful MTMTE project, jointly delivered by Natural England and the Woodland Trust. The project aims to provide recent graduates with the practical skills and experience they need to develop their careers in the natural environment and heritage sector. Under MTMTE 100% of those completing the programme went straight into jobs. With support from our corporate partner Clif bar the project will re-launch in January 2021 with the Authority a new core partner in the project, hosting the graduates.
- Following the success of the MTMTE programme, Partners are enthusiastic about continuing to work together to benefit Dartmoor. The National Lottery Heritage Fund would also welcome further proposals for a landscape scale partnership programme. Such a programme is being developed, with a natural environment focus, for submission in 2021.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The programme is closed with the final report and claim submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in May 2020. The programme has closed in line with expectations. There are no further financial implications.

7 Equality and Sustainability Impact

- 7.1 The Projects being delivered were selected to improve access to and understanding of the MTMTE (and wider Dartmoor) area by all sectors of society; support local communities and businesses; and deliver a range of environmental benefits.

8 Conclusion and Recommendation

- 8.1 The Moor than Meets the Eye Landscape Partnership has brought significant benefit to the people and landscape of Dartmoor. The programme is regarded as successful by participants, partners and funders. Officers would like to thank our partners, communities, volunteers and of course the NHLF who helped ensure this scheme was a success. Members are requested to note the successful delivery and closure of this programme.

JAMES SHARPE

Background Papers: NPA/15/039, NPA/AG/16/015, NP/AG/16/017, NPA/17/004, NPA/17/043, NPA/AG/18/011, NPA/AG/18/016, NPA/18/040

Attachments: Appendix 1 – List of MTMTE Partners
Appendix 2 – Achievement of Outputs for each Project by Stated Programme Outcome

^{i, ii, iii, iv} - quotes in this report are drawn from the independent evaluation report into the results of Moor Than Meets the Eye, Resources for Change, March 2020, commissioned by the Partnership

Moor Than Meets the Eye Partners

- Dartmoor Hill Farm Project
- Dartmoor National Park Authority
- Dartmoor Preservation Association
- Dartmoor Tinworking Research Group
- Devon Action for Wildlife Partnership
- Devon County Council
- Duchy of Cornwall
- Forestry England
- Historic England
- Med Theatre
- Natural England
- Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM)
- RSPB
- South West Lakes Trust
- Woodland Trust

Moor than Meets the Eye LP, table showing % of project outputs achieved by programme outcome

		PA1 - Moorland Birds	PA2 - Haymeadows	PA4 - Nature of the Bovey Valley	PA5 - Heritage of the High Moor	PA6 - Higher Uppacot	PA7 - Ponies, Pounds & Driftways	PA8 - Ancient Boundaries	PA9 - Hamelown Crash Site	PB1 - Bellever & Postbridge Trails	PB2 - Parishscapes	PB3 - Moor Medieval	PB4 - Engaging, Nature of the Bovey Valley	PB5 - Welcome to Widecombe	PB6 - Managing Volunteers	PB7 - In the Footsteps of the Victorians	PB9 - Moor Boots	PB10 - Whitehorse Community Play	PC1 - Discovering the Dartmoor Story	PC4 - Brimpts Tin Trail	PC5 - Wray Valley Trail	PC6 - Heritage Trails	PC7 - Fernworthy Reservoir Improved Access	PC8 - Postbridge Visitor Centre	PD2 - EcoSkills	PD4 - Heritage Skills Training	PD5 - Conservation Apprentices	PD6 - Dart Valley in Focus	OUTCOME AVERAGE
outcome 1	1. To conserve the unique historic landscape of East Dartmoor and its natural habitats which tell the story of human influence over thousands of years.	97%	72%	98%	90%	100%	99%	317%	100%	n/a	100%	n/a	103%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	68%	106%	100%	100%	111%
outcome 2	2. To significantly enhance physical and intellectual access to the heritage landscape.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	99%	n/a	n/a	560%	100%	100%	101%	99%	106%	n/a	102%	170%	148%	106%	103%	100%	96%	325%	104%	n/a	n/a	100%	n/a	148%
outcome 3	3. To develop new ways to increase community involvement and understanding of the historic and natural landscape and improve the ability of local people to share, celebrate and enjoy their local landscape.	132%	113%	100%	102%	n/a	n/a	n/a	333%	n/a	100%	152%	108%	108%	n/a	75%	n/a	113%	n/a	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	104%	n/a	n/a	n/a	92%	124%
outcome 4	4. To provide local communities, businesses, land managers, guides and local property owners with enhanced skills, confidence and enthusiasm to contribute to the conservation of our built and natural heritage.	129%	102%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	138%	n/a	n/a	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	107%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	90%	182%	100%	104%	117%
outcome 5	5. To sustain a living and working landscape by encouraging and facilitating business opportunities that capture the value of the landscape.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	113%	103%	100%	96%	325%	52%	n/a	103%	n/a	n/a	119%
outcome 6	6. To develop a well-trained and co-ordinated volunteer workforce to help conserve and interpret the area's heritage.	195%	n/a	100%	107%	n/a	n/a	175%	n/a	n/a	100%	152%	102%	117%	93%	75%	n/a	117%	n/a	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	83%	258%	n/a	n/a	127%



NPA/20/018

Dartmoor National Park Authority

12 June 2020

TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS, SECTION 211 NOTIFICATIONS (WORKS TO TREES IN CONSERVATION AREAS) AND HEDGEROW REMOVAL NOTICES DETERMINED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

Report of Trees and Landscape Officer

Recommendation : **That the decisions be noted.**

TPO APPLICATIONS

West Devon

Ref: 19/0046

Okehampton Golf Course

SX 5815 9388

Application to reduce the canopies of several broadleaved trees and fell one oak tree. The remedial works are minor and the tree to be felled has poor form. Consent was granted subject to conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works;
2. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work-Recommendations;
3. Replacement planting of one rowan or birch tree within the crown spread of the originals during the first planting season following felling.

Ref: 19/0047

Rockmoor, Yelverton

SX 5165 6845

Application to fell an oak tree and reduce three other oak trees. The tree to be felled is in very poor condition and the other works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the trees. Consent was granted subject to conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works;
2. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work-Recommendations;
3. Replacement planting of one half standard English oak tree within the crown spread of the original during the first planting season following felling.

Ref: 19/0048

Lower Hobey, Belstone

SX 5169 9355

Application to remove a branch from a sycamore and reduce a beech tree. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the trees. Consent was granted subject to conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works;
2. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work-Recommendations

Ref: 19/0055

Fancydale, Hoo Meavy

SX 5267 6565

Application to fell four ash trees. The trees are infected with Ash Die back disease. Consent was granted subject to conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works;
2. Replacement planting of four beech trees within the crown spread of the originals during the first planting season following felling.

Ref: 19/0056

Fancydale, Hoo Meavy

SX 5259 6563

Application to reduce an oak tree. The works will help balance the crown. Consent was granted subject to conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works;
2. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work-Recommendations.

Teignbridge

Ref: 19/0051

48 Miners Close, Ashburton

SX 7604 7038

Application to reduce two sycamore trees and crown lift a third. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the trees. Consent was granted subject to conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works;
2. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work-Recommendations.

Ref: 19/0054

85 Beverley Gardens, Ashburton

SX 7608 7059

Application to fell an ash and sycamore tree. The trees are suppressed and their removal will have minimal impact on the character of the area. Consent was granted subject to conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works;

2. Replacement planting of two silver birch trees within the crown spread of the originals during the first planting season following felling.

Ref: 19/0057

2 Miners Close, Ashburton

SX 7613 7034

Application to fell a sycamore and reduce another sycamore. The tree to be felled is too close to the house and the other works are minor and the works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the tree. Consent was granted subject to conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works;
2. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work-Recommendations.

SECTION 211 NOTICES

Teignbridge

Ref: 19/0049

5 Hillcrest, Ilsington

SX 7857 7625

Notification to fell a sycamore and prune an apple tree. The works will have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

Ref: 19/0050

Ponsford House, Moretonhampstead SX 7539 8600

Notification to fell a beech tree. The tree is damaging a retaining wall.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

Ref: 19/0053

Primrose Tea Room, Lustleigh SX 7850 8123

Notification to reduce a pittosporum and yew tree. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the trees.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

Ref: 19/0058

Gate House, North Bovey SX 7407 8385

Notification to crown lift a willow, cherry and birch. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the trees.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

West Devon

Ref: 19/0043

St Michaels Church, Chagford SX 7016 8750

Notification to reduce two yew trees. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the trees.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

Ref: 19/0059

St Mary's Church, Throwleigh

SX 6678 9075

Notification to coppice several trees, raise the canopies of three oak trees and remove damaged limbs from a sycamore. The works will have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

BRIAN BEASLEY