Grant Thornton

The Audit Findings (ISA260) Report for Dartmoor National Park Authority

Year ended 31 March 2022

30 November 2022

Contents

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Section	Page
1. Headlines	3
2. Financial statements	5
3. Value for money arrangements	18
4. Independence and ethics	20
Appendices	
A. Action Plan	22
B. Follow up of prior year recommendations	23
C. Audit adjustments	24
D. Fees	26
E. Audit Opinion	28

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.

This Audit Findings Report presents the observations arising from the audit that are significant to the responsibility of those charged with governance to oversee the financial reporting process, as required by International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260. Its contents have been discussed with management.

Gareth D Mills

Name: Gareth Mills, Key Audit Partner and Engagement Lead for Dartmoor National Park Authority
For Grant Thornton UK LLP
Date: 30 November 2022

1. Headlines

This table summarises the key findings and other matters arising from the statutory audit of Dartmoor National Park Authority ('the Authority') and the preparation of the Authority's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 for those charged with governance.

Financial Statements

Under International Standards of Audit (UK) (ISAs) and the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'), we are required to report whether, in our opinion:

- the Authority's financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority and its income and expenditure for the year; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local authority accounting and prepared in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We are also required to report whether other information published together with the audited financial statements (including the Annual Governance Statement (AGS), and Narrative Report), is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

Our audit work was completed on site and remotely during June to August as planned. Our findings are summarised in Section Two of this report. We have identified one adjustment to the financial statements that has resulted in an £80k adjustment to the Authority's comprehensive income and expenditure statement. This adjustment does not affect the Authority's level of usable reserves. A small number of other presentational audit adjustments are detailed at Appendix C. We have also raised recommendations for management as a result of our audit work in the Action Plan at Appendix A. Our follow up of recommendations from the prior year's audit are detailed at Appendix B.

We have concluded that the other information to be published with the financial statements, is consistent with our knowledge of your organisation and the financial statements we have audited.

Our work is complete and we have issued an unqualified audit opinion on 30 November 2022.

1. Headlines

Value for Money (VFM) arrangements

Under the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'), we are required to consider whether the Authority has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Auditors are now required to report in more detail on the Authority's overall arrangements, as well as key recommendations on any significant weaknesses in arrangements identified during the audit.

Auditors are required to report their commentary on the Authority's arrangements under the following specified criteria:

- Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- Financial sustainability; and
- Governance

We have completed our VFM work, which is summarised on page 19, and our detailed commentary is set out in the separate Auditor's Annual Report, which is presented alongside this updated report. We are satisfied that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Statutory duties

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ('the Act') also requires us to:

- report to you if we have applied any of the additional powers and duties ascribed to us under the Act; and
- to certify the closure of the audit.

We have not exercised any of our additional statutory powers or duties.

We have certified the closure of the audit as at 30 November 2022.

Significant Matters

We did not encounter any significant difficulties or identify any significant matters arising during our audit.

2. Financial Statements

Overview of the scope of our audit

This Audit Findings (ISA260) Report presents the observations arising from the audit that are significant to the responsibility of those charged with governance to oversee the financial reporting process, as required by International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260 and the Code of Audit Practice ('the Code').

Its contents have been discussed and agreed with the Head of Business Support on 16 August prior to presenting it to the Authority Meeting on 2 September 2022.

As auditor we are responsible for performing the audit, in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) and the Code, which is directed towards forming and expressing an opinion on the financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of those charged with governance. The audit of the financial statements does not relieve management or those charged with governance of their responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements.

Audit approach

Our audit approach was based on a thorough understanding of the Authority's business and is risk based, and in particular included:

- An evaluation of the Authority's internal controls environment, including its IT systems and controls
- Substantive testing on significant transactions and material account balances, including the procedures outlined in this report in relation to the key audit risks

We have not had to alter our Audit Plan dated 16 May, and presented to the Audit and Governance Committee on 27 May 2022.

Conclusion

We have completed our audit of your financial statements and we have issued an unmodified audit opinion as detailed in Appendix E.

Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to record our appreciation for the assistance and timely collaboration provided by the finance team and other staff during the course of our audit.

2. Financial Statements

Our approach to 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.

Materiality levels remain the same as reported in our Audit Plan on 16 May 2022.

We detail in the table to the right our determination of materiality for the Authority.

Materiality area	Amount (£)	Qualitative factors considered
Materiality for the financial statements	121,000	Financial statement materiality was determined based on a proportion of the gross expenditure of the Authority for the financial year.
Performance materiality	90,750	Set at 75% of materiality.
Trivial matters	6,100	Set at 5% of materiality.
Materiality for senior officer remuneration	10,000	Due to perceived public interest in these disclosures.

2. Financial Statements - Significant risks

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.

This section provides commentary on the significant audit risks communicated in the Audit Plan.

Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Commentary
Management override of controls 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.	We have: • evaluated the design effectiveness of management controls over journals • analysed the journals listing and determined the criteria for selecting high risk unusual journals • identified and tested unusual journals made during the year and the accounts production stage for appropriateness and corroboration • gained an understanding of the accounting estimates and critical judgements applied by management and considered their reasonableness • evaluated the rationale for any changes in accounting policies, estimates or significant unusual transactions. Our work has not identified any issues in respect of management override of controls.
Valuation of land and buildings 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. This valuation represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements due to the size of the numbers involved (c£3.1 million in the 2020-21 balance sheet) and the sensitivity of this estimate to changes in key assumptions. Management have engaged the services of a valuer to estimate the current value as at 31 March 2022. The Authority has engaged an external valuer in 2021-22, as in the prior year. We therefore identified the closing valuation of land and buildings as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.	We have: • evaluated management's processes and assumptions for the calculation of the estimate, the instructions issued to the valuation experts and the scope of their work • evaluated the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the valuation expert • written to the valuer to confirm the basis on which the valuation was carried out • evaluated the basis of the valuation • challenged the source data, information, and assumptions used by the valuer to assess completeness and consistency with our understanding, e.g. the build rates in respect of properties valued on a DRC basis • tested, on a sample basis, revaluations made during the year to ensure they have been input correctly into the Authority's asset register and that accounting adjustments in relation to these revaluations have been processed appropriately For one asset, we identified an error in valuation which resulted in an audit adjustment of £80k. This is also detailed in the audit adjustments section at Appendix C.

2. Financial Statements - Significant risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Commentary
Valuation of pension fund net liability 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. The pension fund net liability is considered a significant estimate due to the size of the numbers involved (£15.6m in the Authority's balance sheet) and the sensitivity of the estimate to changes in key assumptions. The methods applied in the calculation of the IAS 19 estimates are routine and commonly applied by all actuarial firms in line with the requirements set out in the Code of practice for local government accounting (the applicable financial reporting framework). We have therefore concluded that there is not a significant risk of material misstatement in the IAS 19 estimate due to the methods and models used in their calculation. The source data used by the actuaries to produce the IAS 19 estimates is provided by administering authorities and employers. We do not consider this to be a significant risk as this is easily verifiable. The actuarial assumptions used are the responsibility of the entity but should be set on the advice given by the actuary. A small change in the key assumptions (discount rate, inflation rate, salary increase and life expectancy) can have a significant impact on the estimated IAS 19 liability. In particular the discount and inflation rates, where our consulting actuary has indicated that a 0.1%% +/- change in these two assumptions would have approximately 2% +/- effect on the liability. We have therefore concluded that there is a significant risk of material misstatement in the IAS 19 estimate due to the assumptions used in their calculation. With regard to these assumptions we have therefore identified valuation of the Authority's pension fund net liability as a significant risk.	We have: • updated 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 evaluated the design of the associated controls • evaluated the instructions issued by management to their management expert (an actuary) for this estimate and the scope of the actuary's work • assessed the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the actuary who carried out the Authority's pension fund valuation • assessed the accuracy and completeness of the information provided by the Authority to the actuary to estimate the liability • tested 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 • undertaken 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 • requested 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 – this assurance letter is currently outstanding. Our work has not identified any issues in respect of the valuation of the pension fund net liability.

2. Financial Statements - Significant risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Commentary
Improper revenue recognition Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a rebuttable presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue. This presumption can be rebutted if the auditor concludes that there is no risk of material misstatement due to fraud relating to revenue recognition.	As reported in our Audit Plan, 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: • 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 the Authority, mean that all forms of fraud are seen as unacceptable. There has been no change to our assessment in regard to the risk of improper revenue recognition.
Risk of fraud related to expenditure recognition (PAF Practice Note 10) In line with the Public Audit Forum Practice Note 10, in the public sector, auditors must also consider the risk that material misstatements due to fraudulent financial reporting may arise from the manipulation of expenditure recognition (for instance by deferring expenditure to a later period)	As reported in our Audit Plan, we have rebutted this presumed risk for the Authority because: • expenditure is well controlled and the Authority has a strong control environment • the Authority has clear and transparent reporting of its financial plans and financial position to the Authority. There has been no change to our assessment in regard to the risk of fraud related to expenditure recognition.

2. Financial Statements – key judgements and estimates

This section provides commentary on key estimates and judgements inline with the enhanced requirements for auditors.

Significant judgement or estimate	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment
Land and Building valuations – £3.3m	Land and buildings comprises £2.8m of specialised assets where no market exists which are required to be valued at depreciated replacement cost (DRC). The remainder of the land and buildings (£0.4m) are not specialised in nature and are required to be valued at existing use in value (EUV) at year end. The Authority has engaged NPS (SW) Ltd as their management expert to complete the valuation of land and buildings as at 31 March on an annual basis. All assets were revalued as at 31 March 2022. The valuation of properties valued by the valuer has resulted in a net increase of £159k.	We have: • Assessed the competence and expertise of management's expert • Reviewed the completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine the estimate • Reviewed the assumptions used by the expert, including the floor areas • Ensured that there has been no changes to the method used to revalue the assets, and ensured that the method is suitable for the different classes of the assets • Considered the adequacy of disclosure of the estimate in the financial statements. There are no significant issues arising from our work.	● Green

Assessment

- ● [Purple] We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
- ● [Blue] We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
- ● [Grey] We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
- ● [Green] We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

2. Financial Statements - key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment
Net pension liability – £15.6m	The Authority's net pension liability at 31 March 2022 is £15.6m (PY £17.8m) comprising the Devon Pension Fund defined benefit pension scheme obligations. The Authority uses Barnet Waddingham to provide actuarial valuations of the Authority's assets and liabilities derived from this scheme. A full actuarial valuation is required every three years. The latest full actuarial valuation was completed in 2019. A roll forward approach is used in intervening periods which utilises key assumptions such as life expectancy, discount rates, salary growth and investment return. Given the significant value of the net pension fund liability, small changes in assumptions can result in significant valuation movements. There has been a £2.2m net actuarial gain during 2021-22.	We have: • Assessed management's expert • Assessed the actuary's approach taken and deemed it reasonable • Used PwC as auditor's expert to assess actuary and assumptions made by actuary (see table below) • Confirmed the completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine the estimate • Confirmed the reasonableness of the Authority's share of LPS pension assets. • Confirmed the reasonableness of the decrease in the liability estimate • Confirmed the adequacy of the disclosure of the estimate in the financial statements There are no significant issues arising from our work.	Green

Assumption	Actuary Value	PwC range	Assessment
Discount rate	2.6%	2.55% - 2.6%	Green
Pension increase rate	3.25%	3.05% - 3.45%	Green
Salary growth	4.25%	4.05% - 4.45%	Green
Life expectancy – Males currently aged 45 / 65	24.4 / 23.1	21.9 – 24.4 / 20.5 – 23.1	Green
Life expectancy – Females currently aged 45 / 65	26.1 / 24.7	24.9 – 26.4 / 23.4 – 25.0	Green

2. Financial Statements - Internal Control

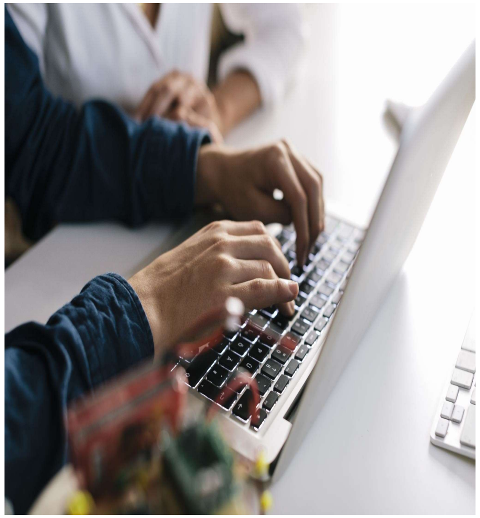
Assessment	Issue and risk	Recommendations
Medium	iTrent payroll system: The Authority's payroll is provided by a service organisation, iTrent, for which no service auditor's report is provided. The Authority therefore lacks assurance over the control environment in respect of payroll. From our audit of the Authority's payroll costs, we are satisfied that we have obtained sufficient and appropriate audit evidence for payroll expenditure in 2021/22.	We acknowledge that the Authority outsources its payroll services to Devon County Council. Therefore, the Authority should work with DCC to understand how assurance can be gained over payroll controls. **Management response** The Authority maintains its own controls in respect of payroll to the extent that this is within our control. However, we have a service level agreement in place with Devon County Council for the provision of this service and therefore this matter will need to be discussed with DCC to take forward with iTrent.

2. Financial Statements - other communication requirements

We set out below details of other matters which we, as auditors, are required by auditing standards and the Code to communicate to those charged with governance.

Issue	Commentary
Matters in relation to fraud	We have previously discussed the risk of fraud with the Audit and Governance Committee. We have not been made aware of any incidents in the period and no issues have been identified during the course of our audit procedures.
Matters in relation to related parties	We are not aware of any related parties or related party transactions which have not been disclosed.
Matters in relation to laws and regulations	You have not made us aware of any significant incidences of non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations and we have not identified any incidences from our audit work.
Written representations	A letter of representation has been requested from the Authority, which was separately included in the Authority papers for the meeting on 2 September, and a signed copy of which has subsequently been received from management. A further update was provided as at the date of our audit opinion on 30 November 2022. As in prior years, we have requested a specific representation in respect of the Authority's accounting treatment of £350k of S.106 monies held by the Authority.

2. Financial Statements - other communication requirements



Issue	Commentary
Confirmation requests from third parties	We requested from management permission to send confirmation requests to the Authority's banks. This permission was granted and the requests were sent. These requests were returned with positive confirmation and no issues were noted.
Accounting practices	We have evaluated the appropriateness of the Authority's accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures. We have identified one recommendation regarding accounting policies relating to capitalisation of assets, as set out in the Action Plan at Appendix A.
Audit evidence and explanations / significant difficulties	All information and explanations requested from management was provided. The Authority's finance team were responsive to audit queries throughout the audit, and we would like to thank the Head of Business Support and her team for their help and support during the audit process.

2. Financial Statements - other communication requirements

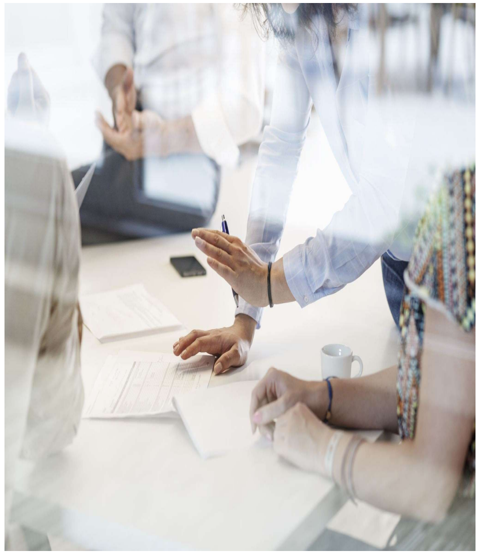
Our responsibility

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 entity's ability to continue as a going concern" (ISA (UK) 570).

Issue	Commentary
Going concern	In performing our work on going concern, we have had reference to Statement of Recommended Practice – Practice Note 10: Audit of financial statements of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom (Revised 2020). The Financial Reporting Authority recognises that for particular sectors, it may be necessary to clarify how auditing standards are applied to an entity in a manner that is relevant and provides useful information to the users of financial statements in that sector. Practice Note 10 provides that clarification for audits of public sector bodies. Practice Note 10 sets out the following key principles for the consideration of going concern for public sector entities: • the use of the going concern basis of accounting is not a matter of significant focus of the auditor's time and resources because the applicable financial reporting frameworks envisage that the going concern basis for accounting will apply where the entity's services will continue to be delivered by the public sector. In such cases, a material uncertainty related to going concern is unlikely to exist, and so a straightforward and standardised approach for the consideration of going concern will often be appropriate for public sector entities • for many public sector entities, the financial sustainability of the reporting entity and the services it provides is more likely to be of significant public interest than the application of the going concern basis of accounting. Our consideration of the Authority's financial sustainability is addressed by our value for money work, which is covered elsewhere in this report. Practice Note 10 states that if the financial reporting framework provides for the adoption of the going concern basis of accounting on the basis of the anticipated continuation of the provision of a service in the future, the auditor applies the continued provision of service approach set out in Practice Note 10. The financial reporting framework adopted by the Authority meets this criteria, and so we have applied the continued provision of service approach. In doing so, we have considered and evaluated: • the nature of the Authority and the environment in which it operates • the Authority's financial reporting framework • the Authority's system of internal control for identifying events or conditions relevant to going concern • management's going concern assessment. On the basis of this work, we have obtained sufficient appropriate audit evidence to enable us to conclude that: • a material uncertainty related to going concern has not been identified • management's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

2. Financial Statements - other responsibilities under the Code

Issue	Commentary
Other information	We are required to give an opinion on whether the other information published together with the audited financial statements (including the Annual Governance Statement and Narrative Report), is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. No material inconsistencies have been identified. We plan to issue an unmodified opinion in this respect as per Appendix E.
Matters on which we report by exception	We are required to report on a number of matters by exception in a number of areas: • if the Annual Governance Statement does not comply with disclosure requirements set out in CIPFA/SOLACE guidance or is misleading or inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audit, • if we have applied any of our statutory powers or duties. • where we are not satisfied in respect of arrangements to secure value for money and have reported a significant weakness or weaknesses. We have nothing to report on these matters.



2. Financial Statements - other responsibilities under the Code

Issue	Commentary
Specified procedures for Whole of Government Accounts	We are required to carry out specified procedures (on behalf of the NAO) on the Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) consolidation pack under WGA group audit instructions. This work is not required as the Authority does not exceed the threshold.
Certification of the closure of the audit	We have certified the closure of the 2021-22 audit of the Authority in the audit report, as detailed at Appendix E.

3. Value for Money arrangements

Approach to Value for Money work for 2021-22

The National Audit Office issued its guidance for auditors in April 2020. The Code require auditors to consider whether the body has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

When reporting on these arrangements, the Code requires auditors to structure their commentary on arrangements under the three specified reporting criteria.

Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

Arrangements for improving the way the body delivers its services. This includes arrangements for understanding costs and delivering efficiencies and improving outcomes for service users.

Financial Sustainability

Arrangements for ensuring the body can continue to deliver services. This includes planning resources to ensure adequate finances and maintain sustainable levels of spending over the medium term (3-5 years)

Governance

Arrangements for ensuring that the body makes appropriate decisions in the right way. This includes arrangements for budget setting and management, risk management, and ensuring the body makes decisions based on appropriate information

Potential types of recommendations

A range of different recommendations could be made following the completion of work on the body's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, which are as follows:

Statutory recommendation

Written recommendations to the body under Section 24 (Schedule 7) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. A recommendation under schedule 7 requires the body to discuss and respond publicly to the report.

Key recommendation

The Code of Audit Practice requires that where auditors identify significant weaknesses in arrangements to secure value for money they should make recommendations setting out the actions that should be taken by the body. We have defined these recommendations as 'key recommendations'.

Improvement recommendation

These recommendations, if implemented should improve the arrangements in place at the body, but are not made as a result of identifying significant weaknesses in the body's arrangements

3. VFM - our procedures and conclusions

We have completed our VFM work and our detailed commentary is set out in the separate Auditor's Annual Report, which is presented alongside this updated report.

As part of our work, we considered whether there were any risks of significant weakness in the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We did not identify any risks of significant weakness. We are satisfied that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

4. Independence and ethics

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 Authority's Ethical Standard and confirm that we, as a firm, and each covered person, 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 May 2020 which sets out supplementary guidance on ethical requirements for auditors of local public bodies.

Details of fees charged are detailed at Appendix D.

Transparency

Grant Thornton publishes an annual Transparency Report, which sets out details of the action we have taken over the past year to improve audit quality as well as the results of internal and external quality inspections. For more details see the report on our website.

Audit and non-audit services

For the purposes of our audit we have made enquiries of all Grant Thornton UK LLP teams providing services to the Authority.

No other audit or non-audit services are provided to the Authority.

Appendices

A. Action Plan – Audit of Financial Statements

We have identified the following recommendation for the Authority as a result of issues identified during the course of our audit. We have agreed our recommendation with management and we will report on progress of this recommendation during the course of the 2022-23 audit. The matter reported here is limited to those deficiencies that we have identified during the course of our audit and that we have concluded are of sufficient importance to merit being reported to you in accordance with auditing standards.

Assessment	Issue and risk	Recommendations
Medium	Accounting policy for capitalisation: Our review of the Authority's accounting policies identified that the de minimis limit for capitalisation of expenditure on land and buildings assets and information communications technology related equipment is set at £20,000. In determining its accounting policies the Authority must have regard to the concept of materiality, and we consider that £20,000 is excessively high for the Authority given its size and profile. Other entities of a similar type and size set their de minimis limit at £5,000. The current de minimis represents a risk of material misstatement, as it is possible that expenditure is charged to revenue when it should have been capitalised, therefore understating the value of the Authority's assets and overstating its revenue expenditure, with consequent impacts on reserves balances. We note that this policy is consistent with the prior year and preceding periods, and would not have had a cumulative material impact on the 2021-22 or 2020-21 financial statements.	We recommend that from 2022-23 onwards, the Authority considers adopting a de minimis limit for the capitalisation of expenditure more in line with organisations of a similar size and profile. Management response We have reviewed de minimis limits at other local authorities in the local area. We intend to adopt a policy with a de minimis limit of £10,000 from 2022-23 onwards, which is consistent with other bodies in the Devon area. We do not receive specific capital funding; all funding received is revenue and any capital spend is discretionary.

B. Follow up of prior year recommendations

We identified the following issues in the audit of the Authority's 2020-21 financial statements, which resulted in two recommendations being reported in our 2020-21 Audit Findings Report.

We have followed up on the implementation of our recommendations and note that one recommendation is still to be completed.

Assessment	Issue and risk previously communicated (August 2021)	Update on actions taken to address the issue
✓	Our audit work identified that there are a number of assets in the Fixed Asset Register that have exceeded their Useful Economic Life (UEL) set by the Authority, have a net book value of £nil but they remain in use. A number of these assets are also not fully depreciated, with a Net Book Value of £27k, despite having exceeded their UEL. The Gross Book Value (GBV) of assets still listed on the FAR that have a nil NBV is £469k. We recommend the Authority undertakes an assessment of all fully depreciated assets to consider if UELs and depreciation rates are appropriate and whether there is a need to revise these rates. In addition, for all fully depreciated assets that are still in use, the Authority should be satisfied that these assets are still operating at an appropriate level in terms of quality and reliability. If not, consideration should be given to disposing or "writing off" these assets.	The asset verification exercise was undertaken at the year end, resulting in the disposal of £285k (GBV) of vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment assets, as well as £73k (GBV) of intangible assets, which were no longer in use at the Authority. The remaining balance of assets identified in prior year is considered to still be in use. The Head of Business Support has confirmed that this asset verification exercise will be undertaken annually in future to ensure that the Authority's Fixed Asset Register is kept up to date.
X (tbc in 2022-23)	We noted during our audit that the Authority's Members Code of Conduct is dated from July 2012. We also noted that the Authority's Email Policy was last updated in November 2018 and the document does not have a next review date. The Authority should review its Code of Conduct to ensure it remains appropriate and fit for purpose. Arrangements for periodic review and updating of key documentation should be implemented.	The policies had not yet been updated at the end of the 2021-22 financial year. However, we understand from our discussions with management that these will be updated during 2022-23. We will follow this up as part of our VFM audit work later in 2022.

Assessment

- ✓ Action completed
- **X** Not yet addressed

C. Audit Adjustments

We are required to report all non trivial misstatements to those charged with governance, whether or not the accounts have been adjusted by management.

Impact of adjusted misstatements

All adjusted misstatements are set out in detail below along with the impact on the key statements and the reported net expenditure for the year ending 31 March 2022.

Detail	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £000	Statement of Financial Position £000	Impact on useable reserves £000
Understatement in valuation of building asset – increases gain on revaluation and PPE net book value by £80,000	(80)	80	Nil
Overall impact	(80)	80	Nil

Impact of unadjusted misstatements

The table below provides details of adjustments identified during the 2021-22 audit which have not been made within the final set of financial statements. The Authority is required to approve management's proposed treatment of all items recorded within the table below.

Detail	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £000	Statement of Financial Position £000	Impact on useable reserves £000	Reason for not adjusting
Other expenditure and creditors are understated (one invoice was identified which was underaccrued by £3.7k. Under our Audit Manual we are required to extrapolate the possible impact of this error over the whole population, which produces an immaterial projected error of £35k)	35	(35)	(35)	The adjustment is immaterial and based on an extrapolated value
Overall impact	35	(35)	(35)	

Impact of prior year unadjusted misstatements

There were no unadjusted misstatements in the 2020-21 financial statements.

C. Audit Adjustments

Misclassification and disclosure changes

The table below provides details of misclassification and disclosure changes identified during the audit which have been made in the final set of financial statements.

Disclosure omission	Auditor recommendations	Adjusted?
The movement in debtors / creditors amounts were reversed on the cash flow statement.	The figures should be corrected to accurately record the change in the respective balances. Management response Recommended adjustment has been made.	✓
Note 1: Expenditure and Funding Analysis misstates the opening and closing balances of the General Fund by £21k.	The figures should be corrected to accurately record the change in the respective balances. Management response Recommended adjustment has been made.	✓
Note 9: Note to the Expenditure and Funding Analysis is separated from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis by 8 other notes and 10 pages. This makes it difficult for a user to understand the linkage between this note and the EFA.	The notes should be adjusted so that Note 9 becomes Note 2 and follows on from Note 1. All other notes then move one place further down e.g. Note 2 Accounting Policies becomes Note 3. Management response Recommended adjustment has been made.	✓
Note 3: Critical Judgments in Applying Accounting Policies includes two items which are not critical judgments, as they simply restate the accounting policies of the Authority.	We recommend that these be removed. Management response Recommended adjustment has been made.	✓
Note 16: Financial Instruments overstated creditors by £70k due to the inclusion of creditor amounts which are not financial instruments under IFRS9.	The disclosure should be updated to remove these creditor balances from Note 16. Management response Recommended adjustment has been made.	✓
Note 27: Officers' Remuneration did not include disclosure of the remuneration for either office holder for the Head of Business Support or the Director of Conservation in 2021-22, when both holders of both posts should be included per the Code of Practice.	The disclosure should be updated to include disclosures relating to each office holder during the year for each of these positions. Management response Recommended adjustment has been made.	✓

D. Fees

We confirm below our final fees charged for the audit and confirm there were no fees for the provision of non audit services.

Audit fees	Proposed fee	Final fee
Authority scale fee set by PSAA	£9,091	£9,091
Audit fee variations *	£9,450	£9,450
Total audit fees (excluding VAT)	**£18,541**	**£18,541**

** Any changes to the 2021-22 scale fee will need to be approved by PSAA. MHCLG has set aside £15m of funding to deal with the expected increase in 2021-22 audit fees, a direct response to one of the key findings of the Redmond Review into local authority external audit. National parks will have access to this funding to mitigate the direct financial impact on the Authority of this increase in audit fees.*

No non-audit or other audit-related services have been undertaken for the Authority.

The fees reconcile to note 26 of the financial statements.

D. Fees

Audit fees	2021-22 fee
Scale Fee published by PSAA	9,091
Raising the quality bar / regulatory factors / increased granularity of audit testing	1,500
Enhanced audit procedures for Property, Plant and Equipment	2,000
Enhanced audit procedures for Pensions	2,000
Increased audit requirements of revised ISA's (540 / 240 / 700)	450
Additional work on Value for Money (VFM) under new NAO Code	3,500
Total proposed audit fees (excluding VAT)	£18,541

E. Audit opinion

Our audit opinion is included below.

We have provided the Authority with an unmodified audit report.

Independent auditor's report to the members of Dartmoor National Park Authority

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion on financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of Dartmoor National Park Authority (the 'Authority') for the year ended 31 March 2022, which comprise the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2022 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law, as required by the Code of Audit Practice (2020) ("the Code of Audit Practice") approved by the Comptroller and Auditor General. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report. We are independent of the Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We are responsible for concluding on the appropriateness of the Head of Business Support's (Chief Finance Officer's) use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify the auditor's opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Authority to cease to continue as a going concern.

E. Audit opinion

In our evaluation of the Head of Business Support's (Chief Finance Officer's) conclusions, and in accordance with the expectation set out within the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 that the Authority's financial statements shall be prepared on a going concern basis, we considered the inherent risks associated with the continuation of services provided by the Authority. In doing so we had regard to the guidance provided in Practice Note 10 Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom (Revised 2020) on the application of ISA (UK) 570 Going Concern to public sector entities. We assessed the reasonableness of the basis of preparation used by the Authority and the Authority's disclosures over the going concern period.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Head of Business Support's (Chief Finance Officer's) use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

The responsibilities of the Head of Business Support (Chief Finance Officer) with respect to going concern are described in the 'Responsibilities of the Authority, the Head of Business Support (Chief Finance Officer) and Those Charged with Governance for the financial statements' section of this report.

Other information

The Head of Business Support (Chief Finance Officer) is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements, and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of the other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Other information we are required to report on by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

Under the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office in April 2020 on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (the Code of Audit Practice) we are required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement does not comply with 'delivering good governance in Local Government Framework 2016 Edition' published by CIPFA and SOLACE or is misleading or inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audit. We are not required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement addresses all risks and controls or that risks are satisfactorily addressed by internal controls.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters required by the Code of Audit Practice

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit of the financial statements and our knowledge of the Authority, the other information published together with the financial statements in the Statement of Accounts for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

E. Audit opinion

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Under the Code of Audit Practice, we are required to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make a written recommendation to the Authority under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or;
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit.

We have nothing to report in respect of the above matters.

Responsibilities of the Authority, the Head of Business Support (Chief Finance Officer) and Those Charged with Governance for the financial statements

As explained in the Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts set out on page 10, the Authority is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this authority, that officer is the Head of Business Support (Chief Finance Officer). The Head of Business Support (Chief Finance Officer) is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22, for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Head of Business Support (Chief Finance Officer) determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Head of Business Support (Chief Finance Officer) is responsible for assessing the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless there is an intention by government that the services provided by the Authority will no longer be provided.

The Audit and Governance Committee is Those Charged with Governance. Those Charged with Governance are responsible for overseeing the Authority's financial reporting process.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

E. Audit opinion

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that material misstatements in the financial statements may not be detected, even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with the ISAs (UK).

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Authority and determined that the most significant, which are directly relevant to specific assertions in the financial statements, are those related to the reporting frameworks (international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22, The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, Local Government Act 2003, and the Local Government Act 1972.
- We enquired of senior officers and the Audit and Governance Committee concerning the Authority's policies and procedures relating to:
  - the identification, evaluation and compliance with laws and regulations;
  - the detection and response to the risks of fraud; and
  - the establishment of internal controls to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We enquired of senior officers, internal audit, and the Audit and Governance Committee whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations or whether they had any knowledge of actual, suspected or alleged fraud.
- We assessed the susceptibility of the Authority's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur, by evaluating officers' incentives and opportunities for manipulation of the financial statements. This included the evaluation of the risk of management override of controls, and of fraudulent recognition of revenue and expenditure. We determined that the principal risks were in relation to:
  - Journal entries outside the normal course of business
  - Significant management estimates, in particular those relating to land and buildings valuations and the valuation of the net pension fund liability
- Our audit procedures involved:
  - evaluation of the design effectiveness of controls that management has in place to prevent and detect fraud;
  - journal entry testing, with a focus on unusual and high-risk journals made at the year-end accounts production stage;
  - challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in its significant accounting estimates in respect of land and buildings and defined benefit pensions liability valuations;
  - assessing the extent of compliance with the relevant laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statement item.

E. Audit opinion

- These audit procedures were designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements were free from fraud or error. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error and detecting irregularities that result from fraud is inherently more difficult than detecting those that result from error, as fraud may involve collusion, deliberate concealment, forgery or intentional misrepresentations. Also, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it.
- The team communications in respect of potential non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations, including the potential for fraud in revenue and expenditure recognition, and the significant accounting estimates related to land and buildings and defined benefit net liability valuations.
- Our assessment of the appropriateness of the collective competence and capabilities of the engagement team included consideration of the engagement team's.
  - understanding of, and practical experience with audit engagements of a similar nature and complexity through appropriate training and participation
  - knowledge of the local government sector
  - understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements specific to the Authority including:
    - the provisions of the applicable legislation
    - guidance issued by CIPFA/LASAAC and SOLACE
    - the applicable statutory provisions.
- In assessing the potential risks of material misstatement, we obtained an understanding of:
  - the Authority's operations, including the nature of its income and expenditure and its services and of its objectives and strategies to understand the classes of transactions, account balances, expected financial statement disclosures and business risks that may result in risks of material misstatement.
  - the Authority's control environment, including the policies and procedures implemented by the Authority to ensure compliance with the requirements of the financial reporting framework.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements – the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

Matter on which we are required to report by exception – the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

Under the Code of Audit Practice, we are required to report to you if, in our opinion, we have not been able to satisfy ourselves that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2022.

We have nothing to report in respect of the above matter.

Responsibilities of the Authority

The Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

E. Audit opinion

Auditor's responsibilities for the review of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to be satisfied that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We undertake our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in December 2021. This guidance sets out the arrangements that fall within the scope of 'proper arrangements'. When reporting on these arrangements, the Code of Audit Practice requires auditors to structure their commentary on arrangements under three specified reporting criteria:

- Financial sustainability: how the Authority plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;
- Governance: how the Authority ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks; and
- Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the Authority uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.

We document our understanding of the arrangements the Authority has in place for each of these three specified reporting criteria, gathering sufficient evidence to support our risk assessment and commentary in our Auditor's Annual Report. In undertaking our work, we consider whether there is evidence to suggest that there are significant weaknesses in arrangements.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements – Whole of Government Accounts

We can formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate for Dartmoor National Park Authority for the year ended 31 March 2022 in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Code of Audit Practice, as the Authority falls below the minor bodies threshold and therefore no Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) Component Assurance statement is required for the Authority for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of the Authority, as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Authority's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Authority and the Authority's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Gareth Mills, Key Audit Partner

for and on behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP, Local Auditor

Leeds