

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

4 April 2014

AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)Report of the Senior Forward PlannerRecommendation : **That Members adopt the Affordable Housing SPD****1 Introduction**

- 1.1 At the Authority meeting of the 10 January 2014 Members approved the Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for a period of public consultation. The SPD responds to a need, identified during the preparation and examination of the Development Management DPD (The DMD), to provide further detail and support the implementation of the housing policies set out in the local plan.
- 1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 153 states “supplementary planning documents should be used where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery...”. This SPD has the principal aim of facilitating the delivery of affordable housing in the Dartmoor National Park in line with the local plan and national policy.
- 1.3 The SPD is supported by a Sustainability Appraisal and has undergone Habitat Regulations Assessment screening and Equality Impact Assessment screening. An SPD does not undergo independent examination. The document has now been subject to a formal 6 week period of consultation.

2 Preparation of the SPD

- 2.1 Preparation of the SPD started in January 2013, including research, discussions with specific stakeholders and with the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) on housing, and the Planning and Sustainable Development Working Panel. An Issues Paper was prepared and 30 stakeholders with a range of interests attended a focus group held in May 2013.
- 2.2 Initial drafts of the SPD have been discussed again at the JAC and Planning and Sustainable Development Working Panel meetings. A piece of research was commissioned in order to provide robust evidence around the use of commuted sums for affordable housing; a report undertaken by Three Dragons was finalised in December.

3 Consultation

- 3.1 The Consultation Draft of the SPD was published on the 17th January 2014 for a 6 week consultation period ending Friday 28th February 2014. The approach to

consultation has been consistent with the Authority's Statement of Community Involvement and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

3.2 The key issues raised at consultation were as follows:

- General support for the document, its structure and clarity, though also comment suggesting it is complicated
- Importance of identifying need – a mix of views regarding the merits of Housing Needs Assessment, but a consensus that a degree of flexibility and pragmatism is required
- Housing Register – suggestions it could/should be more up to date and therefore of more value in identifying need
- 'Strong local connection' – suggestions it needed further definition still, and can be interpreted in different ways
- Band E – support for the inclusion of elements in the definition of local need, though a need to align with Teignbridge District Council on retained elements of Band E.
- Affordability – need to recognise the genuine affordability of a property
- Sustainability of new housing, by virtue of its location – points around the need to consider both the availability and capacity of local services and facilities.
- Local lettings/allocations plan – support for their encouragement
- Recognising the needs of older people – support for the approach of the document but suggesting that it could go further in recognising the needs of older people
- Risk of occupation by non-qualifying people
- Land value on exception sites – general support for inclusion with recognition it will change over time
- Cross subsidy – need to be clear on the interpretation of 25% cap, and concern that expecting cross subsidy units to meet other needs may impact upon viability
- Community support for cross subsidy – suggestions it is not necessary and planning authority should make the decision
- Commuted sums – a mix of views (although limited in number) suggesting that they are either too high to be viable, or too low to be of value in delivery; suggestion the geographical (postcode) approach needs refinement
- Advertisement periods for vacant properties – general support with some suggestions (limited in number) they are too long, and some too short
- Phased delivery – suggestions affordable units should always be completed prior to open market units

4 Structure of the SPD

4.1 The SPD is structured to follow the development process under 6 headings, summarised below:

(1) Defining and identifying local housing need

This section sets out the way in which housing need can be identified, through formal housing needs assessment and other information provided through the housing register.

(2) Considering potential sites

This section describes the types of sites which may be appropriate for housing, but makes clear the range of policies in the local plan will be relevant.

(3) Delivering different types of housing

This part includes a description of the range of approaches to delivering housing in the National Park including development by registered providers (housing associations), privately built 'intermediate and self-build housing, discount market housing and development through community groups.

(4) Viability and legal agreements

This section sets out a number of important elements which add detail to the policies in the local plan, including:

- Viability assessment
- Cross subsidy on exception sites
- Commuted sum contributions
- Cascades in legal agreements

(5) Delivery and enforcement

This section sets how we will support the delivery of affordable housing and monitor and enforce against occupancy conditions.

(6) Monitoring and review

This section states that the Authority will consider a formal review of the SPD in 5 years unless monitoring indicates that an earlier review is necessary.

5 Changes from the draft SPD

5.1 Based on the consultation responses received on the Draft SPD, an internal officer workshop around the practical use of the SPD and the consideration of the SPD by the JAC, the key changes to the SPD are as follows:

- Consistency of wording around 'qualifying person' and 'eligible household'
- Recognition of role of Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment (SHMNA)
- A further degree of flexibility around the approach to housing needs assessment. Closer alignment with Housing Authority through retained elements of Housing Register Band E
- Caveated wording relating to typical exception site plot values
- Greater recognition of the role of older persons housing in a community
- Clearer tabulation of potential discount rates for intermediate housing
- Clearer explanation of the process of valuation for intermediate housing
- Flexibility around the formality of community support for cross subsidy
- Clarification that 25% cap on cross subsidy relates to the number of units
- Deletion of the standard tables for commuted sum contributions
- Specific reference to the need for detailed monitoring around intermediate housing discount rates, cross subsidy delivery and the viability and effectiveness of delivery of commuted sums
- Insertion of a full list of Rural Settlement and Local Centres

- 5.2 Certain matters raised at consultation have led to no change within the SPD and may be addressed through other means, for example:
- The Authority will continue to pursue with Devon Home Choice improvements to the housing register which will improve its relevance and value to the identification of need within the National Park
 - The Authority is of the view that 'strong local connection' is adequately defined with the use of examples; an approach which was drafted in collaboration with housing officers
 - A range of views (and limited in number) suggest that a balance has been achieved in relation to cross-subsidy and commuted sums, and that no further changes are necessary. But that this area will be subject to careful monitoring.
- 5.3 However, it has been considered that an approach of standard contributions for commuted sums could be inflexible, soon become out of date and, therefore, may be unnecessary in light of the very limited opportunity for its use. This has therefore been deleted in favour of case by case negotiation. A copy of the revised Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is attached to this report at Appendix 1. A tracked change version is available to view on the Authority's website:

<http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/planning/pl-forwardplanning/affordable-housing-spd>.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The Affordable Housing SPD will play an important role in the delivery of the local plan. Whilst wholly consistent with the overarching plan it provides guidance in a number of areas where this is necessary, setting clear parameters around the flexibility the Authority may show in order to support the delivery of affordable housing in the National Park. The SPD would be a material consideration when dealing with planning applications and would have weight in the event of a refusal and subsequent appeal.
- 6.2 The consultation process has attracted a relatively limited response, with generally positive and constructive comments. This has led to relatively limited change between the draft and final version although a number of changes have been made in response to specific suggestions, particularly where there was a degree of consensus. It is intended to closely monitor aspects such as commuted sum contributions and the impact of changes to cross subsidy, in order ensure the approach is having the desired outcome consistent with the local plan. Some responses received referred to aspects of policy which stepped beyond the scope of the SPD, changes which would have been inconsistent with the local plan, or been a matter for local plan policy, for example.
- 6.3 The overall ambition of the SPD is to guide how the Authority will take a pragmatic approach to affordable housing delivery in the National Park, maximising and balancing the benefits to local community and the special qualities of the National Park.
- 6.4 Importantly, this SPD must be considered in the context of the current Government Consultation S.106 Obligations, which is considering the removal of affordable housing obligations on schemes of less than 10 units (excluding exception sites).

Such a change could have significant implications for affordable housing in the National Park. Since 2005 we have used S.106 agreements/obligations to secure 80 units of affordable housing out of a total of 170 units – the Government Consultation would remove this mechanism. Members will be given the opportunity to consider a draft response from the Authority to the Government Consultation paper at the May 2014 Authority meeting.

7 Equality and sustainability impact

- 7.1 The Affordable Housing SPD sits within the framework of the policies of the local plan. It adds detail or interpretation to these policies but cannot alter them. The local plan (the Adopted Core Strategy and Adopted Development Management and Delivery DPD) has undergone Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) and public examination. A SA/SEA screening statement has been undertaken which concludes that the SPD will not have significant environment effects. This statement has been the subject of public consultation alongside the SPD; no comments have been received relating to it.
- 7.2 Habitat Regulations Assessment (Appropriate Assessment) is a process which ensures that plans, programmes or projects will not have an unacceptable impact upon the integrity of European sites (on Dartmoor the Special Areas of Conservation). A Habitat Regulations Assessment screening has been undertaken and concluded that detailed Appropriate Assessment of the Affordable Housing SPD is not required. This assessment has been the subject of public consultation alongside the SPD; no comments have been received relating to it.
- 7.3 As described above, the Affordable Housing SPD sits within the framework of the policies of the local plan. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken of the Development Management and Delivery DPD. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken using the Authority's proforma, which does not identify any necessary amendment or action.

8 Financial implications

- 8.1 The adoption of the SPD will entail minor advertising and printing costs anticipated in the 2014/15 budget. The implementation of the SPD has no financial implications for the Authority.

DAN JANOTA

Background Papers: Tracked changes version of SPD:

<http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/planning/pl-forwardplanning/affordable-housing-spd>.

Government Consultation :

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/295035/140320_Planning_Performance_and_Planning_Contributions_-_consultation.pdf

Attachments: Appendix 1 – Affordable Housing SPD

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Dartmoor National Park Authority

Affordable Housing in Dartmoor National Park

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

**Version for Adoption
March 2014**

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INTRODUCTION

This document is the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Dartmoor National Park. It aims to make clear the National Park Authority's expectations and provide guidance to support the delivery of affordable housing in the National Park. It will be a material consideration when dealing with planning applications and will have weight in the event of a refusal and subsequent appeal.

The SPD is split into 6 topics areas; these aim to address the process of developing affordable housing, from identifying need through to viability and legal agreements.

The Authority has a Core Strategy adopted in April 2008 and a Development Management and Delivery DPD (the DMD) adopted in July 2013; these documents, together with the Minerals Local Plan, comprise the 'Local Plan' for Dartmoor National Park, also sometimes referred to as the 'Development Plan'.

As a protected landscape the primary focus for Dartmoor is the statutory purposes of National Park designation; *"to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage (of National Parks); and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities (of the National Park) by the public"*. There is also a statutory duty to *"seek to foster the economic and social well being of local communities by working closely with the agencies and local authorities responsible for these matters"*¹. In this respect there is a fundamental difference between Dartmoor National Park Authority and the other local planning authorities operating in Devon, where we have a strong focus on providing for local needs rather than providing for market housing generally².

The Core Strategy set a robust focus on affordable housing with a housing strategy based upon the provision of affordable housing to meet identified local needs. It sets a settlement strategy, focussing development in 8 'Local Centres'³, with development for local needs in 34 'Rural Settlements'⁴. The DMD sits below the Core Strategy, its policies adding detail where required, in order to aid decision making and provide greater clarity.

This SPD aims to guide the use of these and national policies, and therefore support the delivery of affordable housing in the Dartmoor National Park. It is important to recognise that the Local Plan must be taken as a whole and any relevant policies taken into account when considering the guidance set out in this SPD.

Links with District/Borough Housing Strategies

Dartmoor National Park Authority is the Local Planning Authority for the National Park, but not the Housing Authority. This SPD therefore has an important link with the Housing

¹ Environment Act 1995

² An approach consistent with the English national parks and the broads: UK government vision and circular 2010

³ These are identified in the Core Strategy as Ashburton, Buckfastleigh, Chagford, Horrabridge, Moretonhampstead, Princetown, South Brent and Yelverton.

⁴ These are identified in the Core Strategy as Belstone, Bittaford, Bridford, Buckfast, Cheriton Bishop (Cheriton Cross), Christow, Cornwood, Dean/Dean Prior, Dousland, Drewsteignton, Dunsford, Hennock, Holne, Ilsington, Liverton, Lustleigh, Lydford, Manaton, Mary Tavy, Meavy, North Bovey, North Brentor, Peter Tavy, Postbridge, Scorrison, Shaugh Prior, Sourton, South Tawton, South Zeal, Sticklepath, Throwleigh, Walkhampton, Whiddon Down, Widecombe-in-the-Moor

Strategies for Teignbridge, West Devon, South Hams, and a small part of Mid Devon, which cover the National Park area.

1. DEFINING AND IDENTIFYING LOCAL HOUSING NEED

How do we identify housing need?

- 1.1.** The National Park Authority currently works with the Housing Authority (District/Borough Council) and with the Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) at the Community Council of Devon to identify housing need at a Parish/Community level. Housing Needs Assessments (HNAs) undertaken by the Rural Housing Enabler are informed by a survey of all households within the Parish. Returns are then assessed based upon eligibility (e.g. against local criteria), housing need, and their ability to afford local prices, in order to establish whether they would be an 'eligible household' for the purposes of affordable housing for local needs on Dartmoor. Justification for a development based upon housing needs extending beyond the Parish will only be appropriate where the scheme is agreed with those communities as jointly meeting housing needs on a single site.
- 1.2.** Assessments are being constantly refined, and recently have linked more closely with evidence from the Housing Register (currently Devon Home Choice) and South West Homes to ensure that those already registered are captured as having a need. The Authority supports the increased use of information from the Housing Register, however this information cannot currently act as a substitute for an independent HNA as it does not provide information regarding an 'eligible household' sufficient to support a planning application. Whilst HNAs can be more accurate they do have a limited shelf-life, typically 3-5 years, as they represent a snapshot in time. Information from the Housing Register is 'live' data, but is currently not sufficiently detailed. Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessments (SHMNA) provide a high level indication of need to support strategic decisions, such as the nature of policies or allocations in the Local Plan; they are not appropriate evidence to support individual planning applications in Dartmoor National Park.
- 1.3.** The HNA, normally driven by a Housing Authority and Parish Council to identify need and bring a scheme forward, are currently undertaken at a very early stage in the process. These surveys can also play a role in raising the awareness of affordable housing, and drawing out potential sites or issues within the community.
- 1.4.** The Authority recognises the time it can sometimes take to bring forward a scheme, which has in the past meant that two surveys or a 'refresh' of an initial survey has been needed. Given this the Authority will take a flexible approach to the initial identification of housing needs, or the need for a refreshed survey where there is robust evidence of need. This would include supporting lighter touch surveys at the beginning of the process in order to establish a principle of need, with a full HNA then being undertaken prior to a planning application, in order to inform the scale and nature of need in more detail. The Authority may also consider information from the Housing Register as sufficient evidence of need to initiate work in a community, but it is currently not adequately detailed or up to date to support a planning application on its own.

What is an 'eligible household'?

- 1.5.** An eligible household is one where there is a clear need for accommodation, an inability to afford local accommodation at current open market prices, and conformity with relevant local occupancy criteria, as set out in the Local Plan.

I. In housing need

This is a household which has been assessed and placed on the Housing Register in Bands A-E

- Emergency Housing Need (A);
- High Housing Need (B);
- Medium Housing Need (C);
- Low Housing Need (D);
- No Housing Need (E) (where applicable)

Where Band E does not form part of the Housing Register, the Authority may consider those meeting the following elements of Band E to be in housing need:

- Any household where the household income is insufficient to enable them to afford or to sustain to rent or to purchase a property suitable to their needs in the parish
- A member of a household working in the parish of provision paid or unpaid for 16 hours or more a week for a minimum period of 12 months (it is important to note that this aspect applies only to (i) 'in housing need' and is distinct from (iii) 'a local person')

II. Unable to afford open market prices

The Authority will consider typical measures of affordability used in Housing Market Assessments, linking incomes with lower quartile house prices in the area. This includes the benchmark⁵ that no more than 25% of gross household income is spent on housing costs, with a typical measure of a mortgage which is 3.5 times gross household income being achievable.

III. A household including a 'local' person

This is defined in the Local Plan⁶ as:

- (i) those people currently living in the parish of provision, or a rural parish adjacent to the parish of provision, and having done so for a period of at least five years; or
- (ii) those people who have lived in the parish of provision or a rural parish adjacent to the parish of provision for a period of five years but have moved away in the past three years; or
- (iii) those people who have a strong local connection with the parish of provision or a rural parish adjacent to the parish of provision by virtue of, for example, upbringing or current employment.

⁵ Strategic Housing Market Assessment – Practice Guidance (DCLG 2007)

⁶ Development Management and Delivery DPD paragraphs 2.19.12 - 2.19.14

The eligible adjacent rural parishes will be specified in the legal agreement attached to the property (the 'Section 106 Agreement'⁷) according to the individual location of the development. It should be noted:

- Adjacent parishes containing a Local Centre will not normally be considered to be an adjacent rural parish to the parish of provision
- Parishes lying substantially outside the National Park containing a town or other large community will not normally be considered to be an adjacent rural parish to the parish of provision.

1.6. The Authority has not defined what is meant by a 'strong local connection', as this enables a degree of flexibility. It is however recognised that it is helpful to have a measure of the strength of connection the Authority would expect; some examples of a strong local connection are as follows:

- A person with a family member (for example a parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, step-son, step-daughter, child of partner, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece) who is living in the parish and has done so for a continuous period of at least 5 years.
- A person whose upbringing or a significant part of their upbringing took place in a relevant parish.
- A person who is employed (for not less than 16 hours per week) in the parish of provision or whose work is primarily carried out within the parish, having done so for a continuous period of at least 2 years.
- A person who has spent a significant length of time (normally more than 5 years) living in the parish in the past.

1.7. We will offer advice in the drafting of Allocations Plans or Local Lettings Plans. This can allow the local community an opportunity to identify local priorities in the allocation of properties, and provide a clearer process for identifying an eligible household. In all cases Allocations Plans and Local Lettings Plans must be consistent with the criteria in the Local Plan and the overarching Section 106 Agreement.

2. CONSIDERING POTENTIAL SITES

What sites may be appropriate for affordable housing?

- 2.1.** The Local Plan set out a range of policies against which the merits of a site, its location, layout, design etc may be considered. The Authority's Design Guide SPD also provides additional advice on good design in the National Park. The Local Plan sets out advice on how we will consider and show flexibility in the assessment of site layout, scheme mix (e.g. tenure, property size) in order to promote sustainable development and enable viable schemes to come forward.
- 2.2.** The Local Plan identifies a number of housing sites in the 8 Local Centres in the National Park. It does not identify potential sites for affordable housing in the Rural Settlements on Dartmoor or in Local Centres where there is no current identified

⁷ This refers to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

need, but will consider potential sites identified within the settlement or alternatively 'exception sites' on the edge of settlements where that is necessary to meet identified needs of these smaller communities. The Local Plan recognises that the meeting of needs in another community within or adjacent to the parish may be appropriate where there is environmental constraint in some settlements. Whilst the priority should always be to locate affordable housing where there is the local need, in limited circumstances, we may also consider meeting of needs in another community within or adjacent to the parish where this supports the viability of a scheme to the benefit of the communities involved.

How are sites assessed?

- 2.3.** The Local Plan identifies settlement boundaries in Local Centres, which makes the identification of exception site as 'adjoining' the boundary easier. Settlement boundaries are not identified in Rural Settlements due to the dispersed and varied character of these smaller settlements. Policy DMD22 (residential development in Rural Settlements) describes exception sites as "suitable land within or adjoining the settlement and well related to its existing built form". In these cases we will consider on a case by case basis the merits of a site, its suitability in respect of the policies of the Local Plan and the availability of other suitable land in the settlement.
- 2.4.** In all cases the value of the land should reflect the fact that it would only be available for affordable housing. Currently this would lead to a typical land value of £5,000-£10,000 per housing plot on an exception site. Where we have agreed that an element of cross subsidy (i.e. some limited open market housing – see section 4) may be appropriate to support the viability of the scheme which would otherwise be only for affordable housing, the land value of all plots must still reflect that for affordable housing only.

3. DELIVERING DIFFERENT TYPES OF HOUSING

Delivering different types of housing in the National Park

- 3.1.** Housing in the National Park is delivered by a range of different mechanisms, some of which are explored in more detail below. The Local Plan has a strong focus on delivering affordable housing in communities where a local need is identified. It is important to recognise, though, that there is a demand for other types of housing in the National Park ranging from rural workers dwellings, families or single people looking for private rental or to buy, older people seeking to downsize and an increasing interest in self-build. We would encourage those developing housing schemes to recognise this wider need and consider how a development as a whole, and in particular the open market element, might aim to meet some of the demand for these other types of housing in the local community.
- 3.2.** Where other needs are identified in a community, for example older persons housing, we will encourage developers to include an element of different house types which might meet this need. In certain circumstances we may consider these other needs as part of the cross-subsidy element of an exception site development. Where this is the case we may seek additional measures as appropriate, such as a local occupancy

condition, in order to ensure that these properties are made available for local people in perpetuity. In respect of older persons housing it is important to recognise that providing housing which meets this need for local people can free up existing family sized housing within a community.

Housing with Registered Providers ('Housing Associations')

- 3.3.** The usual approach for larger housing schemes is development by or with a Registered Provider (generally a 'housing association'); this has historically provided the greatest number of new affordable homes in the National Park. These homes would normally be at affordable rent level, or a shared ownership/equity property. Development may be undertaken by a Registered Provider, or in some cases it may be built by a developer and transferred to a Registered Provider on completion.
- 3.4.** Where development by a Registered Provider includes properties for shared ownership the lessee would normally acquire up to 80% of the equity of the property. Where the lessee acquires more than 80% and then wishes to dispose of the property it should be sold back to the Registered Provider. What is important is that the property remains available as an affordable house for local people in the long term and not just for the duration of the first occupier. Where a lessee is struggling to sell their share of the property (for example, because they have acquired a large share), the Authority will look to the Registered Provider to buy back all or a proportion of the equity. We will also be flexible with regard to the ongoing tenure of that property. For example by allowing it to become a rental property if the demand for shared ownership is limited.

Privately built (intermediate) and 'self build' housing

- 3.5.** Intermediate housing is 'more affordable' housing and aims to meet a need between affordable rent and market housing where the household is not able to afford market prices. This model requires that occupants meet the same 'eligible household' criteria, but instead of the property specification and rent level being set by a Registered Provider, a Section 106 Agreement restricts the rent or sale price of the property each time it is re-let or sold.
- 3.6.** Historically the Authority has limited the size of new dwellings to 80m² to sustain their affordability. It is recognised that in some cases this floor space limit may prove inflexible in respect of conversions or the desire to provide larger family housing. A key principle is that properties built via this route must be of a sale or rental value which is within the reach of a qualifying person; the Authority will be flexible on property size subject to an appropriate discount rate as necessary. Size and specification are important –high quality design is essential in the National Park, so a careful balance must be struck between good quality development and one that could be valued such as to be unaffordable to the people who are actually in housing need.
- 3.7.** When considering proposals for privately built affordable housing, the most important aspect is its affordability; in assessing proposals we will therefore consider:
- The size of the property. The following gives an indication of unit size for a range of property types, together with the potential discount rates which may be necessary:

Unit Type	Indicative Unit Size (m ²)	Potential discount rate
1 Bed (2 Person) Flat	48	20%
2 Bed (4 Person) House	62	20%
3 Bed (5 Person) House	85	20-30%
4 Bed (6 Person) House	95	30-40%

Table 1. Indicative property sizes and discount rate

Properties which exceed the above guidelines may not be of a sale value such as to be truly affordable for an eligible household. Permission will therefore be granted subject to a level of discount on market prices which ensures genuine affordability.

- Garages will not normally be acceptable, a modest car port may be.
- The property should have a modest amount of garden space. Large gardens or associated land and buildings would not be acceptable.
- The finish of the property must be carefully considered. Whilst the Authority will seek a high standard of design and build including aspects of sustainable design, a high internal specification is not appropriate for this type of housing, and could make the property unaffordable for an eligible household. Intermediate homes would normally be expected to meet the same *Code for Sustainable Homes* standard as those built by Registered Providers.
- Permitted Development Rights will be removed in order for the Authority to control extensions to the property (including loft conversions), preventing them from becoming less affordable.

It is crucial that the price paid for the land reflects the above factors, or development may not be viable.

In all cases the sale price or rental level should be discounted by not less than 20% from its open market level, having already taken into account the occupancy condition attached to the property (which typically is a discount of round 15%). In order to secure this, a Section 106 Agreement will require that upon the sale or resale of the property, a valuation is undertaken by the District Valuation Office⁸ at the owner's expense. In order to show clearly the discount applied these valuations will set out:

- a) The unrestricted market value of the property
- b) The value of the property, taking into account the occupancy condition
- c) The discounted value based upon a reduction of (b) by the percentage specified in the Section 106 Agreement. The property may not be sold for more than this value.

- 3.8.** Where the conversion of a building to a dwelling would be acceptable in respect of policy, but conversion to an affordable dwelling may not be appropriate, we may consider the possibility of permitting an open market dwelling, and seeking the affordable housing contribution via a commuted sum (see 4.8 below).

⁸ It is important to note that whilst the valuations must be undertaken at the owners expense the District Valuation Office (The Valuation Office Agency) can only be instructed by the local authority.

- 3.9.** The guidance on property size above will also be a helpful benchmark for proposals for agricultural workers dwellings in the National Park. Whilst we may consider proposals which include a modest amount of additional floor space for office or utility/boot room, the focus should remain on providing a dwelling which is affordable for an agricultural worker and potential future occupancy as an affordable dwelling.

Discount Market or 'low cost' Housing

- 3.10.** The NPPF makes clear that low cost discount market housing does not meet the definition of affordable housing. It cannot therefore constitute the affordable housing obligation of a development. Discount market housing could however have a role in the National Park, and may make up a portion of the overall provision in mixed affordable and market schemes.
- 3.11.** Discount market housing may be appropriate in areas of higher house prices; in particular certain communities find that some local people may not qualify for affordable housing, but cannot actually afford to buy a house locally on the open market. These people may not qualify for affordable housing as they technically earn enough to afford a house, however the reality may be that they can only afford the house they might need elsewhere, and not in their own community. For this reason discount market housing would only be appropriate where it is secured for occupancy only by local people in perpetuity, through a Section 106 Agreement. Where discounts are on first occupancy only they should be for a period of not less than 5 years.

Community Land Trusts, Neighbourhood Plans and the Community Right to Build

- 3.12.** Increasingly, communities are taking the opportunity to lead or guide development in their area. Separate advice is available at a national and local level on these different potential routes, such as Neighbourhood Planning, the Community Right to Build and the role of Community Land Trusts and Community Interest Companies. We will continue to support Dartmoor communities wishing to explore these different options. Community Land Trusts have the advantage of being rooted in the community and can perhaps therefore be well placed to ensure the affordable unit benefits the local community in the longer term.
- 3.13.** These tools provide alternative routes for bringing forward affordable housing in a community. Whilst the policies of the Local Plan remain, community level planning can enable local people to have a greater influence over where and how housing may be built (see also paragraph 1.7) as well as how they are occupied. A strong community stake in housing development will normally mean applications are then more positively received. Importantly, these are tools for positive planning, and not intended as an opportunity to prevent development from coming forward.

4. VIABILITY AND LEGAL AGREEMENTS

Why is viability important?

- 4.1. We recognise that viability is a key issue in the delivery of affordable housing. We will continue to work flexibly with the Housing Authorities, communities and housing providers to bring forward schemes where there is an identified need for affordable housing.
- 4.2. In the current funding regime some schemes are unable to meet the current policy expectations for affordable housing of 50% affordable housing in Local Centres, and 100% affordable housing in Rural Settlements. Planning officers are increasingly involved in appraising the viability of schemes and negotiating a viable contribution to affordable housing. In many cases we require specialist support in order to assess viability appraisals.

How do we assess viability?

- 4.3. Any planning application submitted to the Authority which is not delivering the level of affordable housing required by policy must be supported by a detailed viability appraisal carried out by a suitable professional⁹. We will consider the suitability of the viability appraisal submitted, and may undertake a further appraisal based, where appropriate, upon the figures provided by the applicant in order to consider the robustness of the submitted appraisal (the information required for the Authority to undertake its own appraisal, in addition to that already undertaken by the applicant, is set out in Appendix 1). Where necessary we will seek verification of the applicant's viability appraisal; this independent viability appraisal will be carried out at the applicant's expense by a suitable professional instructed by the Authority.

When may the Authority accept cross-subsidy on exception site schemes?

- 4.4. Exception sites are an important route for the delivery of affordable housing in the National Park, particularly in respect of the Rural Settlements; development on exception sites should come forward for 100% affordable housing.
- 4.5. We do, however, recognise that the level of public subsidy currently available is below that which has historically enabled a good level of development on exception sites at 100% affordable housing. Currently the viability of some exception sites, particularly those with limited subsidy may be marginal. In cases such as this we may consider allowing an element of cross-subsidy on exception sites in order to bring forward affordable housing.

⁹ Such requirements may be set out formally in the Authority's Validation Checklist, or a Planning Performance Agreement.

4.6. Cross-subsidy may be acceptable on exception sites where:

- (i) The land for development is brought forward at a level which reflects a value for affordable housing only; and,
- (ii) the scheme can be shown not to be viable at 100% affordable housing; and,
- (iii) there is support for the principle of an element of cross-subsidy on the site in order to bring affordable housing forward within the community (normally the Parish/Town Council); and,
- (iv) the level of cross subsidy proposed is the minimum level necessary to bring the affordable housing forward and the number of market units on the site does not exceed 25% of the development.

We would expect the cross-subsidy element of the scheme to explore how it could meet other local housing needs or requirements in the community. In particular this may include properties suitable for older local people seeking to downsize, or open market self build. Wherever viable we will seek a local occupancy condition on these properties.

When may the Authority accept commuted sum contributions?

4.7. In the majority of development we would expect affordable housing to be provided on site. In a very limited number of cases we may consider a 'commuted sum' contribution i.e. a financial contribution towards affordable housing elsewhere rather than provision on the site. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states off-site provision or a financial contribution of broadly equivalent value should be robustly justified and contribute to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities. We will only consider a commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision of affordable housing where:

- A. The proposal is for the conversion or change of use of an existing building which the Authority considers would be acceptable for use as a dwelling in line with Local Plan policies, but inappropriate for use as an affordable dwelling by virtue of:
 - Its anticipated market value; or,
 - the feasibility of converting or adapting the building for the purposes of affordable housing; or,
 - the impact of the conversion or adaptation for the purposes of affordable housing upon the building (for example where it is a heritage asset); or,
 - the sustainability of its location (i.e. it is in a very isolated rural location).
- B. The proposal is for a new build dwelling(s) in a Local Centre, where the Authority considers that housing development is acceptable in line with Local Plan policies, but that the form or design of a unit(s) to meet affordable local needs would be inappropriate in the local context.

Commuted sums will only be appropriate where the Housing Authority advises that there is reasonable prospect of a local affordable housing development to which a sum would contribute being delivered within the next 10 years.

- 4.8.** Given the range of land and property values, and potential build costs across the National Park we will negotiate commuted sums on a case by case basis. These sums should be calculated on the basis of equivalence; i.e. the contribution would be equivalent to the provision of an affordable dwelling on site. The principle being that the developer of a scheme should be no worse or better off whether they provide the affordable housing required on-site or as a financial contribution. The calculation of a commuted sum would therefore be based upon the difference between the value of a development providing the required amount of affordable housing in line with policy, and the value of that development at 100% market housing.
- 4.9.** Applications which propose an off-site contribution to affordable housing must therefore be supported by viability appraisal and negotiated on a case by case basis. Where necessary we will seek verification of the applicant's viability appraisal; this independent viability appraisal will be carried out at the applicant's expense by a suitable professional instructed by the Authority.
- 4.10.** Commuted sums will be held by the relevant Housing Authority. The Housing Authority will be asked to covenant in the Section 106 Agreement that the commuted sum will contribute to affordable housing in the parish or adjoining rural parish. Where this proves not to be possible within the given timescale the Section 106 Agreement may provide for the sum to be used to contribute to affordable housing elsewhere in the National Park.

How does a cascade operate in our legal agreements?

- 4.11.** Legal Agreements (Section 106 Agreements) are a key tool in ensuring that the requirements of the Authority's housing policies are met through a development; securing affordable housing for local people in perpetuity. The requirements set out in these legal agreements must reflect the Authority's policies, and be consistent with the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF paragraph 203-206). These agreements must strike a balance however, meeting the expectations of the community whilst not being so restrictive as to impact upon a developer or buyer's ability to get a mortgage, or leaving properties empty because an eligible household cannot be found.
- 4.12.** Occupancy restrictions will be used in Section 106 Agreements to secure occupancy by an eligible household. In order to allow for cases where an eligible household cannot be found within a reasonable period of time we will include a 'cascade' to a wider area, in order that a property is not left empty. This cascade is also an important requirement for mortgage lenders, as they would seek re-assurance that, should the property be repossessed, it could be disposed of within a reasonable period of time.
- 4.13.** We operate a different cascade for rental properties and intermediate or shared equity/ownership properties. The cascade would normally operate as follows:

REGISTERED HOUSING PROVIDER

Properties advertised through choice based lettings (currently Devon Home Choice or South West Homes).

- (i) The Parish of provision or adjoining rural parish

- (ii) Where no qualifying person can be found after 8 weeks, all of the National Park

PRIVATELY DELIVERED INTERMEDIATE SALE OR RENT

Properties valued by the District Valuation Office and advertised at or below the agreed discounted price.

- (i) The Parish of provision or adjoining rural parish only
- (ii) Where no qualifying person can be found after 13 weeks, all of the National Park

Upon the possession of the property by the mortgagee, if after the expiry of 13 weeks no offer has been received for the purchase of the Affordable Dwelling (subject to contract) at the full asking price, the requirement for the Affordable Dwelling to be occupied by a Qualifying Person shall not apply to that disposal and any person to whom the Owner shall dispose of the Affordable Dwelling shall be conclusively presumed to be a Qualifying Person and entitled to occupy that dwelling:

- (a) for the purposes of that disposal; and
- (b) for the duration of that person's ownership of the Affordable Dwelling

In all cases where a property is not occupied by an eligible household it shall be for that instance only, and the property will revert to the top of the cascade upon its next re-let or sale. In respect of (i) we may consider where it would be appropriate that provision within a Local Centre may cascade to an adjoining Local Centre.

- 4.14.** We will apply the above approach flexibly, responding to local circumstances and the particular aims of Parish Councils or Community Land Trusts where possible. This may include using Local Lettings or Allocations Plans to add further interpretation to the above, for example reflecting a 'parish first' priority. Importantly, whilst these may aid interpretation or assign priority, they must be consistent with the overall principles set out in the Local Plan.

How might we defer planning obligations or renegotiate agreements?

- 4.15.** The Authority will be flexible in its approach to the phasing of deferral of planning obligations where this is shown to support the viability of the scheme. This may include, for example, a phasing condition and/or Section 106 Agreement allowing the sale of some open market units prior to the completion of the affordable housing, in order to improve the developer's cash flow.
- 4.16.** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes clear that planning obligations should only be sought where they are:
- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms
 - Directly related to the development; and
 - Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

We recognise the need to negotiate planning obligations in such a way as to enable appropriate development to come forward, potentially with a lower affordable housing

contribution where this is robustly justified on the grounds of viability. We would, however, only accept a lesser contribution to affordable housing on this basis if it is certain that the scheme will be delivered immediately, and not held back and completed at a later time, this would be secured through a Section 106 Agreement. The Section 106 Agreement may also require the re-assessment of a scheme's viability, for example upon the commencement of each phase of a development, or if the development has not been completed within the specified period of time.

- 4.17.** A Section 106 Agreement may be varied or amended at any time by further agreement in writing between the original signatories or their successors; a formal procedure is now in place for the application and appeal of affordable housing obligations relating to scheme viability¹⁰. We will always give careful consideration to applications to vary or amend an agreement where they set out clear evidence of changed circumstances. However, the overriding consideration will remain the delivery and retention of affordable housing for local people.

5. DELIVERY AND ENFORCEMENT

- 5.1.** Registered providers should ensure that people applying to live in new or newly available affordable housing in Dartmoor National Park will qualify to do so. This will require reference to the Section 106 Agreement for the property in question. Where possible, we will be flexible in the application or revision of Section 106 agreements where properties are proving 'hard to let', in order to reduce periods where a house is empty. The focus will however always be on the current Local Plan policies and the definition of an eligible household, in order to ensure local people have the best opportunity for vacancies in their community.

How long must vacant properties be advertised for?

- 5.2.** The Authority has traditionally sought long advertising periods on vacant properties, in order for local people to have the best opportunity to take up vacancies in their community. Recognising however that this can create issues around mortgage availability and mean longer periods where properties are left empty, we may allow shorter time periods where properties are advertised through choice based letting. The Authority will require a minimum of 4 weeks advertising through choice based lettings (currently Devon Home Choice) including 2 advertisements, and a minimum of 13 weeks for shared equity and intermediate properties.
- 5.3.** Alongside this we will work more closely with local housing authorities, Devon Home Choice, Parish/Town Councils and local groups such as Community Land Trusts, to promote the awareness of vacant properties in the National Park. Promoting the awareness of vacancies by encouraging local people to register with Devon Home Choice or South West Homes, and ensuring communities are aware of an existing stock in their area, which will give rise to vacancies, will give local people the best opportunity to acquire a property in their community.

¹⁰ The Growth and Infrastructure Act inserts new Section 106BA, BB and BC into the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act making formal provision for the applications and appeal for the review of planning obligations on planning permissions which relate to affordable housing (excluding exception sites).

How do we monitor and enforce legal agreements and occupancy conditions?

- 5.4.** Significant resources go into the delivery of affordable housing. It is therefore important that we place an appropriate level of priority in ensuring that these properties are occupied in accordance with legal agreements. A proactive approach in the first instance is always preferred over enforcement action, and we would always encourage housing authorities, housing providers and individuals to seek our advice on whether an individual meets the qualification criteria for that property. In rented properties the onus is upon the Housing Association or Provider, to ensure new tenants will comply with the relevant occupancy conditions. A form for this purpose is set out in Appendix 2.
- 5.5.** The Authority may from time to time require information from occupiers to confirm their occupancy is in accordance with the conditions set out in the Section 106 Agreement. This is particularly important in respect of privately built intermediate housing whether owned or rented.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THIS DOCUMENT

- 6.1.** It is important that planning policy and associated advice such as an SPD is kept up to date. The Local Plan is currently monitored through the Authority's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), which already includes indicators to monitor the housing policies in the Core Strategy and the DMD. Additional indicators may be included to supplement existing monitoring and ensure the SPD is performing as intended.
- 6.2.** In particular the Authority will monitor closely the effectiveness of elements in this document relating to discount rates on intermediate properties, the level of delivery via cross-subsidy schemes, and the viability and effectiveness in delivery of commuted sums.
- 6.3.** Affordable housing is currently a rapidly changing sphere of work. The Authority will consider a formal review of this SPD in 5 years unless monitoring indicates an earlier review is necessary.

APPENDIX 1 – REQUIREMENTS FOR VIABILITY APPRAISAL

Dartmoor National Park Authority

Development Viability Assessment Information Request

The following form sets out the basic information required by the Authority in order to assess the viability of a scheme for the provision of affordable housing. Where an application proposes a level of affordable housing which falls short of policy the Authority will require the application is supported by a viability appraisal. This appraisal, undertaken by a suitably qualified professional, would normally be expected to include the following information. Where necessary we will seek verification of the applicant’s viability appraisal; this independent viability appraisal will be carried out at the applicant’s expense by a suitable professional instructed by the Authority.

Dartmoor National Park Authority is registered under the Data Protection Act 1998. Your personal information will be held securely and will not be used for any purpose other than for the assessment of viability of the planning obligations relating to the planning application in question. Your details will not be passed on to any other organisation or used for any other purpose without your prior consent.

1. Scheme Information

Applicant	
Planning Application Number	
Date this schedule completed	
Name of Scheme	
Address	
Postcode	
Scheme description	
Site size in Ha (Gross site area)	
Site size in Ha (Net developable area)	
Total residential units	
Description of any commercial and other uses	
Residual land value of commercial/other uses if known	
Date site acquired	
Existing/alternative use value £	
Has the existing alternative use value been determined by a current independent valuation? (If yes please attach a copy)	

2. Timetable and phasing

Please provide:

- proposed start date of construction (month and year);
- proposed completion date of construction (month and year);
- phasing information (if relevant);
- completion timetable for affordable units if known.

3. Residential Scheme Mix

Breakdown of units to be provided to include details of :

- property type e.g. terraced, detached;
- net internal area (m2) of each property type;
- number of bedrooms;
- number of bedspaces;
- number of storeys (if flats);
- whether units are proposed for open market sale or are to be affordable and if the latter, proposed affordable housing tenure .

Please attach architect plans of the proposed scheme (unless already provided as part of a planning application or permission)

4. Scheme Revenue

<p>Please detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current selling prices for each market unit by property type; • current agreed transfer price (with Registered Provider) for any affordable units by property type and affordable housing tenure – if agreed; • level of affordable rent to be charged (if known); • ground rent to be charged; • all other sources of funding such as Social Housing Grant, EU funding and the amount (£) either on a per scheme or per unit basis.

5. Scheme costs

Site investigation cost (£)	
Abnormal build costs Please provide full details and related costs per item	
Developer profit (as a % of GDV)	
Please detail any build costs that are external to the built form of the dwellings.	
Planning gain and infrastructure contributions – please detail on a per item basis for the scheme as a whole (e.g. Education - £)	

APPENDIX 2 – ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

Dartmoor National Park Authority Affordable Housing Application Form to establish an eligible household

This form can be completed by prospective occupants who wish to establish whether he/she satisfies the Affordable Housing Criteria and constitutes a “Qualifying Person” as set out in the Section 106 legal Agreement restricting occupancy.

Please complete and return this questionnaire to Forward Planning, Dartmoor National Park Authority, Parke, Bovey Tracey, TQ13 9JQ, or email to forwardplanning@dartmoor.gov.uk.

1.0 PERSONAL DETAILS

1.1 Please complete your details:

Name	
Current address	
Date of Birth	
Tel No.	
Fax No.	
Email address	

1.2 Please provide details of everyone who will be living with you (please continue and attach a separate sheet in necessary):

Name			
Age			
Current address			
Relationship to you			

2.0 PROPERTY DETAILS

2.1 Please provide details of the property to which this application relates:

Address	
Planning Application ref	
Owner	
Address of owner	
Telephone no. of owner.	
Email address of owner.	

3.0 HOUSING NEED

This section seeks to establish whether you are in housing need, through assessing whether you are in need of suitable permanent housing and unable to satisfy your accommodation needs on the open market.

3.1 Please specify the proposed sale value or monthly/weekly rent

3.2 Please provide a simple financial statement to illustrate why you are unable to afford to pay open market prices/ rents.

Reference should be made if purchasing the property to the gap between household income and the open market house price. In the case of a rental arrangement a straightforward financial assessment relating to the breakdown of income and expenditure should be detailed. In both cases reference should also be made to existing savings and any property currently owned or occupied.

3.3 Are you on the housing needs register for the Local Housing Authority?

Yes/ No (delete as appropriate)

If yes please state for which Local Housing Authority:

3.4 Please indicate your reason for moving – you can give more than one reason. (Please provide further detail if relevant to your housing circumstances), this might include one or more of the following:

- a) New household formation
- b) Inappropriately housed: present home is overcrowded, in disrepair or lacks self contained facilities (e.g. kitchen or bathroom): is inappropriate in terms of household requirements (e.g. for people with very young children or mobility problems more than one flight of stairs in existing accommodation)
- c) Relationship break up
- d) Homelessness or insecure tenancy: living in temporary accommodation, or informal accommodation coming to an end (e.g. living with friends), mortgage/rent too expensive:

Please give details:

4.0 LOCAL CONNECTION

This section seeks to establish your local connection to a parish wholly or partly within the National Park.

4.1 In what way do you consider you have a local connection, please state which of the following circumstances would apply to you

- a) Do you live in the National Park? If yes please give details of your current address and past addresses together with the period of residency for the past five years (please continue on another sheet if necessary)
- b) Have you lived in the National Park for a period of at least five years but moved away in the last three? If yes please give details of past addresses and period of residency for the past eight years prior to the date of completing this questionnaire
- c) Do you consider yourself to have a strong local connection with a parish wholly or partly within the National Park, for reasons other than those detailed above? If yes please specify and give full details of the nature of the connection with the parish within the Dartmoor National Park. Common examples include strong family connections, upbringing, or employment.

Please provide details below, and attach evidence wherever possible.

5.0 STATEMENTS AND SIGNATURE

I declare that all information in this statement is true, correct and complete. I understand, agree and consent to the Dartmoor National Park Authority making their own inquiries and checks regarding the contents of this application.

Please sign within this box:

Date:

Thank you for completing this application. We will contact you should additional information or clarification be required.

Dartmoor National Park Authority is registered under the Data Protection Act 1998. Your personal information will be held securely and will not be used for any purpose other than the monitoring of affordable houses within the Dartmoor National Park. Your details will not be passed on to any other organisation without your prior consent.

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

4 April 2014

REVISIONS TO GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTSReport of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer)Recommendations : **That Members:**

- (i) **Approve the appointment of the Head of Legal & Democratic Services as the Authority's Monitoring Officer, to take effect from the conclusion of the meeting.**
- (ii) **Approve the required changes to the Governance arrangements outlined in this report and delegate the final wording of policies and procedures to the Chief Executive (NPO) on the advice of the Head of Legal & Democratic Services and the Head of Resources**
- (iii) **Approve the revised Financial Regulations attached at Appendix 1**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Due to further reductions in core funding from Defra it is not proposed to recruit a new permanent senior manager to replace the Director of Communications & Business Support when she retires at the end of March. As previously advised, interim arrangements will be put in place pending a staffing and structure review in the 2014/15 financial year. This means that it will be necessary to revise some of the delegations to officers and amend some of the Authority's governance instruments to ensure that they remain fit for purpose – for example by removing references to the post of Director of Communications & Business Support. It is also necessary to appoint a new Monitoring Officer, as the retiring Director undertook this role.

2 Monitoring Officer

- 2.1 The Authority is required by law to appoint three statutory officers:
 - the National Park Officer
 - the Monitoring Officer; and
 - the Chief Finance Officer (also known as the section 151 Officer)
- 2.2 The **National Park Officer** (who is the de facto **Chief Executive**) is appointed '*to be responsible to the Authority for the manner in which the carrying out of its different functions is co-ordinated*'. The Chief Executive (National Park Officer) is the '**Head of Paid Service**' and the Authority is required to provide him/her '*with such staff, accommodation and other resources as are necessary to allow his/her duties to be performed*'.
- 2.3 The Authority is also required to appoint a **Monitoring Officer**. Prior to 2000 the Head of Paid Service could also be the Monitoring Officer, but that option was removed by the Local Government Act 2000 which prohibits the Head of Paid

Service holding both roles. Section 5 of the LGA 2000 requires the Monitoring Officer to report to the Authority on any proposal, decision, or omission by the Authority, or a committee or sub-committee or an officer of the Authority, which has given rise to, as is likely or would give rise to:

- (1) *a contravention of law or any code of practice made or approved by or under an enactment; or*
- (2) *maladministration or injustice... in connection with action taken by or on behalf of the Authority, in the exercise of the Authority's administrative functions.*

2.4 The Monitoring Officer also has an important role in ensuring probity, upholding standards in public life and in particular advising Members on issues arising in connection with interests and the Members Code of Conduct.

2.5 Historically, the key responsibilities for the Monitoring Officer within the Authority have been:

- to lead on governance issues, including the core governance instruments
- to support the work of the Standards (sub)committee, including dealing with any complaints under the Member Code of Conduct
- to promote probity and good practice
- to oversee the Authority's complaints procedure, reviewing decisions where necessary
- to be the principal point of contact with the Local Government Ombudsman on any matter of complaint

2.6 With the changes to the senior management structure as part of the interim arrangements and the need to balance workloads, the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) has determined that responsibility for the Authority's complaints procedure and acting as the link officer with the Local Government Ombudsman shall transfer to the Head of Human Resources upon the retirement of the Director of Communications & Business Support.

2.7 As regards the statutory position of Monitoring Officer, it is proposed that the Head of Legal & Democratic Services should be appointed as Monitoring Officer. The Head of Legal & Democratic Services has served as Deputy Monitoring Officer for several years and has substantial experience of dealing with questions of probity, lawfulness, Members' interests and the Members' Code of Conduct. He has also significant experience in dealing with governance issues, including the drafting and revision of core governance instruments.

2.8 The recent resignation of the Assistant Solicitor has provided an opportunity to re-assess the framework for delivering legal advice and support to the Authority. An interim arrangement has been established for an initial six month period from mid-March 2014, based upon in-house legal services provided by the Head of Legal & Democratic Services supplemented by a service level agreement with Devon County Council (DCC). This interim arrangement is designed to support the Head of Legal & Democratic Services in both the role of Monitoring Officer and in dealing with the day to day workload of legal services and ensure that officers and Members continue to enjoy access to legal advice and support services as appropriate. DCC have agreed

to provide a qualified lawyer for two days each week at Parke as baseline support and have confirmed their willingness to provide additional capacity, support and cover for any periods of leave or other absence as required.

- 2.9 The proposed arrangements are believed to offer a good level of assurance for continuing governance, an appropriate level of resource within the Authority, and at an agreed fixed cost of £8,500 for six months, good value for money.

3 Revisions to Governance Documents

- 3.1 As part of the interim arrangements, it will be necessary to revise some of the delegations to officers and amend some of the Authority's governance instruments to ensure that they remain fit for purpose – for example by removing references to the post of Director of Communications & Business Support.
- 3.2 Work to identify the amendments required has identified the need to change references to job titles and responsibilities in the following documents:
- Scheme of Delegation
 - Instructions on Procurement
 - Anti fraud & corruption policy
 - Confidential reporting policy (“whistleblowing”)
- 3.3 As the changes do not affect the underlying Governance arrangements, but simply update the text to remove reference to a Director of Communications & Business Support, this report does not set out the detail of all these consequential amendments line by line. It is proposed that the final wording of these documents is delegated to the Chief Executive and full copies of the updated documents can be made available for inspection upon request.
- 3.4 While the changes to the Scheme of Delegation are minor, the removal of a Director post means that it has been necessary to review the delegations to officers and make new delegations to ensure business continuity. These delegations are at the discretion of the Chief Executive (NPO) and do not amend the overall delegations from the Authority.
- 3.5 The changes proposed to Financial Regulations are broader and include revisions to the current provisions on virements and a number of other minor amendments. These changes are set out in full at Appendix 1 for Member approval, with the new text and text to be deleted highlighted. These amendments have been discussed with the S151 officer (which role is undertaken by the County Treasurer at Devon County Council who is happy that she is still adequately represented and the changes are appropriate.

4 Continuing Review

- 4.1 These new arrangements are considered necessary and timely to ensure effective governance, reflect the impact of organisational change and keep in place an up-to-date mandate for officers to exercise delegated functions and responsibility on behalf of the Authority.
- 4.2 The Audit & Governance Committee and the Standards Sub-Committee will both have an important role in scrutinising the success of the new Monitoring Officer arrangements and identifying any areas requiring remedial action. It is important that

the process remains one of continuing review and vigilance, to guard against any complacency.

- 4.3 It is believed that the new arrangements offer a robust solution for effective and fit-for-purpose governance that will continue to provide appropriate safeguards and accountability.

KEVIN BISHOP



FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Issued: 2 May 2008
Review: April 2012
Review: March 2014

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INTRODUCTION

Why do we have Financial Regulations?

The Local Government Act 1972 directs that Authorities shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs, and that some of their officers be responsible for the administration of those affairs.

Under powers contained in the Local Government Finance Act 1982 (s23 and 35) the Secretary of State also makes regulations as to the accounts themselves and requires them to be audited by the Audit Commission, or by an Auditor appointed by them. The 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' require that the 'Responsible Financial Officer' must determine and be responsible for the accounting systems and the form of both the accounts and supporting records of the Authority. That Officer must further ensure (by maintaining an effective and adequate audit) that rules so made are observed and that all records are maintained in a satisfactory manner. To conduct its business efficiently, a local authority needs to ensure that it has sound financial management policies in place and that they are adhered to. Part of this process is the establishment of financial regulations that set out the financial policies of the Authority.

Status of Financial Regulations

Financial Regulations provide a framework for managing the authority's financial affairs. They apply to every Member and Officer of the Authority and anyone acting on its behalf.

The regulations identify the financial responsibilities of the Authority, the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive(National Park Officer) – CE(NPO)), the Monitoring Officer, the Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer- CFO), ~~the Director of Communications & Business Support~~ the Head of Resources and Directors.

All Members and Officers have a responsibility for taking reasonable action to provide for the security of the assets under their control, and for ensuring that the use of these assets is legal, properly authorised, provides value for money and achieves best value.

The ~~Director of Communications & Business Support~~ Head of Resources (in consultation with the CFO) is responsible for maintaining a continuous review of the financial regulations and submitting any additions or changes as necessary to the Authority for approval. He/she is also responsible for reporting, where appropriate, breaches of these financial regulations to the Authority.

Directors ~~and the CE(NPO)~~ are responsible for ensuring that all staff in their departments are aware of the existence and content of the Authority's financial regulations.

These regulations should be read in conjunction with:

- Standing Orders
- Scheme of Delegation
- Procedure manuals

- VAT Manual
- Financial Grant Memorandum issued by the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- The Treasury Management Policy & Strategy
- The Prudential Code
- Sustainable Procurement Policy and Procurement Procedures

Statement of Principles

The Authority expects high standards of conduct from its members and officers and those with whom it has dealings. Further to this the Authority expects honesty, openness and integrity to be the values which underpin its financial affairs and all those involved with the Authority's finances should work with these values in mind. The Principles below provide the basis for the detailed guidance in Financial Regulations.

The Principles

The Authority is responsible for the stewardship of public money and will make arrangements to safeguard the interests of all its stakeholders.

The Authority expects its members and officers to exercise high standards in financial management and administration and aims to stimulate openness and a climate of frankness that it will support through policies and regulations, such as the "whistle blowing" policy.

The importance of planning, monitoring and controlling the use of resources is of vital importance to the Authority and it will make arrangements for these activities to be undertaken effectively.

Issues of probity will be dealt with effectively and the Authority will work to meet its duty to maintain proper accounts and related records.

Value for money is at the core of the Authority's financial activity and the way in which it administers its financial affairs.

Compliance with statutory requirements, accounting standards and appropriate codes of practice will be inherent in the Authority's arrangements for financial matters.

Allocation of responsibility and authority in relation to financial matters will be clearly identified.

The Authority is mindful of the need for consistent standards in financial administration and management across all its operations and will set in place guidance to be adhered to by all its directorates. In particular, it expects staff to consult with and use all of the expertise in financial matters that it has available and act on advice from such sources.

The assets and resources of the Authority must be protected from loss, damage and theft. Identifying and quantifying risks to the Authority is of key importance and

arrangements must be made to reduce, eliminate or insure against them as appropriate.

The accurate, appropriate and timely payment and collection of monies forms much of the routine financial business of the Authority and arrangements will be made for its proper administration.

A Financial Management

Financial Management covers all financial accountabilities in relation to the running of the Authority including the policy framework and budget. Below are set out the main areas of responsibility of financial management.

A1 The Authority

The Authority is responsible for adopting the Authority's Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation and Members code of conduct and for approving the policy and corporate governance framework and budget. It is also responsible for approving and monitoring compliance with the Authority's overall framework of accountability and governance as set out in its Standing Orders and is responsible for monitoring compliance with agreed policy and reporting decisions taken.

A2 The Audit and Governance Committee

The Audit and Governance Committee is responsible for scrutinising the activity of the Authority with particular reference to its governance, performance and use of resources (including human resources, property & IT). Acting under delegated power from the Authority, the committee will agree the External Auditor's annual Audit and Inspection Plan; agree the Internal Audit plan; monitor the financial performance of the Authority and the management and maintenance of the Authority's assets; monitor and review the Corporate Risk Strategy and Register; and scrutinise and keep under review Internal Control Mechanisms.

A3 Statutory Officers

A3.1 The Chief Executive (National Park Officer) (CE(NPO)) or Head of Paid Service is responsible for the corporate and overall strategic management of the Authority as a whole. He/she must report to and provide information for the Authority and other committees. He/she is responsible for establishing a framework for management direction, style and standards and for monitoring the performance of the organisation.

A3.2 The Monitoring Officer is responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of financial conduct and for reporting any actual or potential breaches of the law or maladministration and for ensuring that the procedures for recording and reporting key decisions are operating effectively. The Monitoring Officer is responsible for advising all members and officers about who has the authority to take a particular decision and whether a decision is likely to be considered contrary to the policy framework. The Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer are also responsible for advising the Authority if a decision could be considered contrary to the aims and intentions of the approved budget.

A3.3 The Chief Finance Officer or Section 151 Officer (CFO)

Lawfulness and Financial Prudence of Decision Making:

After consulting with the CEO (NPO) and the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Finance Officer will report to the Authority the Authority's external auditor if he/she considers that any proposal, decision or course of action will involve incurring unlawful expenditure or is unlawful and is likely to cause a loss or deficiency or if the Authority is about to enter an item of account unlawfully.

The Chief Finance Officer, if necessary in conjunction with the CE (NPO) and after consultation with the Chairman of the Authority, shall have the powers to take any action necessary to safeguard the interests of the Authority.

Administration:

The Chief Finance Officer has responsibility for the proper administration of the Authority's financial affairs. This includes setting and monitoring compliance with financial management standards, advising on the corporate financial position and on key financial controls, providing financial advice, advising on preparation of revenue and capital budgets, and treasury management.

These responsibilities are set out in statute such as section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. They refer to the totality of the financial affairs of the Authority in all its dealings.

Advice:

The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for advising committees on all financial matters. He/she must be consulted on all financial matters and given adequate opportunity to provide written comments in any report with financial implications.

Where the urgency procedures set out in the Authority's Standing Orders are to be invoked, the Chief Finance Officer must first be consulted on financial and other resource implications.

The ~~Director of Communications and Business Support~~ and the **Head of Resources** represent the interests of the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) at local level.

The ~~Director of Communications and Business Support~~ Head of Resources has, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, responsibility for the provision of financial services to the Authority. The Chief Finance Officer is consulted with via regular scheduled meetings and is given adequate opportunity to provide written comments in any report with financial implications.

The Chief Finance Officer delegates the day to day financial administration of the Authority's financial affairs to the Head of Resources. Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that systems are in place to process financial transactions efficiently and effectively
- Providing accounting services and financial advice to the Authority and its officers
- Preparing and submitting an annual budget
- Preparing and submitting final accounts
- Preparation and submission to Government and other bodies of funding bids, estimates, budgets, financial returns and any other financial information
- Being given adequate opportunity to review and comment on any reports with financial implications

The Head of Resources ~~and Director of Communications and Business Support~~ will meet with the Chief Finance Officer quarterly, to review financial administration and regulation throughout the Authority.

A3.4 Money Laundering

The Authority must notify the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) of any suspected cases of money laundering committed within its accounts as soon as possible. As the Authority is so small and as all financial transactions are centralised, the requirement, as defined by legislation, for a designated Money Laundering Officer, is considered to be disproportionate. Officers are appropriately trained and if any suspicions arise, the Head of Resources will refer to the matter to the S151 Officer immediately for investigation and reporting purposes. See D9.2 for the limits imposed by the Authority in respect of receiving cash for the payment of goods and services.

A3.5 **Directors** (to include the CE(NPO)) must operate efficient systems of financial control and are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Authority is advised of the financial implications of all proposals and that financial implications have been agreed by the Chief Finance Officer via the Head of Resources
- Ensuring that the Authority is advised of legal implications of all proposals and that legal implications are agreed with the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services
- The signing of contracts on behalf of the Authority where they have delegated authority to do so
- Consulting with the Chief Finance Officer, via the ~~Director of Communications and Business Support~~–Head of Resources and seeking approval on any matter that could materially affect the Authority’s financial position before any commitments are incurred.

A4 Accounting Arrangements

A4.1 The Head of Resources is responsible for ensuring that there are appropriate systems in force for keeping the accounts and financial records of the Authority and that the Authority’s annual financial accounts and reports are prepared to meet statutory requirements. The Chief Finance Officer must approve the accounting systems and accounting records in use.

A4.2 Accounting procedures will reflect recommended professional practices, and follow accounting principles determined from time to time by the Chief Finance Officer, in line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) standards or practice, the Financial Grant Memorandum issued by DEFRA under which grant funding is paid and instructions and advice received from DEFRA and auditors.

A4.3 No change must be made to existing accounting procedures without agreement from the Chief Finance Officer, **via the Head of Resources.**

A4.4 The Chief Finance Officer (delegated to the Head of Resources) must examine and certify where required any submission, estimate or claim for payment

of grant by a Government Department or funding from any other body. Officers responsible for the administration of such grants, funds and spending associated with them must ensure compliance with the conditions of the grant/funding.

A4.5 The Chief Finance Officer (delegated to the Head of Resources) must examine and certify where required any financial return to a Government Department or other body.

A5 Budget Process

A5.1 The Financial Grant Memorandum issued by DEFRA sets out a timetable to prepare an annual budget for planned revenue and capital expenditure and how to draw down National Park Grant. A budget and further two year medium term financial plan is prepared for Authority approval and is submitted to DEFRA in line with the timetable.

A6 Year End Accounting

A6.1 The Chief Finance Officer, **via the Head of Resources**, is responsible for ensuring that the annual statement of accounts is prepared in accordance with the “Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting” (the Code). The Authority is responsible for approving the annual Revenue and Capital Outturn and for agreeing procedures for carrying forward any under and over-spending on budget headings. The Authority’s final financial position as presented in the Annual Statement of Accounts will be approved by the Authority.

A7 Financial Training

A7.1 Directors **and Heads of Service** are responsible for ensuring staff receive appropriate training to undertake their financial responsibilities, in accordance with any standards set by the Chief Finance Officer.

A8 Grants & Contributions

A8.1 Grants or contributions up to a value of £2,000 may be authorised by the approved budget holder.

A8.2 Grants or contributions between £2,001 and £5,000 may be authorised by a Director.

A8.3 Grants or contributions over £5,000 must be approved by the Authority prior to payment.

A8.4 All individual grants over £1,000 approved under this delegation, must be reported to the Authority either during the year or at year end. See also Section E – External Arrangements.

A8.5 Historic Building Grants are to be administered in accordance with the limits above and Section 78 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act 1990, the approved Guidance Notes.

A8.6 Officers must carry out appropriate checks to ensure that, organisations to be grant-aided, are financially viable for the duration of the appropriate project or activity and must obtain signed terms and conditions before payment is made.

A8.7 The general administration of the Authority's grant schemes is carried out by the Finance Team, who maintains a record of applications, decisions and allocations. Such information is open to public inspection.

A8.8 Organisations who have been grant aided on an on-gong and/or annual basis must be given adequate notice of any potential termination, allowing time for consultation and negotiation.

A9 Use of Consultants

A9.1 If any professional person or firm is to be engaged on behalf of the Authority to provide consultancy support on a project, review or task involving expenditure in excess of £10,000, the prior approval of the Authority must first be obtained.

A9.2 The CE(NPO) may approve the appointment or engagement of consultancy support on any project, review or task involving expenditure not exceeding £10,000.

A9.3 For projects or activities under their control, a Director may appoint or engage consultancy support involving expenditure not exceeding £5,000.

A9.4 For the purposes of these regulations, consultancy support shall include but not be limited to work by external contractors, chargeable work by other local authorities, other public sector bodies, and the work of agencies, firms and companies.

A10 Use of Capital Receipts

A10.1 All capital receipts will be treated as corporate capital receipts unless specific approval is obtained from the Authority for alternative treatment.

A11 Pensions

A11.1 It is the responsibility of officers preparing to outsource activities of the Authority that involve the transfer of pension rights and liabilities to notify the Chief Finance Officer of any proposal prior to substantive negotiations taking place with third parties.

A11.2 In consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, the full cost and implication of the transfer of pension rights and liabilities must be disclosed in the financial appraisal that is prepared in relation to the outsourcing proposal.

A11.3 The Chief Finance Officer must be consulted about and approve revised pension arrangements before formal agreements are made.

B Financial Planning and Control of Expenditure

The importance of this area is in the need for sound financial planning, monitoring and control of resources. Sound budget management is crucial to informing good decision making and achieving best value in the use of the Authority's resources.

B1 Policy Framework

B1.1 The Authority is responsible for agreeing the Authority's framework and budget. In terms of financial planning the key elements are:

- The National Park Purposes
- The Dartmoor National Park Management Plan
- The Business Plan
- The Financial Grant Memorandum
- The Annual Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan
- The Capital Strategy and Annual Capital Programme
- Prudential Indicators (limits for external borrowing, other long term liabilities and related matters and Treasury Management Strategy)

B2 Revenue Budget Preparation

B2.1 The CE (NPO) in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, **via the Head of Resources**, is responsible for ensuring that a revenue budget for the coming year and a medium term financial plan, for the two subsequent financial years, is prepared for consideration by the Authority.

B2.2 The Head of Resources in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer is responsible for providing guidance on the general format of the budget.

B2.3 Directors will prepare, in consultation with the relevant working panels and in accordance with the framework set down by the CE (NPO) an estimate of income and expenditure for the ensuing financial year within the spending targets set by the CE (NPO) and Defra.

B2.4 The CE (NPO) will submit a Medium Term Financial Plan to the full Authority for approval by 31 March each year.

B2.5 The ~~Director of Communications and Business Support and~~ Head of Resources in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer is responsible for reporting to the Authority on the robustness of estimates contained within the budget and adequacy of reserves allowed for in the budget proposals.

B3 Determination of Affordable Borrowing

B3.1 It is the responsibility of the Head of Resources, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer to provide the Authority with a written report on affordable levels of borrowing. This report is to be presented at the meeting when the annual budget is set and should have regard to the Prudential Code for Capital Finance issued by CIPFA. The report will contain a number of prudential indicators that demonstrate that capital expenditure plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

B4 Resource Allocation

B4.1 The Chief Finance Officer, **via the Head of Resources**, is responsible for developing and maintaining a resource allocation process that ensures that both capital and revenue expenditure plans take account of the Authority's policy framework and changing priorities within that.

B4.2 It is the responsibility of Directors to ensure that the revenue and capital budget estimates reflect the priorities and goals in the National Park Management Plan, the Business Plan and agreed service plans are in line with the medium term financial plan and capital strategy.

B5 Maintenance of Reserves

B5.1 It is the responsibility of the ~~Director of Communications and Business Support and the~~ Head of Resources, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, to provide the Authority with a written report on levels of reserves that are considered to be prudent.

B5.2 The level of reserves maintained by the Authority is determined and based on, at a minimum, an annual risk based assessment of the Authority's:

- priorities,
- planned activities, and
- known and anticipated future obligations.

The medium term financial plan should, in part, be based on how to either reach or maintain this recommended level of reserves.

B5.3 The Authority will monitor its working balances and minimum reserve level throughout the year as part of its Revenue and Capital Budget monitoring process.

B6 Revenue Budget Management and Control

B6.1 Management and control of each section of the Authority's budget (or part where appropriate) is the responsibility of the appropriate Director **and the CE(NPO)**.

B6.2 The appropriate Director must ensure that there is a designated officer managerially accountable to them for the detailed management of their budget and notify the Head of Resources of those so designated.

B6.3 Directors and the Head of Resources will jointly carry out regular budget monitoring and reporting to identify financial problems and key issues and to recommend the management action necessary to resolve them. Reference may also need to be made to DEFRA under the grant regulations. Responsibility for management action rests with the appropriate Director.

B6.4 Monitoring reports defining service financial problems and key issues with recommended action will be made to the Audit and Governance Committee on a quarterly basis, and to the Authority at year end and at any other time as determined by the Chief Executive (NPO) and Chief Finance Officer. Where agreement on information or recommended action cannot be reached, the Chief Executive (NPO) and Chief Finance Officer have the duty to report separately.

B6.5 With the explicit approval of the Authority, and subject to the overall outturn position, at the end of each financial year any net under-spend within operational budgets may be carried forward into the following year via transfers to or from reserves.

B6.6 The Authority's final financial position as presented in the Annual Statement of Accounts will be approved by the Authority.

B7 Monitoring and Control of Affordable Borrowing

B7.1 It is the responsibility of the Head of Resources, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, to develop and maintain systems to monitor performance against prudential indicators. Reports on performance against indicators including early warning of any possible breach of any prudential indicator will be made to the Audit and Governance Committee on a regular basis.

B8 Authority to Incur Revenue Expenditure

B8.1 No expenditure shall be incurred nor any reduction in income authorised unless such expenditure or reduction in income is:

- Covered by the annual or supplementary budgets approved by the Authority.
- The benefit of a carried forward under spending within Regulation B6.5
- Covered by a virement (see B9).

B9 Virements

B9.1 A virement is a movement of budget provision between headings within a cost centre or between cost centres.

B9.2 Where a virement represents a major change in policy and is greater than ~~£25,000~~ £30,000, the CE (NPO) in consultation with the CFO, needs to prepare a brief written report for the Authority seeking its approval to the policy change and the associated virement.

B9.3 **Virements up to £5,000 may be approved by a Director. Virements over £5,000 and up to £30,000 must be approved by the CE (NPO) forms are available on Parknet. The signed Virement form and copies of any supporting documentation must be forwarded to the Head of Resources.**

B10 Preparation of the Capital Programme

B10.1 The **Head of Resources, in consultation with** the Chief Finance Officer, is responsible for ensuring that a capital strategy for the ensuing financial year and three subsequent financial years is prepared, or for a longer period as may be specified by the Authority and this must be submitted to the Authority.

B10.2 Before items included in an approved Capital Programme may be committed, a detailed estimate of their cost must be submitted to the Authority for approval.

B10.3 The amount of capital expenditure to be financed by borrowing, in accordance with the Prudential Code, must be approved by the Authority.

B11 Authority to Incur and the Control of Capital Expenditure

B11.1 All capital expenditure proposals must be included in the Capital Programme.

B11.2 Revised approval from the Authority must be obtained if the cost of an item increases above the approved estimate by more than the excess permitted under the Authority's Procurement Procedures. Approved increases must be contained within the approved total programme. Exceptionally, the Authority's approval may be sought to increase the approved total Programme and its financing.

B11.3 The introduction of new capital items after the Capital Programme has been approved (where additional or in substitution) requires the Authority's advance approval.

B11.4 The Authority must approve any re-phasing or alterations to Capital Programme

B11.5 Capital items purchased must be recorded in the appropriate asset register or inventory.

B12 Capital Receipts

B12.1 The proceeds from the sale of land, buildings and equipment are classed as capital receipts. Capital receipts must be accounted for separately and they must not be confused with revenue income such as fees and charges.

B12.2 The ~~Director of Communications and Business Support~~–Head of Resources must be informed of all proposed sales of land and buildings so that the effect on financial and property management can be assessed.

B12.3 All disposals relating to land and buildings (owned and leased) shall be approved by the Authority in accordance with the Authority's Asset Management Plan and will be by public auction or by tender after public advertisement.

B12.4 The CE(NPO) will be responsible for the negotiations of all such sales in accordance with any delegated approval given the Authority and must be undertaken in accordance with Section 123(2) of the LGA Act 1972 so as to obtain best consideration for the Authority and no favour should be shown to staff or third parties.

B13 Leasing

B13.1 All vehicle, plant, furniture and equipment leasing must be negotiated in consultation with the Head of Resources and where appropriate ~~the Authority's Lawyer~~ **the Head of Legal and Democratic Services**. Provision for the acquisition of leased items must be considered by the Head of Resources before they are included in the Capital Programme.

B13.2 Authority approval must be obtained before any commitment is entered into for any new property lease so that the effect of Central Government and DEFRA controls on the Capital Programme can be assessed and approved.

C Risk Management and Control of Resources

It is essential that robust, integrated systems are developed for identifying and evaluating all significant operational risks to the Authority. Equally, regulations are needed to ensure arrangements are in place to protect assets and resources of the Authority.

C1 Risk Management

C1.1 The Authority is responsible for approving the Authority's risk management strategy and for reviewing the overall effectiveness of the strategy.

C1.2 The CE (NPO) and Directors are responsible for preparing the Authority's Risk Management Policy Statement and for promoting it throughout the Authority and updating it.

C1.3 The general controls for risk management are:

- Procedures are in place to identify, assess, prevent or contain material known risks and the procedures are operating effectively throughout the authority
- A monitoring process is in place to review the effectiveness of risk reduction strategies and operation of these controls
- Managers know which risks they are responsible for managing and are provided with relevant information
- Provision is made for any losses that might result from the risks that remain
- Claims are investigated within a given time scale
- Acceptable levels of risk are determined and insured against where appropriate
- The Authority has identified business continuity plans in the event of a disaster that results in significant loss or damage to its resources

C2 Internal Control

Internal control refers to the systems of control devised by management to help ensure the Authority's objectives are achieved in a manner that promotes economical, efficient and effective use of resources and that the Authority's assets are safeguarded.

Systems of Internal Control

C2.1 The **Head of Resources, in consultation with the** Chief Finance Officer, is responsible for advising on effective systems of internal control. These arrangements need to ensure compliance with all applicable statutes and regulations and other relevant statements of best practice.

C2.2 Directors are responsible for establishing sound arrangements for planning, appraising, authorising and controlling their operations to achieve continuous improvement, economy, efficiency and effectiveness and for achieving their financial and non-financial performance targets.

C2.3 The ~~Director of Communications and Business Support~~ Head of Resources, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer shall prepare an annual statement of the effectiveness of the Authority's system of internal control incorporated into the Annual Governance Statement. This statement will be published as part of the Annual Statement of Accounts and will be approved by the Authority.

C3 Separation of Duties

C3.1 Financial procedures must be undertaken wherever possible using separate persons to undertake different parts of any one transaction.

C4 Retention of Records

C4.1 Accounting and other records must be retained for periods that comply with relevant legal requirements. Detailed standards are contained within the Authority's Retention Policy.

C5 Investments and Treasury Management

C5.1 All investments of money under its control and all borrowings shall be made in the name of the Authority.

C5.2 All securities that are the property of or in the name of the Authority and the title deeds of property in its ownership, shall be held by the Head of Resources, or appointed custodians, or the Authority's bankers as appropriate.

C5.3 The Head of Resources will maintain the Authority's register of stocks, bonds and mortgages and will maintain records of all borrowing of money by the Authority.

C5.4 Funds held in trust will wherever possible be in the name of the Authority.

C5.5 All officers acting as trustees or controlling funds by virtue of their official position have a duty to exercise due care over the custody of valuables and documents and the administration of funds.

C5.6 The Authority adopts the key recommendations of CIPFA's Treasury Management in Public Services: Code of Practice.

C5.7 Accordingly the Authority will create and maintain a Treasury Management Policy Statement, suitable Treasury Management Practices (TMP's) and will receive reports on its treasury management policies, practices and activities, including as a minimum, an annual strategy and plan in advance of the year and an annual report after its close.

C5.8 The Authority delegates responsibility for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions to the Head of Resources (in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer) who will act in accordance with the organisation's policy statement and TMP's and, if a CIPFA member, with CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

C5.9 The Authority is required to approve certain maximum borrowing levels before the start of each financial year based on recommendations made by the Chief Finance Officer.

C6 Security of Authority Property

C6.1 The Head of Resources will ensure that a register of land and buildings owned by the Authority is maintained and, in liaison with the ~~Authority's Lawyer~~ **Head of Legal and Democratic Services**, will ensure custody of all title deeds under secure arrangements.

C6.2 Directors are responsible for maintaining proper security of Authority property and cash holdings in accordance with the detailed standards below:

- Other than where approved by the CE (NPO), the Authority's property must not be removed other than in the ordinary course of the Authority's business or used other than for the Authority's purposes.
- Where Authority property is held in the homes of Officers or Members, those individuals must make reasonable arrangements for its safe custody and return the property when required by the Authority.
- Maximum limits for cash holdings must be agreed with the Head of Resources and must not be exceeded without the Head of Resources' express permission. All reasonable steps should be taken for the secure storage of cash
- Keys to safes and similar receptacles must be subject to adequate security and the loss of keys must be reported to the Head of Resources immediately. Safes and similar receptacles must be subject to an annual contents review, listing and certification by an appropriate manager.

C6.3 The Head of ICT & Premises is responsible for maintaining proper security and privacy of information held in the main computer installation.

C6.4 The Head of ICT & Premises is responsible for controlling access to main computer installation data and within directorate computer data in accordance with the Authority's Data Protection and Computer Security Policy Guidelines.

C7 Sale of Assets

C7.1 The CE (NPO), **Directors or the Head of Resources may approve** and make arrangements for the disposal for surplus items (excluding land, buildings and leased items) with an estimated market value of up to £2,500. For surplus items above £2,500 approval must be obtained from the Authority.

C7.2 All disposals of assets and surplus items (excluding land and buildings) must be undertaken in accordance with the Authority's Disposals Procedures (attached at appendix 1).

C7.3 All disposals relating to land and buildings (including leases) shall be approved by the Authority and will be in accordance with the Authority's Asset Management Plan and will be via public auction or by tender after public advertisement.

C7.3 All disposals of assets and surplus items must be undertaken in accordance with Section 123(2) of the LGA Act 1972 so as to obtain the best consideration for the Authority and no favour should be shown to staff or other third parties.

C8 Stocks and Stores

Officers are responsible for the custody and control of stocks and stores in their Sections in accordance with detailed standards below:

C8.1 A complete record of all stores received on behalf of the Authority, whether from suppliers, surplus stores, gifts, or material returned from work sites, together with a record of all stores issues made and stores balances in hand at any time, must be kept in a form agreed by the Head of Resources in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer.

C8.2 In addition to the periodical testing of stocks in hand, Directors and / or Heads of Service must make the necessary arrangements to undertake a complete stocktaking of all stores at least once during each financial year.

C8.3 Where required, stock sheets must be prepared and passed to the Head of Resources showing at 31 March (as nearly as may be) the actual stocks in hand and their value. This will be revealed by the stocktaking. The stocks in hand and their value must be shown in the stores accounts, together with any surpluses or deficiencies.

C8.4 The stocktaking must be supervised by a responsible person (other than the person responsible for the stores) nominated for the purpose by the appropriate Director or Head of Service and both the person taking the stock and the person supervising must certify the stock sheets.

C8.5 Any deficiency, theft or other loss in value including obsolete stock exceeding £200 or any combination of items revealed on the occasion of the annual stocktaking or otherwise, must be reported at the earliest opportunity to the Head of Resources, for the necessary authority to write off each deficiency, or to obtain a decision as to other action to be taken. The report must state quantities and values in question, together with any other relevant information. The CE (NPO) or **delegated Director** may write off deficiencies up to ~~£1,000~~ **£2,500**. Items or a combination of items in excess of ~~£1,000~~ £2,500 requires the approval of the Authority.

C8.6 Wherever a storekeeper or person in charge of stores hands over, leaves or ceases to have custody of stores, the appropriate Director must ensure that a prior reconciliation is made of the stores concerned and that a handing over certificate is signed by the out-going and incoming officers.

C8.7 Stocks and stores must not be carried by any Directorate in excess of reasonable requirements as ascertained by experience, or in excess of authorised levels notified from time to time.

C9 Inventories

C9.1 Directors have overall responsibility for the maintenance of inventories of plant and equipment in their control in accordance with the instructions issued by the Head of Resources. Inventory responsibility may be delegated to individual Officers. Such inventories must include items held at the homes of Officers or Members. Directors must ensure that:

- Inventories are kept up to date and original copies will be held by the Head of Resources
- Items held under leasing arrangements are appropriately identified
- Any deficiency, theft or other loss is reported at the earliest opportunity to the Head of Resources.
- The deletion of items from inventories is authorised and in accordance with the Disposals Policy and Section C7.1 of these Regulations
- Details of the disposal of the items are stated on the inventory
- An adequate record is maintained of transfer of control and any temporary borrowing or other removal from the establishment of any item which is (or should be) listed in the inventory including items held at the homes of Officers or Members
- Where an officer who is responsible for the custody of the items recorded in an inventory hands over that responsibility to another, the inventory is checked and the incoming officer must sign as accepting responsibility for the custody of the items recorded in the inventory
- A complete inventory check is carried out at least once each year and the result certified by the head of section
- All property owned or acquired by the Authority must, as far as practicable, be effectively marked as Authority property

C10 Insurance

The Authority faces many risks of different kinds in carrying out its functions. Regulations here are designed to protect the interests of the Authority, its staff and the people it serves.

C10.1 The Authority will decide and approve the Authority's policy of insurance. Directors must notify the Head of Resources promptly of all new risks or properties which may need to be insured, and of any alterations affecting existing risks or insurances indicating the amount of cover required.

C10.2 The Head of Resources is responsible for advising the Authority of the insurance required and of market changes.

C10.3 Any event which gives rise to a claim under any policy of insurance must be notified immediately to the Head of Resources, who will make arrangements to deal with all claims.

C10.4 Any officer in respect of whom the Authority is required by Section 114 of the Local Government Act 1972 to take security and any other person handling public money or money's worth, in respect of whom the Authority consider it desirable, must be covered by insurance in such form as the Authority approves.

C10.5 Any officer who uses his own motor vehicle on Authority business is required to insure against third party risks in such form as to indemnify the Authority against claims arising, and the policy, including any necessary endorsements and renewal receipts, must be produced for inspection during the annual staff appraisal process. Directors are responsible for acquainting officers under their control of the foregoing requirement.

C10.6 Before any contract is made the ~~Authority's Lawyer~~ **Head of Legal and Democratic Services** must approve the insurance cover to be furnished by the contractor in respect of any act or default.

C11 Ex Gratia Payments

Ex-gratia payments are made in situations where no legal obligation exists.

C11.1 The CE (NPO) may make any ex gratia payment in a sum not exceeding £1,500 to any person who is proved to have suffered a direct identifiable loss as a result of the Authority's actions or failure to act.

C11.2 The CE (NPO) may reimburse the costs of damage or loss of an Officer's personal property up to a maximum of £500 in any one case, provided it is shown that the damage or loss arose in the course of the Officer's duties without negligence or carelessness on the Officer's part.

C12 Gifts and Hospitality

The Authority and the public expect the highest standards of integrity from public servants. Formal standards are in place to guide staff and Members on these matters and to ensure consistency of judgement.

C12.1 All employees must observe the provisions of the Authority's policy on Gifts and Hospitality set out in the detailed standards below.

C12.2 A particular source of conflict between the private and public interest is the offer of gifts, hospitality or benefits in kind to Members and officers in connection with their official duties. An exercise of judgement may sometimes be necessary to decide how the public interest and the Authority's good name may be served. A reasonable amount of entertainment is a normal part of the courtesies of public life and extreme strictness can give unnecessary offence to people and organisations with whom the Authority's relationships should be cordial. But an appearance of improper influence is easily created and with it encouragement of cynicism about the motives of those who serve in local government.

C12.3 With the exceptions listed below, a Member or officer should refuse any personal gift offered to him/her or to a member of his/her family, by any person or body who has or seeks dealings with the Authority. Any such offer should be reported immediately to the Monitoring Officer. These paragraphs are particularly directed to individuals or organisations or persons who already provide or who seek to provide work, goods or services to the Authority, e.g. building contractors, suppliers of goods or equipment and firms to provide professional or commercial services to the Authority.

C12.4 Exceptions:

- A modest gift of a promotional character given to a wide range of people. These gifts are usually given at Christmas time and include calendars, diaries, desk sets, tape measures, scales and other articles of use in the office
- Gifts on conclusion of any courtesy visit to a factory or firm of a sort normally given by that firm
- A modest gift where refusal would cause needless offence and the giver is not seeking a decision of business, but merely wishes to express thanks for advice, help or co-operation received

It is wise to err on the side of caution and an obviously expensive gift should raise a question, even if it otherwise falls within one of the above categories. If in doubt, seek the advice of the ~~Director of Communications and Business Support~~ **Monitoring Officer or Head of Resources**. Officers and members should be aware that it is an offence under the Section 117(2) of the LGA Act 1972 and the Bribery Act 2010 to give/receive any fee or reward to gain a commercial advantage.

C12.5 When a gift has to be refused, this should be with tact, because the offer of gifts is common practice in the commercial world. In some cases a gift is simply delivered and there may be a problem over returning it. It is sometimes acceptable to the giver for the gift to be the subject of a raffle and the proceeds placed to a charitable fund. An arrangement of this sort should only be made with the approval of the ~~Director of Communications and Business Support~~ Head of Resources and recorded by letter.

C12.6 Hospitality is sometimes offered to representatives of the Authority and is accepted at official level because it is reasonable in all circumstances. Where it is offered to individual employees, special caution is needed where the host is seeking to do business with the Authority or to obtain a decision from it. It is important to avoid any suggestion of improper influence. The question is one of judgement and the following examples are intended to give general guidance:

Acceptable:

- A working lunch of modest standard provided to allow the parties to continue to discuss business. Officers should seek approval for reciprocation on a subsequent occasion, if there is a need for a further meeting
- Invitation to a Society or Institute dinner or function
- Invitation to take part in a sporting event
- Invitation to take part in Company jubilee or other anniversary celebration.

Unacceptable:

- Holiday abroad, at home or weekend in a holiday centre
- Offer of hotel or theatre tickets
- Use of a company flat or hotel suite
- Invitation to attend a sporting events at the courtesy of a private individual or company

C12.7 In general terms it will often be more acceptable to join in hospitality offered to a group than to accept something unique to oneself. When a particular matter is currently an issue with the Authority, e.g. arbitration, then clearly common-sense dictates that offers of hospitality be refused; even if in normal times they would be acceptable.

C13 Voluntary Unofficial Funds

For reasons of probity and accountability, the good practice applied to Authority funds should also applied to unofficial funds. This section therefore requires that administrative arrangements for unofficial funds meet the standards expected by the Authority.

C13.1 Officers controlling, wholly or in part, any voluntary unofficial fund must ensure that accounting arrangements are in place which comply with the detailed standards below and other guidance issued by the Head of Resources, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer.

C13.2 Directors must ensure that they are aware of all voluntary unofficial funds in their directorates, maintain a record of them and ensure that the accounts are audited and put before the management bodies annually.

C13.3 Officers must ensure that arrangements are in place to:

- Ensure that a suitably experienced person (not necessarily professionally qualified) audits the fund in accordance with procedures recommended by the Chief Finance Officer
- Arrange for audited statements of accounts to be submitted to and received by the appropriate management body at least annually. Such statements must include a signed certificate in a form prescribed by the Chief Finance Officer
- Ensure other guidance issued by the Chief Finance Officer is complied with

C14 Fraud and Corruption

C14.1 All Officers and Members are responsible for giving immediate notification to the Monitoring Officer ~~or Deputy Monitoring Officer~~ where there are grounds to suggest any financial impropriety or irregularity concerning income, expenditure, cash, stores, or other property of the Authority or held by the Authority.

C14.2 Any suspected financial irregularity will be dealt with in accordance with the Authority's policy entitled 'Strategy for Dealing with Financial Irregularities'.

C14.3 Where there are reasonable grounds to suggest irregularity, after preliminary investigation, the Monitoring Officer and/or **Head of Resources (in consultation with the** Chief Finance Officer) shall consult with the CE(NPO), before involving the police, if it is considered that a criminal offence may have been committed. A report may be made of any irregularity to the Authority after consultation with appropriate officers.

C15 Audit Requirements – accounts and audit regulations 2011

The Authority has a statutory responsibility to maintain an effective and adequate system of internal audit. Regulations in this area are therefore important to provide a formal framework for the activities of the internal audit team. There are also statutory requirements in respect of external audit and other inspection agencies.

Internal Audit

C15.1 As required by legislation **the Head of Resources, via** the Chief Finance Officer will ensure that all financial systems are secure. Assurance that this is the case is given by maintaining an internal audit of the Authority's financial dealings.

C15.2 Internal audit will follow professional standards and guidelines issued by CIPFA and the Auditing Practices Board.

C15.3 The Chief Finance Officer or authorised representatives may, for the purposes of audit:

- Enter on any premises or land and have access to all property in the keeping or ownership of the Authority;
- Have access at all times to all records, documents and correspondence relating to all financial and other transactions of the Authority or non-official funds operated by staff of the Authority;
- Require and must receive any explanations as are necessary;
- Require any employee of the Authority to produce cash, stores or any other property of the Authority or that of an unofficial fund under his control;
- Remove records, documents or assets required for further investigation

External Audit

C15.4 The Audit Commission is responsible for appointing external auditors to each local authority. The basic duties of the external auditor are governed by section 15 of the Local Government Finance Act 1982, as amended by section 5 of the Audit Commission Act 1998.

Other Review Bodies

C15.5 The Authority may, from time to time, be subject to audit, inspection or investigation by external bodies such as HM Revenue and Customs and, who have statutory rights of access.

C16 Staffing

C16.1 **The CE (NPO) and** Directors are responsible for the operation of the following controls over staffing:

- A staffing strategy is in place that matches staffing requirements and budget allocations
- Appropriate methods are used to forecast staffing requirements and related costs
- Staffing establishments specified as full time equivalents are approved by the Authority alongside the annual budget

- Any subsequent increases in establishment levels will require the approval of the CE(NPO), subject to adequate budgetary provision being available to finance the addition
- Any additions to the staffing establishment and any salary or pension related changes that result in an increased budget requirement, must be approved by the Authority
- Procedures are in place to ensure that only authorised vacancies are advertised
- Monitoring of full time equivalents against budget is undertaken on monthly basis and is reported to Leadership Team
- Corporate minimum standards on recruitment and selection, as defined by the Authority's Recruitment and Selection Policy, are followed at all stages of the recruitment process

C 17 Official Conduct

Directors are responsible for ensuring that Officers are properly inducted and understand their terms and conditions of employment (as laid down in the Statement of Particulars) and the rules and local agreements made by the Authority.

C17.1 It is expected that local government officers will demonstrate the highest level of integrity and although off duty hours are personal, officers should never put themselves into a situation where there is any possibility that private interests could conflict with their official duty as a local government officer.

C17.2 If it comes to an Officer's knowledge, that a contract or transaction, in which that officer has a personal or pecuniary interest, whether direct or indirect, (not being a contract to which the officer is a party) had been, or is proposed to be, entered into by the Authority, the Officer should give notice in writing to the ~~Director of Communications and Business Support~~ **Head of Legal & Democratic Services** of that interest, as soon as is practicable.

C17.3 Officers above DNP Grade 5 are expected to devote their whole time service to the work of the Authority and not engage in any other business or take up any additional appointment without the express consent of the CE(NPO).

C17.4 Any officer below grade 5 who wishes to undertake additional employment or work will be required to inform their line manager in writing and enter into an undertaking regarding confidentiality if there is potential for conflict of interest.

C17.5 Officers must not disclose to the public the confidential (Part II) proceedings of any Committee meetings, etc. nor the contents of confidential documents relating to the Authority unless required by law or expressly authorised to do so by the CE (NPO).

D Systems and Procedures

This area forms much of the routine financial business of the Authority and involves large numbers of transactions and staff. This area will be of interest to many people and it is important that such a major area of activity is clearly regulated and those regulations are supported by thorough detailed standards.

D1 General Controls

D1.1 The general controls for systems and procedures are:

- Basic data exists to enable the Authority's objectives, targets, budgets and plans to be formulated
- Performance is communicated to the appropriate managers on an accurate, complete and timely basis
- Early warning is provided of deviations from targets, plans and budgets and management action taken
- Operating systems and procedures are secure

D2 Purchasing Arrangements

D2.1 Directors must ensure and be able to demonstrate that the Authority obtains value for money in purchasing activity and that purchasing accords with corporate and service priorities and where appropriate the procurement plan and is sustainable in nature.

D2.2 The most effective and sustainable purchasing arrangements must be used and must always be in compliance with the Authority's Sustainable Procurement Policy and Procurement Procedures

D2.3 The Head of Resources will seek to provide access to a range purchasing options. Corporate contracts and approved framework contracts must be used where such contracts exist. The Authority may also have access to other external procurement contracts, for example:

- Joint procurement arrangements and framework agreements with the Devon Procurement Partnership
- Joint procurement arrangements and framework agreements with other local authorities, Central Government and/or public bodies i.e. national agreements
- Low cost items may be purchased through an imprest account in accordance with D6
- Low value high volume purchases may be made via a Government Procurement card in accordance with D5

D2.3 The Head of Resources must ensure that e-business / purchasing processes maintain the security and integrity for transacting business electronically and must approve the introduction of such systems.

D2.4 In accordance with the relevant codes of practice, every officer and member of the Authority who is involved in contractual or purchasing decisions and issuing payments on behalf of the Authority, has a responsibility to formally declare any

links or personal interests which they may have with purchasers, suppliers or contractors and in respect of partnership arrangements.

D3 Orders for Goods and Services

Directors are responsible for the control and use of all orders and requisitions within their service directorates and for access to the systems that generate them in accordance with the detailed standards below:

D3.1 Orders are to be raised electronically on the Finance (FINEST) system by the Finance Team. The design of Request For Order (RFO) forms must be approved in advance by the Head of Resources.

D3.2 Directors are responsible for:

- Providing the Head of Resources with the names and limits of their authority of those authorised to sign RFOs and a specimen of their signatures
- Ensuring that staff issuing orders have received appropriate purchasing training
- Ensuring every RFO clearly specifies the standards, quality and quantity of goods and services required
- Ensuring every RFO states the agreed price or contract terms and times of delivery
- Ensuring every RFO is dated & signed by an authorised officer
- Ensuring every order is in compliance with the Sustainable Procurement Policy and Procurement Procedures
- A second counter-signature is required for any order over the value of £5,000

D3.3 Directors and authorised spending officers are responsible for ensuring that budget provision exists for all purchases and commitments created.

D3.4 RFOs will be forwarded to the Head of Resources so that the official order can be raised and a commitment made in the Authority's Financial Ledger. There are two transaction stages in raising an official order, carried out by two separate officers from the Finance Team. The Finance Team will make checks against all of the items listed at D3.2 & D3.3 above.

D3.5 For orders placed by telephone, email, internet or verbally, the Director is responsible for ensuring systems approved by the Head of Resources are in place to ensure the person ordering has the appropriate authority and that the Authority receives the goods that have been ordered. A copy of the order must be confirmed by written order sent to the supplier not later than the next working day, or the transaction must be entered onto the Officer's procurement card log sheet, approved each month by the Officer's Line Manager and forwarded to the Head of Resources to be reconciled at each month end.

D3.6 Orders are required for all purchases except:

- Rents (previously agreed)
- Rates and water charges

- Gas and electricity
- Telephone charges, grants and minor cash purchases – but a record of the submission for payment of such items must be kept
- Small items purchased from imprest accounts
- Items purchased by via a Government Procurement Card

D3.7 The detailed standards, financial limits, number of quotations required and instances where tendering must be undertaken are laid out in the Authority's Procurement Procedures. Directors are to ensure that officers responsible for procurement are appropriately trained and that all of their staff complies with these instructions.

D3.8 **Staff Officers** of the Authority are not permitted to purchase goods privately under the Authority's contract arrangements or solicit preferential treatment in a private capacity from the Authority's suppliers. ~~Staff Officers~~ are not permitted to accept gifts from the Authority's suppliers, or potential suppliers as set out in the Authority's statement of official conduct and referred to in section C17 of this document.

D3.9 If any professional person is to be engaged as a consultant or advisor, the appointment must be in accordance with A8 Use of consultants and must comply with the Authority's Procurement procedures.

D4 Payment of Accounts

All payment of accounts shall be under the direction of the Head of Resources, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, as set out below.

D4.1 The Service activity area that issues the order shall be responsible for the examination, certification and submission for payment of the related invoice within the appropriate payment terms. The authorising officer will be required to certify that:

- The invoice request for payment relates to a proper liability of the Authority which has not previously been discharged
- The goods or services have been received and are of the quality and quantity ordered and all procedures have been followed
- The officer certifying each of the foregoing matters shall sign on the appropriate section of the certificate
- The expenditure is allocated to the correct analysis code
- Sufficient budget provision exists to meet the liability
- A **Director's second** counter-signature is required for any payment over the value of £5,000 (see the budget / authorisation book)

D4.2 Certified invoices for payment will be forwarded to the Head of Resources so that the Finance Team can ensure that:

- All 'brought forward' items have been excluded
- The prices, extensions and tax are correct; all available discounts, allowances and credits have been deducted; arithmetical calculations are correct; the total certified for payment agrees with the invoiced amount and the document is a proper tax invoice within the meaning of Value Added Tax Regulations

- The expenditure is allocated to the correct analysis code and is covered by an approved estimate
- Where specific authorisation is required for the expenditure, the appropriate authority (e.g. minute) is quoted
- Where appropriate, entries have been made on inventories, stores, records, stock books and on the Authority's copy of the order
- The three stages of processing an account payable; i.e. registering, approving and funding each claim is carried out with due regard to a separation of duties as approved by the Chief Finance Officer and Internal Audit.

D4.3 Directors will supply specimens of the signatures of the authorised officers and the extent of authority in monetary terms to be exercised. The Head of Resources will make arrangements for an annual certification by the CE(NPO) of the list of approved signatories.

D4.2 Suppliers' invoices must not be prepared by officers of the Authority. If it is necessary for an officer to amend an invoice, that fact and the reason therefore shall be shown on the invoice and the amendment must conform to VAT regulations.

D4.3 If, on examining any item submitted for payment, a member of the Finance Team is not satisfied that it is in order, such investigations as deemed necessary, either before or after payment, will be instigated and brought to the attention of the Head of Resources.

D4.4 In exceptional circumstances payment may be required in advance of the supply of goods or services, though this is not best practice. In such cases, payment must follow the normal authorisation process as stated above, with the exception that the goods or services will not yet have been received; the Head of Resources should approve each such transaction. The authorising officer must take extra care in such transactions and ensure:

- Only reputable suppliers are used
- That the amounts of such payments are appropriate to be paid in advance and do not present unnecessary risk
- All other reasonable steps are taken to protect the Authority from risk and potential loss

D4.5 Officers must ensure that valid payments are processed in sufficient time to meet payment deadlines and to avoid late payments and avoid potential penalties being incurred.

D4.6 The use of Direct Debits as a payment method requires the prior agreement of the Head of Resources.

D4.7 The Authority's preferred method of payment of accounts, grant-aid and other contributions is via the BACS payment system and so Officers must obtain the required banking details from third parties in all instances. (Forms are available in Finance).

D4.8 All suppliers are required to provide details of their business (trading status, VAT registration number, Company Registration number etc) before being entered into the Authority's financial system to enable the Authority to carry out an appropriate assessment of the business relationship / employment status for taxation purposes. (See also D10)

D4.9 Staff who have contact with suppliers of goods or services who are engaged in pressure selling activities, or who receive unsolicited promotional or direct marketing materials, or who receive invoices for goods or services not received, are required to report the matter to their line manager, who, in turn, will advise the Head of Resources.

D5 Government Procurement Cards

D5.1 The Head of Resources will ensure that proper arrangements are made for the administration of Government Procurement Cards. The Head of Resources will issue cards where circumstances require, once approval had been given by the appropriate Director or CE(NPO).

D5.2 Directors are responsible for ensuring that Government Procurement cards used within their Directorates are only held by appropriate staff and are used strictly in compliance with the specific guidance issued by the Head of Resources.

D6 Imprest Accounts and Advances

These are separate bank accounts, with a cheque book facility, to which an advance is made to facilitate quick payment for small items.

D6.1 Advances may be made to appropriate officers on account of imprest expenditure or for other reasons as may be agreed by the Head of Resources.

D6.2 Imprest accounts may only be established and their details amended by the Head of Resources, who will make any necessary arrangements with the Authority's bankers.

D6.3 Imprest holders must maintain a complete record of all transactions. At least once in each month expenditure must be certified by the Head of Service or other authorised officer as correctly paid; the cash in hand (and where applicable, reconciled bank account balances) reconciled with the balance shown on the account; and reimbursement, supported by all relevant vouchers claimed from the Head of Resources in such a form as he/she may require must be verified. The reconciliation should take account of any reimbursement already claimed but not yet received.

D6.4 In no circumstances may cash received, other than imprest account reimbursement, be paid into these accounts.

D6.5 None of the following items of expenditure shall be paid out of imprests:

- Sums which fall due for payment periodically (e.g. rents)

- Travelling expenses of officers (other than very minor items below £5 for occasions which are neither regular nor frequent) or of Members of the Authority
- Single payments of £25.00 or more
- Payment of (or on account) of salaries or wages or payment to an individual of employed status

D6.6 Payments must not normally be made from imprests to creditors with whom the Authority has regular dealings.

D6.7 When required each officer holding an imprest must certify in writing to the Head of Resources that such items are held either in cash or in vouchers to be reimbursed.

D6.8 It is the duty of Directors:

- To verify balances independently of the imprest holder at frequent intervals
- To notify the Head of Resources well in advance whenever an officer who holds an imprest gives notice of leaving the employment of the Authority, or immediately it is known that an officer otherwise ceases to be responsible for such imprest account

D6.9 A bank account must be opened for all imprest accounts exceeding £100; such bank accounts must not be allowed to run into overdraft. Directors must notify the Head of Resources of all authorised signatories and subsequent changes. Such bank accounts will require two signatories to authorise cheque payments.

D6.10 All reasonable steps should be taken for the secure storage of cash.

D7 Salaries, Wages and Pensions

Regulations are essential in this area and are vital to ensuring staff are paid accurately, on time and that payroll information of sound quality is available to management. The payment of salaries, wages, pensions, compensation and other emoluments to all employees will be made by the Chief Finance Officer or under arrangements as detailed in the standards below:

D7.1 The Head of HR will be responsible for the administration of the payment of salaries, wages, pensions, compensation and other emoluments to all employees or former employees of the Authority.

D7.2 Directors will ensure that all necessary information is supplied to the Head of HR to enable the Contracted Payroll Provider to be advised in accordance with the timetables and in the form prescribed of all matters affecting the payment of emoluments and in particular:

- Appointments, resignations, dismissals, suspensions, secondments and transfers
- Absences from duty for sickness or other reason, apart from approved leave.

- Changes in remuneration, other than normal increments and agreements of general application
- Information necessary to maintain records of service for superannuation, income tax, national insurance etc.

D7.3 Appointments of all employees must be made in accordance with the regulations of the Authority concerning establishments, grades and rates of pay.

D7.4 All time records or other pay documents must be maintained and in a form prescribed or approved by the Head of HR in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Payroll Provider and must be certified by the Head of Resources or the CE(NPO).

D7.5 In accordance with the Authority's Job Evaluation Scheme when applying scales of salaries or wages, Directors must confer as necessary with the Head of HR and the Head of Resources.

D7.6 Where errors in the payment of salaries, wages or pensions are discovered, the Head of HR and the Head of resources must be informed immediately. It is the responsibility of the Head of HR to inform employees or former employees of errors and to require the Contracted Payroll Provider to recover any sums overpaid in accordance with prescribed procedures.

D7.7 The CE(NPO) may write off any overpayment not exceeding £1,000 if he/she is satisfied:

- After consultation with the Head of Resources and the Head of HR that all steps have been taken to recover the sums due; or
- That the cost of recovering any sums due would exceed the sum involved; or
- After consultation with the Head of HR that recovery would cause hardship to the employee concerned

D7.8 The prior approval of the Authority must be obtained to write off any overpayment in excess of £1,000.

D8 Travelling, Subsistence and Financial Loss Allowances

D8.1 All claims for payments of car allowances, subsistence allowances, travelling and incidental expenses must be submitted to the Head of Resources with all relevant receipts in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Authority scheme. The claims must be duly certified and in a form approved by the Head of Resources and made up to a specified day of each month.

D8.2 The certification by the approved authorising officer will be taken to mean that the allowances are properly payable by the Authority.

D8.3 Officers & Members claims submitted more than three months after the expenses were incurred will only be paid in exceptional circumstances and then, only with the express approval of the CE(NPO).

D9 Income and Banking

It is important that all income due to the Authority is identified, collected on time and recorded accurately in the Authority's accounts. Also banking arrangements must be appropriate and well recorded for the Authority to exercise adequate control.

Income

D9.1 Directors are responsible for making arrangements for the collection of sums due to the Authority and for the issuing of official receipts and invoices in accordance with detailed standards below.

D9.2 A limit is imposed on the cash amount to be received in settlement for the payment for goods and services of £500 in any one transaction. This limit is required to ensure the Authority complies with the Money Laundering Regulations.

D9.3 Scales of charges for services and any allowances and any variations thereof (except where fixed by statute) must be reviewed at regular intervals by the appropriate Director and be reviewed by the Head of Resources before submission to the Authority for approval.

D9.4 The Head of Resources must be consulted by Directors on any proposal to acquire any cash till or accounting equipment.

D9.5 The records kept by each Directorate with regard to items of income must be in such form as agreed by the Head of Resources.

D9.6 Directors must provide to the Head of Resources such particulars in connection with work done, goods supplied, or services rendered and all other amounts due, as may be required to record correctly all sums due to the Authority and to ensure promptness in the rendering of accounts and the recover thereof.

D9.7 The Head of Resources must be promptly notified of all money due under contracts, leases, tenancy and other arrangements entered into which involve the receipt of money by the Authority and must have access to the original documents or relative particulars.

D9.8 The ~~Director of Communications and Business Support~~–Head of Resources must ensure that a detailed record of Authority owned or leased land and buildings is maintained in respect of which rent is or may be receivable, together with sufficient details of the terms of tenancy/usage to enable the correct amount of rents to be recovered, either directly from the tenant or by deduction from salary or wages in the case of service tenants. The Head of Resources is responsible for ensuring that an annual review of the Authority's rent roll in respect of all land and buildings held by the Authority.

D9.9 The CE(NPO) may authorise the writing off of any sum not exceeding £1,000 due to the Authority if he/she is satisfied that all reasonable recovery action has been taken to recover the sum due. The prior approval of the Authority must be obtained to write off any sum in excess of £1,000.

D9.10 Where the Authority contracts to supply goods or services to external parties, the arrangements must avoid inappropriate subsidy.

Banking Arrangements

D9.11 The Head of Resources is authorised to make arrangements regarding the Authority's bank accounts. All such bank accounts will be in the name of the Dartmoor National Park Authority.

D9.12 The Head of Resources will ensure that a monthly bank reconciliation is carried out for all of the Authority's bank accounts and will carry out a summary bank reconciliation annually.

D9.13 Officers will be advised by the Head of Resources on secure arrangements for the collection and banking of cash and for prompt reconciliation and monitoring of these monies.

D9.14 Unless otherwise agreed by the Authority, officers authorised to collect Authority money must issue official receipts promptly, at such intervals as the Authority may direct, pay over all sums received to the Head of Resources, or by arrangement, to the Authority's bankers. All reasonable steps should be taken for the storage of cash, and should conform to the requirements imposed by the Authority's insurers.

D9.15 Each officer who receives money on behalf of the Authority must keep an accurate and chronological account of all receipts and deposits.

D9.16 Money received or held on behalf of the Authority must be banked in full and not be used to cash personal or any other cheques whatsoever.

D9.17 Receipts must only be issued on officially authorised receipt books, tickets and other documents of a similar nature which have been ordered and issued by, or under the direction of the Head of Resources. A record must be maintained of every issue of such documents.

D9.18 When banking monies, care must be taken to ensure accurate use of analysis codes.

D10 Taxation

D10.1 Compliance with taxation rules is important for the Authority to meet its legal requirements and avoid unnecessary costs. Failure to comply with tax legislation can result in penalties and interest payments or may lead to the overpayment or under-recovery of taxes.

D10.2 Directors must ensure all staff are aware of the various tax regimes that impact on their areas of operational activity and ensure that they are compliant with legislation governing tax and the standards below. See also D4.8

VAT

D10.3 Officers should be aware of the Authority's VAT manuals and have access to them as the primary reference document for VAT related matters.

D10.4 VAT must be paid and recovered within the time constraints laid down by H.M. Revenue & Customs.

D10.5 Officers are responsible for obtaining and issuing proper tax documents (e.g. invoices, receipts) to ensure compliance with VAT law and to facilitate full VAT recovery on expenditure.

Other Taxation

D10.6 Guidance on taxation matters, other than VAT will be issued from time to time by the Chief Finance Officer and Head of Resources.

D10.7 Officers responsible for the issuing or payment of invoices must give consideration to the impact of various taxes. Particular attention should be paid to the correct treatment of employment taxes and VAT.

D10.8 In instances of doubt over the correct treatment of taxation, staff should contact the Head of Resources, who will consult with the contracted out service providers for VAT & PAYE, the Chief Finance Officer and / or HMRC as required..

D11 Controlled Stationery

D11.1 The Head of Resources will ensure that a proper record of controlled stationery is maintained , recording stocks of controlled stationery and providing details of to whom such items have been issued.

E External Arrangements

The importance of this area is in the Authority's distinctive leadership role for the community, bringing together contributions from various stakeholders, maximising funding opportunities and achieving best value. This may involve the establishment of partnership arrangements, joint ventures, pooled budgets and externally funded projects. It is therefore essential that the responsibilities, obligations and commitment attached to such arrangements are properly managed and accounted for.

E1 Partnership Arrangements, Joint Ventures and Pooled Budgets

E1.1 The Head of Resources must be consulted on the financial and probity implications of all partnership agreements, joint ventures, pooled budgets and similar arrangements before any such agreements are finalised. Such arrangements must be approved by the Head of Resources, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and be in accordance with the detailed standards below. Directors are expected to agree and formally accept the roles and responsibilities of each of the partners involved before the project commences and to communicate regularly with partners for the duration of the project.

E1.2 Directors are responsible for assessing the risks and benefits associated with partnership, joint venture, and pooled budget arrangements and for ensuring any such arrangement is in the best interest of the Authority and service users.

E1.3 Directors are responsible for promoting and maintaining the same high standards of conduct with regard to financial administration in partnerships, joint ventures and pooled budgets that apply throughout the Authority.

E1.4 Partnership arrangements may be used as a means of employing staff, acquiring goods, commissioning works or services and may be of a complex nature. It is therefore essential that the Head of Resources and the **Authority's Lawyer** **Head of Legal and Democratic Services** are consulted on the arrangements before any commitment is made, in particular that:

- Costs and income are provided for in the Authority's budget
- A written partnership document has been prepared, setting out ideas, responsibilities, duties and accountabilities
- Appropriate accounting arrangements are in place
- Sufficient controls are in place for the successful operation of the partnership, including arrangements for access to financial and other records
- A formal risk assessment has taken place and a management strategy devised
- Insurance issues have been addressed
- An auditing regime has been established
- Carry forward arrangements have been determined
- An exit strategy has been determined

E2 External Funding

E2.1 The Head of Resources must be consulted on the financial and probity implications of all projects involving funding from external sources e.g. Lottery grants, European Social Funds etc. Particular care should be taken to ensure that funding conditions are fully compatible with the aims and objectives of the Authority.

E2.2 All funding from external bodies or associated parties must be recorded in the Authority's accounts.

E2.3 Key conditions of funding and any statutory requirements must be understood and followed.

E2.4 Any matched funding requirements must be given due consideration prior to entering into long-term agreements and future revenue budgets must reflect those requirements.

E2.5 Consideration of employees' rights, funded by such finance, should be carefully reviewed prior to appointment.

E3 Work for Third Parties

Current legislation enables the Authority to provide a range of services to other bodies, within prescribed parameters. The following matters must be addressed before any commitment is made or work undertaken:

- Legality - the ~~Authority's Lawyer~~ **Head of Legal and Democratic Services** should be consulted to ensure that the proposed work is within the Authority's powers.
- Finance - proposals should be costed properly and provision made to ensure that the Authority is not at risk of non-payment for work done.
- Contract - a formal written contract should be drawn up in consultation with the ~~Authority's Lawyer~~ **Head of Legal and Democratic Services**, Head of Resources and approved by the relevant Director.
- Capacity - it must be clearly shown that the Authority has the appropriate expertise and insurance to undertake the contract and that the delivery of the contract will not adversely impact upon the Authority's work.

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

4 April 2014

NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT

Report of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer)

Recommendations : That Members note the contents of this report and offer any comments on the draft Management Plan Progress Report for 2013.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Under section 66(1) of the Environment Act 1995 each National Park Authority (NPA) is required to prepare and publish a National Park Management Plan (Management Plan) for its Park and review it every five years. Although preparation of the Management Plan is the prime responsibility of the NPA, its preparation needs actively to engage and gain support of all key stakeholders who will assist in its delivery.
- 1.2 The Management Plan is the strategic plan for the National Park – it is a Plan for the National Park as a whole and not just for the Authority.
- 1.3 The new Management Plan for Dartmoor, which was approved by Members at the meeting in November 2013, was formally launched in February 2014 under the title 'Your Dartmoor'. The launch was attended by approximately 80 people representing delivery partners and stakeholders from the local community, voluntary and non-governmental sector, private businesses and the public sector. A hard copy summary of the revised plan was published for the launch and a copy will be available for Members at the Authority meeting. The complete plan, including detailed action plans, have been published on the website: www.yourdartmoor.org.

2 Delivery Board

- 2.1 A reconfigured Delivery Board met in February 2014 to review progress over the last 12 months and to consider future challenges. The Delivery Board is made up of senior representatives from key delivery agencies that provide a strategic overview of how progress is being made towards the Vision and Priorities, and agree how resources and activity should be focused. The Delivery Board will be supported by three working groups based around the three themes of the new Management Plan: Sustain, Enjoy and Prosper. The Steering groups will enable all those who will help to develop the Management Plan to continue to be engaged with the process, to share ideas and experiences, to strengthen working relationships throughout the Plan period and ensure the Plan remains up-to-date.
- 2.2 The 'shadow' Delivery Board was supportive of exploring the appointment of an independent chairman for the Board (unpaid) to reinforce the message that it is a plan for Dartmoor and not just the Authority. This proposal was discussed by

Members of the Authority at their meeting in November 2013 (NPA/13/041). Following further work into the costs and benefits of this model, the Delivery Board (at the meeting on 24 February 2014) agreed that the benefits of an independent chairman were outweighed by the costs of the appointment process and that they should appoint a Chairman from the members of the Delivery Board on the basis that this saved money and officer time in overseeing an independent recruitment process.

- 2.3 A copy of the draft progress report presented to the Delivery Board, incorporating comments received from them, is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration by Members. As well as reviewing progress the Delivery Board were keen that the report also highlighted key 'emerging issues' that might not be reflected in the Management Plan. A good example of this is the changes to TB testing regulations. There is real concern amongst livestock farmers with rights to graze Dartmoor commons that the changes proposed (and now agreed) by Defra might lead to fewer cattle and reduced ability to deliver the Ambitions in the Management Plan. The Authority has agreed to support the Dartmoor Commoners' Council in potentially piloting a TB Control Plan for Dartmoor.

3 Monitoring and Indicators

- 3.1 The Delivery Board agreed a monitoring framework for 'your dartmoor' that will help assess progress towards the Management Plan outcomes as set out in the Ambitions detailed in the revised Plan. This monitoring framework is attached at Appendix 2.

KEVIN BISHOP

Background Papers: NPA/13/041

**Attachments: Appendix 1 -Final Draft Management Plan Progress Report 2013
Appendix 2 – Monitoring Framework**

Your Dartmoor Progress Report 2013

Dartmoor National Park Management Plan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of progress in delivery the National Park Management Plan (Management Plan) during the calendar year 2013. During 2013 there was a clear focus on reviewing the Management Plan with a programme of work to engage with stakeholders, partners and local communities to seek views on a draft version of the revised Management Plan. The majority of responses were positive: 79% of the respondents to the online questionnaire agreed with the revised vision. There was widespread support for the three themes: sustain; enjoy; prosper; and the six priorities identified in the draft plan:

- **The future of farming and forestry** – supporting sustainable farming and woodland businesses that conserve and enhance the special qualities of Dartmoor.
- **Spectacular landscapes, natural networks** – conserving and enhancing Dartmoor's diverse landscapes and natural ecosystems, and improving the connections between them, both within and across the National Park.
- **Making the most of cultural heritage** – conserving and enhancing the archaeology and historic built environment, and helping people to discover more about Dartmoor's heritage.
- **Enjoying Dartmoor** – helping people to enjoy and learn about Dartmoor, with a particular focus on managing access and visitor pressure at areas of heavy recreation use.
- **Prosperous Dartmoor** – enabling diverse, resilient economy that is consistent with the special qualities of the National Park
- **Community focus** – supporting and empowering local communities to help meet identified needs

The National Park Authority approved the final draft Management Plan – Your Dartmoor - at its meeting in November 2013 with a timeline to formally publish it in Spring 2014. It was also agreed that the new Management Plan would be published in the format of website – www.yourdartmoor.org – so that the action plans can be easily accessed and up-dated.

Notwithstanding the focus on developing the new Management Plan there has also been progress on key projects and delivery of the overarching ambitions outlined in the National Park Management Plan 2007 – 2012 and amended in Your Dartmoor. This report provides an overview of key achievements during 2013. These examples of strategic delivery are presented under the three themes and associated priorities that emerged during 2013 for the revised Management Plan – Your Dartmoor (see above).

2.0 SUSTAIN

2.1 Future of Farming and Forestry

Dartmoor Farming Futures – developing a new approach to agri-environment delivery

Dartmoor Farming Futures (DFF) is an experimental pilot project aimed at developing a new approach to the management of the public and environmental benefits associated with Dartmoor's moorland. It is a partnership project involving the National Park Authority, Natural England, Dartmoor Commoners' Council and Duchy of Cornwall with support from South West Water, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Rural Payments Agency and Ministry of Defence.

The two pilots on Forest of Dartmoor and Haytor and Bagtor Commons are now operational and during 2013 two reports were published. The first describes the approach developed:

http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/164564/DFF-final-report.pdf

The second contains the results of an independent evaluation of the pilot to-date:

http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/384614/Dartmoor-Farming-Futures-Independent-Project-Evaluation.pdf

The independent evaluation concluded that the key strengths of the DFF approach include:

- Open process
- Improved dialogue between the parties and development of closer working relationships
- Improved understanding of environmental features, ecosystem services and agri-environment schemes
- Empowered commoners to take ownership of outcomes, management and monitoring
- Re-unitisation and re-assessment of SSSI
- Improved verifiability arising from the outcome-focused agreement
- Greater flexibility
- Increased likelihood of positive outcomes from the agreement
- Increased level of support for commoners
- Generated enthusiasm amongst commoners and partners
- Independent facilitator role

The main weaknesses identified included:

- Lots of responsibility on the Commons Associations/Trustees
- Time required from commoners and partners to develop the project
- Not reaching/engaging some commoners

The evaluation highlighted that there was agreement amongst commoners and stakeholders that the DFF approach should be considered for inclusion in the new Rural Development Programme for England 2014 – 2020 and lessons learnt have been submitted to the Defra and Natural England team responsible for the development of the next programme.

Hill Farm Project Review

Since 2003 the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project (DHFP) has supported farmers on Dartmoor to establish and run a wide range of projects to add value to their businesses and to increase vocational skills. During 2013 a review of the Hill Farm Project to assess progress and highlight achievements. The review was published and can be downloaded from the National Park Authority website:

http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/397580/DHFP-report-2013-v2.pdf

Hill Farm Training Scheme

The Hill Farm Training scheme (run in conjunction with the Forum for Common Land) aims to inform and education conservation professionals about hill farming and evaluate options for roll out and future funding. Eleven events were held on Dartmoor, with 95 attendances, representing around 50 individuals. The scheme has been extremely successful and well received with participants indicating improved knowledge and the process helping to build relationships between conservation professionals and farmers and between different conservation bodies/groups. Plans for 2014 include “24 hours on a Dartmoor hill farm” which should give conservation professionals a much deeper understanding of the workload and pattern involved in farming.

2.2 Spectacular Landscapes, Natural Networks

Living Dartmoor

‘Living Dartmoor’ is a strategy to deliver benefits for the wildlife of the National Park. It seeks to build on past gains accrued through the Dartmoor Biodiversity Action Plan and take forward wildlife conservation on Dartmoor in response to recent legislation and national initiatives. It has been produced by the Dartmoor Biodiversity Partnership, with an overall aim to co-ordinate work which will enable a network of healthy, diverse habitats to benefit wildlife, landscapes, people and natural resources over the next ten years. The main body of text is available on the National Park Authority website, where delivery plans for the Key Wildlife Areas and Key Species for Conservation are being added as they are completed:

<http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/lookingafter/laf-naturalenv/living-dartmoor>

River Management – Duchy of Cornwall

In 2010 the Westcountry Rivers Trust carried out a walkover survey of the Duchy of Cornwall owned sections of the East and West Dart Rivers; highlighting areas which required improvement from both an environmental and fisheries access perspective. This included control of invasive weeds, particularly Himalayan Balsam. High, medium and low priorities were identified through a written report and by March 2013, all priority works were completed using funding from the Duchy and Country Sports South West Project.

The Duchy is now progressing completion of the medium and low priorities.

The Dart and Teign River Improvement Project (DTRIP) commenced in May 2012 and is led by the Westcountry Rivers Trust. This project is funded via the Rural Development Programme for England and seeks to improve river and water management within the Dart and Teign catchments, targeting Catchment Restoration Funding. The Project is due for completion in March 2015. Specific targets are:

- Countering the acidification of water
- Reducing sediment
- Tackling diffuse pollution
- Removing barriers to fish migration
- Improvement of spawning gravels

The West Country Rivers Trust has completed extensive walkover surveys involving the West and East Dart, and sections of the West Webburn, Mardle, Swincombe, Cherrybrook, Blackabrook, Wallabrook, Blackaton Brook, Fingle Brook, Reedy Brook and Teign.

Further details about the Catchment Restoration Fund can be accessed via the Westcountry Rivers Trust website: www.wrt.org.uk

Moor than meets the eye – Landscape Partnership

In the Summer of 2012 the Heritage Lottery Fund provided initial funding to a Landscape Partnership comprising: Dartmoor Farmers Association, Dartmoor Commoners' Council, Dartmoor National Park Authority, Dartmoor Partnership, Dartmoor Preservation Association, Devon County Council, Duchy of Cornwall, English Heritage, Forestry Commission, Natural England, South West lakes Trust and the Woodland Trust.

During 2013 the Partnership worked on developing the Stage 2 application: working with local communities to develop the projects that would be funded if the Stage 2 application is successful.

Full details of the Partnership are available via the national park Authority website:

<http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/aboutus/landpartbid>

2.3 Making the Most of Cultural Heritage

Historic Environment assessment

A Historic Environment Character Assessment (HECA) has been commissioned to provide a more informed overview and understanding of the distribution, extent, and pattern of Dartmoor's heritage assets. It will also provides a basis for a timeline and themes for research and interpretation by a wide range of interested people where the significance of heritage assets is better identified and more detailed information about Character Types sits in the context of the Historic Environment Record (HER). It is intended to provide a reference background for understanding and telling the story of Dartmoor's heritage, especially in the context of the 'Moor than meets the eye' Landscape Partnership programme that was developed during 2013 for submission to the Heritage Lorry Fund.

White Horse Hill Burial

The excavation of a prehistoric cremation burial discovered within a cist at Whitehorse Hill on northern Dartmoor has revealed nationally important remains which have captured the interest of experts from all over the country. This was the first excavation of a burial site on Dartmoor for 100 years and is now considered to be the most important assemblage of prehistoric grave goods ever recovered from Dartmoor and indeed from the whole of the South West of England. The survival of the organic remains is also seen to be of international importance.

Approved by the Duchy of Cornwall as landowner, the excavation was carried out in August 2011. The excavation was co-ordinated by the Dartmoor National Park Authority and carried out by archaeologists from the Historic Environment Projects Team, Cornwall Council with assistance from English Heritage and Plymouth University specialists. The project was jointly funded by the Dartmoor National Park Authority and English Heritage, with contributions from a number of other local funders

The basal stone and cist contents were taken to the Wiltshire Conservation Service laboratory in Chippenham where painstaking micro excavation of the contents took place.

After the excavation, the side and cover stones were left at the site and with the help of a MOD all-terrain vehicle, the base stone was returned to Whitehorse Hill for the process of reconstruction to begin. The Authority's Conservation Works Team, under the supervision of DNPA archaeologists, rebuilt the cist in its original location.

The analysis work on the organic and the other artefacts from the Whitehorse Hill cist burial is nearly completed. These results are highlighting what an astonishing and exciting discovery this is, far exceeding original expectations. The work which has been funded by English Heritage, the Dartmoor National Park Authority, Devon County Council and a number of other organisations and private individuals has been carried out by specialists from English Heritage, British and European Universities and the British Museum.

The painstaking conservation work, which was undertaken by the Wiltshire Conservation Service, Chippenham has also finished and the artefacts will soon be transferred to the Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery. A summary of the results of all the analysis and conservation work can be accessed via the National Park Authority website:

www.dartmoor.gov.uk/lookingafter/laf-culturalheritage/whitehorse-hill-burial

3.0 ENJOY

3.1 Enjoying Dartmoor

Information and Interpretation Strategy for Dartmoor

Consultants were appointed to develop an Audience Development Plan and Interpretation Strategy for the National Park, this was part funded through *Moor than meets the eye* and match funding from the National Park Authority to allow the work to cover a wider area. The methodology included a desk review, information gathering through street surveys, semi structured phone surveys and an online questionnaire and detailed conversation with key stakeholders and partners. The aim of this work was to provide a strategic and co-ordinated approach to the delivery of interpretation across the National Park

A strategy has now been produced; it has been included in proposal submitted in the second round bid to the HLF for Moor than Meets the Eye, a Landscape Partnership scheme. The strategy identified priority audience groups, it promoted the idea of the Dartmoor Story as a way to interpret the area and it recommended a hierarchical approach based around geographical hubs.

Tour of Britain 2013

Dartmoor National Park was delighted to host the finish of the Devon Stage of the Tour of Britain at Haytor. The cycle race saw 114 of the world's elite riders from 21 different countries complete the 85 mile stage which started at Sidmouth, travelled through Exeter, Chudleigh, and Moretonhampstead, before the riders tackled a gruelling hill climb finish at Haytor.

The largest ever crowd to a Devon Stage saw history in the making as the route from Sidmouth to Haytor provided the first ever summit finish in the modern era of the race, which was won by young Great Britain rider Simon Yates.

Independent research to measure the economic impact of The Tour, showed that the Devon Stage attracted around 250,000 spectators, with almost £5.9 million of additional spending injected into Devon's economy as a direct result of the 2013 stage. Full details of the analysis can be accessed via the National Park Authority website:

http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/399169/Stage-6-Economic-Impact-Report-Sidmouth-to-Dartmoor_.pdf

Large Scale Organised Events Management - DNPA

Many different types of recreational event take place in the National Park every year, ranging from charity walks, cycle sportives, to multi-day challenge events and the famous Ten Tors. Dartmoor National Park Authority adopted a formal approach to the management of large recreation events in the early 1990s. In 2003, an organised event application and monitoring system, and associated code of conduct, was established to assist with avoiding clashes between events and to help organisers plan their events in a sustainable manner.

Organisers for events involving more than 50 people on foot, or 30 cyclists or horse riders are encouraged to contact the Authority at an early stage in their planning process to help identify potential impacts. The Authority's policy towards recreational events is set out in the Authority's Recreation and Access Strategy 2011 - http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/70458/Intro-Recreation-Strategy.pdf. The Authority publishes advice for people planning events within the National Park on its website.

Analysis of the number and type of events over recent years suggests the number of event applications reduced from 65 in 2008, to 49 events in 2011, whilst the number of participants increased from almost 9,000 to 12,000 for the same period. It would appear to suggest that whilst fewer events were taking place, the number of participants taking part in individual events was increasing. 2013 saw 65 events taking place with over 16,435 participants taking part.

By operating the Events management system DNPA has been able to:

- Advise organisers on route choices if crossing the commons
- Avoid routes passing through sensitive sites both for wildlife and archaeology
- Influence the timing of events to avoid the bird nesting season
- Avoid conflicts between events taking place in the same location or using the same areas

Organisers of large scale events are encouraged to consider contributing to the £ for the park initiative. Since its introduction it has resulted in additional £5000 of donations for access and wildlife conservation projects.

Whilst large scale recreational events can be spectacular and raise the profile of Dartmoor's wonderful scenery; such events can have a negative impact on those that live and farm in the National Park. The Dartmoor Commoners' Council have reported increased problems with some events: disturbance to stock, cyclists using short cuts and straying from the permitted bridleways etc.

The National Park Authority, Dartmoor Commoners' Council, Common's Associations and the Dartmoor Common Owners' Association are committed to working in partnership to promote awareness of the large-scale organised events management system and inform participants/organisers about the potential of their activity to damage the fragile environment and disturb livestock.

Dog Attacks – Dartmoor Livestock Protection Officer

Dogs attacking livestock, particularly sheep, remains a real problem on Dartmoor. The number of incidents reported to the Dartmoor Livestock Protection Officer and to the police rose slightly in 2013 to 69 reports. However the slight increase may be a reflection of the better publicity given to this terrible crime.

Of these incidents, 47 were logged by the police and their efforts are essential. Recently one dog on Whitchurch Common killed one sheep, injured another and seriously disturbed the remaining flock. The dog was caught and destroyed after witnesses provided sufficient evidence. The dog's owner will also have to pay compensation to the farmer.

Less dramatic is the impact of dogs on where stock grazes. The constant presence of dogs can result in sheep and cows refusing to graze areas of the moor, and this can lead to excessive growth of vegetation that in turn can restrict public access. This effect is increased by 'packs of dogs' running free – an scene all too familiar to those visiting such areas as Haytor Down where professional dog walkers often have 6 or more dogs under their "control".

A new campaign has been launched to promote responsible access to the countryside for those using Dartmoor National Park to walk their dogs. The campaign – 'Paws on Dartmoor' - <http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/visiting/vi-caringfordartmoor/vi-walkingwithdog> has been developed in response to the increasing number of incidents involving uncontrolled dogs and livestock. It also provides advice to dog owners on canine health issues associated with taking your dog onto Dartmoor. The campaign has had widespread support and has had national recognition.

Litter

The Recreation and Access Strategy for Dartmoor 2011 – 2017 <http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/visiting/vi-enjoyingdartmoor/recreation-strategy> identified the need to reduce the amount of recreational litter and fly-tipping, and reduce the associated costs of collecting and disposing of this waste to the National Park Authority. One of the key actions from the Recreation and Access Strategy has been to develop a litter campaign, which was launched in May 2013.

The main theme of the new litter campaign is "Love where you visit" – an adaptation of Keep Britain Tidy's 'Love where you live campaign' for urban areas.

The key messages of Love where you visit are:

- We want all visitors to help us by taking responsibility for their litter
- Litter should be taken home or disposed of responsibly
- Help to reduce the amount of waste which goes to landfill by recycling as much as possible
- Place disposable BBQ's or camping stoves on a flat rock to prevent it burning the grass or other vegetation

Several resources have been produced to help promote the key messages:

- Large waterproof banners have been produced for our heavily used sites
- Branded panels for the outreach vehicle
- Posters are available for visitor centres
- Stickers and branded litter bags to encourage greater recycling
- Articles have been written for the press and magazines

Haytor Hoppa – Devon County Council

The Haytor Hoppa, which is funded by Dartmoor National Park Authority, Devon County Council, and Natural England, has operated successfully since 2009 to support and promote sustainable tourism. The seasonal bus service covers the eastern side of Dartmoor on a circular route (bus service no. 271) starting and finishing in Newton Abbot via Bovey Tracey and is perfect for exploring Dartmoor.

Stops en route include Haytor Information Centre – with easy access to Haytor Rocks, the beautiful village of Widecombe-in-the-Moor, Houndtor Rocks, Manaton village, Becky Falls visitor attraction and Yarner Wood. Passenger figures for 2013 saw 2607 passengers with an occupancy rate of 79% (inc concessionary fares). Passenger figures have been consistent over the past few years with a small rise in 2013.

4.0 PROSPER

4.1 Prosperous Dartmoor

Skills Audit

A skills audit was undertaken as part of the *Moor than meets the eye* Landscape Partnership. It was commissioned to inform and devise a programme of training and skills development to support future management, conservation and interpretation of the heritage of the area. The project was undertaken by an independent consultant

and focussed on the following sectors: farmers and land managers; volunteers; tourism businesses. There was very clear interest in learning more about the following subjects:

- traditional moorland skills
- understanding access
- habitats and species
- habitat management
- agri-environment schemes
- recording and interpreting heritage assets
- archaeology, historic farmsteads
- maintenance of historic buildings
- building vernacular
- history of farming
- Dartmoor breeds
- history of the commons

A skills and training programme including the above and called the Dartmoor Diploma has been included in the second round bid to the HLF for Moor than meets the eye. The outcome of this bid will be known Summer 2014.

Sectors Research

Devon County Council, DNPA and Somerset County Council jointly commissioned research leading to a deeper understanding of economic sectors in the areas and those that have potential for generating high growth and productivity in the future. The aim being to understand which sectors should be encouraged in order to deliver accelerated growth in GVA and high value jobs.

Serio (Plymouth University) undertook the research and identified three potential priority sectors for Dartmoor: Business Services, Tourism, and Construction and Property. The report can be accessed via the National Park Authority website:

http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/405420/DARTMOOR-SECTOR-OUTLOOKS-FINAL.pdf

The report contains a snapshot of current features and trends in the shortlisted sectors, and based on desk research, national and local consultation, provide some indication of the interventions that could be shaped in more detail through further engagement with business.

This research enables a better understanding of potential priorities for growth of the Dartmoor economy, and forms the basis for some of the actions in the new National Park Management Plan

Boosting the Green Economy

The Moor Wool initiative phase 2 development is being used to develop, test and promote products from Dartmoor which help sustain local businesses and the environment. To enable this work to move forward "Resources for Change" has been contracted to carry out study into branding and opportunities on Dartmoor.

Superfast Broadband

Dartmoor National Park Authority is working with the Connecting Devon and Somerset programme to roll out superfast broadband (greater than 24mbps) coverage to Dartmoor communities. The first community to get this service was Sticklepath with more Dartmoor communities due to be connected in later stages of the programme. Further details can be found at:

<http://www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk/>

Even when implemented the Connecting Devon and Somerset programme will not provide superfast broadband to all Dartmoor communities. For this reason the National Park Authority (in partnership with Devon County Council) bid to the Rural Communities Broadband Fund (RCBF) to secure some additional funding. A stage 1 pass was secured in September 2012 but progress with submitting the detailed business plan has been delayed by the need to confirm that the areas being targeted for RCBF are outside the Connecting Devon and Somerset programme (this could only be confirmed after formal launch of the Connecting Devon and Somerset programme in March 2013) and by concerns about state aid and intervention rates. Dartmoor and Exmoor (in partnership with the Connecting Devon and Somerset programme) are now piloting a new approach to this fund.

4.2 Community Focus

Development Management and Delivery Plan (“the DMD”)

In July 2013 the Authority adopted the Development Management and Delivery Plan (DMD) <http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/planning/pl-forwardplanning/pl-localdevframework/pl-development-management-and-delivery-development-plan-document> (‘the DMD’). This document was three years in preparation, which included around 30 community engagement events, nearly one thousand individual comments (or ‘representations’) on the plan, and examination by an independent Inspector. The DMD together with the Core Strategy is now the local plan for the National Park. It includes general policies covering topics like affordable housing, landscape, the historic environment, farm diversification, renewable energy, and economic development. These will be used in day to day decision making on planning applications. The DMD also includes site specific policies which include development sites like those already moving forward at Chagford and Ashburton. Allocating development sites in this way aims to provide certainty for communities and developers around where it is considered are the most appropriate sites for new development to take place. The two plans together look forward to 2026, but will be kept under regular review.

South West Devon Community Energy Partnership identifies that £400 million is spent on energy in South West Devon

The South West Devon Community Energy Partnership (SWD CEP) <http://www.swdcep.org.uk/about-south-west-devon-community-energy-partnership/> is a unique network bringing together community groups and local authority representatives from across West Devon, South Hams and Dartmoor National Park to work towards a sustainable future for our energy.

Partnership members include Dartmoor National Park Authority, West Devon Borough, South Hams District, Teignbridge District and Devon County Councils in partnership with community groups including Bovey Climate Action, DARE, Dartmoor Circle, Greener

Teign, PL21 Ivybridge, Sustainable South Brent, Transition Tavistock and Transition Town Totnes.

The partnership evolved in response to needs identified by local strategic partnerships and has been supported through the SEACS project, match funded by Devon County Council and the EU Interreg IVa programme.

The SWD CEP identified and addressed the need to establish a robust evidence base to focus future work and target the best opportunities to make a difference. Working with the University of Exeter an independent assessment of current energy consumption, opportunities for energy efficiency and renewable energy generation across the area has been published and presented to local councillors and officers from South Hams, West Devon, Devon County and Dartmoor National Park in June. The study is now being used by the SWD CEP to discuss the energy objectives for the area should be, what would be achievable, and what projects should be prioritised for maximum effect.

The study has provided some surprising results which have impacts for the South West Devon area and the future potential for energy resilience for all sectors. Current energy consumption is divided in, approximately, equal thirds between the transport, domestic and non-domestic sectors. This energy consumption results in approximately £0.4 billion being spent on energy in SW Devon – equivalent to about a fifth of the economic output of the area or about 15,000 full time jobs. Effectively each person is spending £2,600 each year on energy within this area.

The study highlighted that the greatest opportunities energy improvements in the domestic sector are from solid wall insulation, encouraging further behavioural changes and installing micro-generation renewables. Following this the Partnership submitted a successful bid to the Energy Saving Trust, match funded by the DSDf to work with at least 5 communities on energy efficiency, drive the take up of retrofit measures and to highlight any barriers to effective take up of home improvements.

5.0 Conclusion and Emerging Issues

Much was achieved during 2013 by partners involved in the National Park Management Plan for Dartmoor: the case studies highlighted in this report are a 'tip of the iceberg'.

In considering a draft version of this Progress Report, the National Park Management Plan Delivery Board were keen that future progress reports also included key 'emerging issues' that might fall outside of the current Management Plan but would have an impact on delivery of the Plan's vision and ambitions. An example of such an issue is the changes to TB testing regulations

Changes to TB testing regulations

The eradication of TB from cattle in the UK is a priority for Government and farmers. Pre-movement testing has been in place since to try and control the disease however cattle moving from the farm to common land and back again have, until recently, benefitted from an exception to the regulations.

In late 2013 Defra consulted on the proposed removal of the derogation and farmers from Dartmoor engaged in the debate. After June 2014 the default situation will be that all cattle movements between common land and other parts of the farm will require pre-

movement tests. In an attempt to mitigate the impact of these regulations Defra are offering to accept the annual herd test as a pre-movement test if that test has taken place within 60 days of the cattle moving onto the common. Also the Vets from Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) will have to undertake a risk assessment for each common and if the risk is deemed acceptable they may not require testing following the return of cattle from the common. The AHVLA now require a TB Control Plan for each common to help them undertake the risk assessment. These plans will have to be in place before the end of the summer. The Dartmoor Commoners' Council is proposing to pilot a plan for all common land on Dartmoor.

There is real concern amongst the cattle farmers that this level of restriction might lead to fewer cattle on the commons and for a shorter grazing period leading to more vegetation and less palatable feed for the remaining stock.

DRAFT

YOUR DARTMOOR – Indicators and Targets

Theme	Ambitions	Indicator	Current status	Trend (to 2013)	What will success look like?	Notes
Sustain	Land Management: Farming communities and land management practices continue to play a central role in conserving and enhancing Dartmoor's special qualities and delivering a range of public benefits.	Numbers of grazing livestock: (i) cattle ¹ (ii) sheep ² (iii) ponies ³ (Defra June Survey of Agriculture ⁴)	(i) 42,969 (ii) 167,288 (iii) 1200 (2010)	↓ ↓ ↓	Livestock numbers are maintained.	Dartmoor Commoners' Council have expressed some concerns about the data and are trying to compile more accurate figures –
		Number of livestock on the commons. (Dartmoor Commoners Council)	Awaiting data		Livestock numbers are maintained.	Dartmoor Commoners' Council have written to the individual Commons Associations to calculate a composite figure.
		Number of active farmers (i) full-time farmers (ii) part-time farmers (iii) employees (P/T & F/T) and casual workers (Defra June Survey of Agriculture)	(i) 579 (ii) 642 (iii) 308 (2010)	↓ ↓ ↓	Number of active farmers is maintained.	
		Number of active graziers on the commons. (Dartmoor Commoners Council) ⁵	182 (2012)	↓	Number of active graziers is maintained and increased.	
		Area and % of National Park (usable agricultural area) under agri-environment schemes. (Protected Landscapes indicator)	49,516 ha 60% (2013)	↔	Uncertainty over the next Rural Development Programme has delayed setting a 'target' or measure of success.	Area of land under agri-environment schemes is a proxy for delivery of public benefits. The measure of success is about the quality (benefits) of what is included not the amount of land as the % figure will go down as not all previous schemes will qualify
		Habitats and Wildlife: Dartmoor's internationally and nationally important habitats are expanded and linked and in optimal condition, supporting resilient ecosystems with healthy	% of broad habitats in SSSIs in: (i) Favourable (ii) unfavourable recovering (iii) unfavourable declining condition (Protected Landscapes indicator)	(i) 28% (ii) 71% (iii) 1% (March 2013)	↑	At least 50% of SSSIs in favourable condition by 2020, while maintaining at least 95% in favourable or recovering condition.

¹ Includes female 2+ years beef with offspring, calves under 1 year and other cattle. Does not include dairy. Based on survey responses so does not represent total numbers.

² Includes breeding ewes, lambs under 1 year, and other sheep. Based on survey responses so does not represent total numbers.

³ Pony numbers not yet available but the Dartmoor Commoners Council and Dartmoor Hill Pony Association are investigating setting up a database.

⁴ Based on survey responses so does not represent total numbers. Does not include smallholdings with less than 10 cows or 20 sheep.

⁵ Based on information provided to the Dartmoor Commoners Council as part of annual registrations.

Theme	Ambitions	Indicator	Current status	Trend (to 2013)	What will success look like?	Notes
	populations of priority species.	% County Wildlife Sites in good condition. <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>	89% (2012)	↔	To maintain at least 89% of County Wildlife Sites in 'good' condition.	
		% of 13 key species whose status is stable or increasing. ⁶ <i>(Pearl-bordered fritillary; greater horseshoe bat; flax-leaved St John's-wort; ring ouzel; bog hoverfly; blue ground beetle; red backed shrike; vigur's eyebright; southern damselfly; marsh fritillary; high brown fritillary; Deptford pink; dunlin)</i> <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>	82% (2011)	↑	At least 90% of key species are stable or increasing.	
	<u>Natural Resources:</u> Dartmoor's distinctive and high quality natural resources are managed and enhanced for environmental and public benefits.	Length and % length of monitored rivers achieving 'good' or 'high' ecological status (under the Water Framework Directive). <i>(Environment Agency, Protected Landscapes indicator)</i>	70.9 km 14.8% (2012)	↑	152.5 km, 31% achieving good ecological status by 2015. <i>See appendix 1</i>	
		Area and % of woodland under active management. <i>(Forestry Commission)</i>	5,796 ha 51% (2011)	N/A	Increase the area of woodland under active management.	
	<u>Archaeology and Historic Built Environment:</u> Dartmoor's outstanding archaeological and historic landscapes are well managed, understood and enjoyed, and the character of its distinctive historic built environment is conserved and enhanced.	Number and % of Scheduled Monuments at Risk. ⁷ <i>(English Heritage)</i>	375 out of a total of 1,058 35% (March 2013)	↑	Reduce Scheduled Monuments at risk by 5% by 2019.	
		Number and % of Listed Buildings at Risk <i>(all listed buildings).</i> ⁸ <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>	34 out of a total of 2,565 1.3% (March 2013)	↑	Keep levels of Listed Buildings at Risk at 1.3% or below.	
	<u>Cultures and Traditions:</u> Local communities, cultures, skills and traditional ways of rural life continue to be sustained and celebrated as defining characteristics of Dartmoor.	Attendance figures for two traditional Dartmoor Shows Chagford Show Widcombe Fair			Maintain attendance and increasing current attendance?	Delivery Board proposed this indicator. Trend data is being sourced for the Chagford Show and Widcombe Fair

⁶ Results to be reported annually but longer-term trends need to be taken into account given annual fluctuations in population numbers due to weather and other factors.

⁷ At risk' includes all monuments categorised as being at 'high' or 'medium risk on English Heritage's 'Heritage At Risk Register'. Excludes any monuments that are still shown as at 'high' or 'medium' risk on the English Heritage register but which English Heritage has confirmed meet all the criteria to now be considered to be 'low' risk

⁸ This is the number of individual listed buildings and may differ from the English heritage figure where one listing may include a number of buildings

Theme	Ambitions	Indicator	Current status	Trend (to 2013)	What will success look like?	Notes
	<u>Landscape and Tranquillity:</u> Dartmoor is celebrated for its distinctive landscapes and provides the opportunity to experience wildness, solitude, tranquillity, dark night skies and a sense of space.	No suitable indicators identified. The CPRE tranquillity mapping is not likely to be updated.				Steering Group to advise on suitable indicator or monitoring.
	<u>Military Training:</u> All military training on Dartmoor is consistent with National Park purposes, and Defence Training Estate land is managed as an exemplar of conservation and recreational opportunity.	% of Scheduled Monuments within Dartmoor Training Area at high risk. <i>(MOD)</i>	8%	↑	6% by 2019	
Enjoy	<u>Recreation and Access:</u> Dartmoor offers a variety of access and recreational opportunities for everyone seeking inspiration, peace and active recreation in harmony with each other, the local community and the area's special qualities.	% length of Public Rights of Way which are 'easy to use' <i>(does not necessarily follow the definitive line).</i> <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>	94% (March 2013)	↓	Maintain at least 90% <i>(reflecting decreasing funding for RoW mgt)</i>	
		Number of organised recreational events and large-scale recreation events. ⁹ <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>	64 recorded organised events per year 4 events with 1000+ attendance	↔	<i>Maintain geographical spread in line with recreation Strategy with limited adverse impact on the special qualities and local communities. Fewer annual events No further growth of events over 1,000 people.</i>	
	<u>Tourism:</u> Tourism on Dartmoor is high quality and sustainable, making a positive contribution to the environment, local economy and communities of the National Park.	Total number of staying visitors <i>(STEAM)</i>	234,000 (2011)	↑	Increase the number of staying visitors	
		Economic impact of tourism: (i) total spend (ii) spend per visitor (all visitors) <i>(STEAM)</i>	(i) £119.20m (ii) £52 (2011)	↑ ↔	Increase spend per visitor	
		<i>Visitor satisfaction (to be developed)</i>			<i>Steering Group to advise</i>	
<u>Military Training:</u> All military training on Dartmoor is consistent with National Park purposes, and Defence Training Estate land is managed as an exemplar of conservation and recreational opportunity.	Number of days that the public can access each live firing range: Okehampton Merrivale Wilsworthy Number of days of public access with	325 days pa 283 days pa 232 days pa	↔ ↔	Maintain at or below five-year average (2008-2012)		

⁹ As notified to DNPA. Organised events defined as more than 50 people on foot 30 cycling or horse riding. Large-scale events defined as over 1,000 participants

Key: ↑ = the situation is improving ↓ = the situation is getting worse ↔ = the situation is stable

Theme	Ambitions	Indicator	Current status	Trend (to 2013)	What will success look like?	Notes
		six weeks advance notice: Okehampton Merrivale Wilsworthy	325 days pa 283 days pa 232 days pa			
		MOD to contribute to visitor satisfaction survey across the National Park, if agreed by all partners. If not, will repeat methodology used for Cramber Tor survey.				
	<u>Information and Communication:</u> People's understanding and enjoyment of Dartmoor National Park is enhanced by high quality and accessible information.	% of users who are satisfied with information from DNPA: (i) visitor centres, and (ii) website <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>	(i) 92% (ii) 72% (March 2013)	↑ ↑		
	<u>Learning and Education:</u> High quality, diverse learning experiences are available for everyone to enable them to understand, value and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of Dartmoor.	% of users reporting increased understanding of Dartmoor as a result of Education events provided by DNPA. <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>	89.2% (March 2013)	↑	90%	
% of users satisfied with DNPA education events. <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>		84.2% (March 2013)	↑	95%		
Number of recorded volunteer days for DNPA. ¹³ <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>		2,471 (March 2013)	↑	Increased number of volunteering opportunities and volunteer days on Dartmoor.		
Prosper	<u>Economic Activity:</u> Broad ranging economic activity is consistent with Dartmoor's special qualities and provides local sources of employment.	% of households in Dartmoor National Park that have access to superfast broadband. <i>(Devon County Council and Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>	Awaiting figures		Target to be based on expected % coverage of households on Dartmoor following the Connecting Devon and Somerset programme and the Rural Community Broadband Scheme.	In discussions with Connecting Devon and Somerset about provision of the data set.
		Number of hard to reach premises passed by superfast broadband. <i>(Hard to reach defined as final 10% of premises not covered by Connecting Devon and Somerset programme or commercial rollout.)</i> <i>(Connecting Dartmoor programme)</i>	0	N/A	854 hard to reach premises have access to superfast broadband.	
		Business start-ups and survival rates	<i>Data not currently available on Dartmoor basis</i>			<i>May come through Local economic assessment data</i>

Key: ↑ = the situation is improving ↓ = the situation is getting worse ↔ = the situation is stable

Theme	Ambitions	Indicator	Current status	Trend (to 2013)	What will success look like?	Notes
		Number of businesses ¹⁰ on Dartmoor <i>(Inter Departmental Business Register)</i>	2065 (2012)	↓		
		Unemployment rate in DNP <i>(Office of National Statistics)</i>	1.5 (Nov 2013)	↑		
	<u>Community Wellbeing</u> : Dartmoor communities thrive and benefit from access to a range of local services, amenities, housing and employment opportunities.	Number and % of affordable housing approved per year. <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>	14 out of a total of 60 approved new dwellings 23% (2012/13)	↓	Average of 50 homes a year, of which at least 50% are affordable.	
		Net annual change in: (i) primary services/facilities in classified settlements (ii) secondary services/facilities in classified settlements <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>	0 -2 (2013)	↔	Maintain no net loss of services/facilities.	
		% of DNP residents very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live. <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority 2013 residents survey)</i>	95% (Nov 2013)	↑	<i>Steering Group to advise</i>	
	<u>Development</u> : Development makes a positive contribution to thriving communities, through high quality, sympathetic and well-informed design, conserving the quality and distinctiveness of the built environment and reinforcing local character.	Number of applications received annually and % granted. ¹¹ <i>(Dartmoor National Park Authority)</i>	621 92% (March 2013)	↑	<i>Steering Group to advise.</i>	
		<i>Indicator relating to the quality of design to be developed.</i>				
	<u>Carbon and Energy</u> : Dartmoor is an exemplar of carbon reduction and climate change adaptation through carbon storage, energy efficiency, decarbonising	Annual energy consumption on Dartmoor. <i>(South West Devon Community Energy Partnership)</i>	947 GWh (2012)	N/A	<i>Not likely to be updated annually.</i>	Environment Agency and Natural England have advised that we look at carbon storage.

¹⁰ VAT- and/or PAYE-based enterprises

¹¹ Includes planning applications, prior approvals and notifications, listed buildings consents, and certificates of lawfulness.

Theme	Ambitions	Indicator	Current status	Trend (to 2013)	What will success look like?	Notes
	products, and the production of renewable energy and heat.	Number of applications for: (i) Feed-in-Tariff (ii) RHI (iii) Green Deal <i>(Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC))</i>			<i>Indicator on renewable energy to be developed?</i>	Response received – Data set not available from DECC RHI - 22 members supplied by Dartmoor woodfuel co-operative

Appendix 1

Water Framework Directive Targets

The aim of the Water Framework Directive is to achieve Good Ecological Status in all water bodies or Good Ecological Potential in those water bodies where they have been modified for human use such as flood defences or urbanisation, by 2027.

In South West we set a target of raising our baseline compliance from 31% to 43% of our water bodies. This was across all water bodies and did not favour any particular location above others. What does dictate what can be done where and when is a combination of factors from what measures (or actions) would need to be put in place to achieve GES, who's responsibility it is, how would that be funded, is a solution sustainable and/or is there even a technically feasible measure.

The Environment Agency is currently undertaking a Cost Benefits Assessment on measures aimed at improving elements to GES. The completion of this exercise will be with a predicted outcome for each element, by 2021 and or 2027. It is worth noting that in terms of how WFD compliance works, improving one element where others continue to fail will still cause the water body as a whole to be non-compliant.

The measures identified and benefits expected have been discussed with some partner organisations and will be discussed once again with a broader audience within the consultation on 2nd cycle River Basin Management Plan which will be publically consulted on through the summer.

If you take the Rivers on Dartmoor as examples; the water bodies not at GES are failing typically because low pH or fish. pH is predominantly natural with an improving anthropogenic influence. Fish compliance is mainly linked to barriers to the passage of fish migration and some habitat for improvement. Low flows are also an issue in some locations.

The 2nd cycle plan, which will be finalised and published early in 2015, will have a reviewed target / predicted outcome for each water body and there will be discussion and opportunities for organisations such DNPA to be fully involved in the thinking, leading to those final predicted outcomes.

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK PLANNING AUTHORITY

4 April 2014

**TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS AND SECTION 211 NOTIFICATIONS
(WORKS TO TREES IN CONSERVATION AREAS)
DETERMINED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

Report of the Trees and Landscape Officer

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

SECTION 211 NOTICES

Teignbridge

Ref: 13/0048 2 Manor Cottages, Widcombe SX 7176 7671

Notification to fell a group of mature cypress trees. The trees are in poor condition and prone to failure in high winds.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

West Devon

Ref: 13/0044 Maple Lodge, Chagford SX 7013 8778

Application to fell a cotoneaster. The tree is too close to the dwelling, it restricts light into the front windows and it is damaging the boundary wall.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

Ref: 13/0045 The Old Rectory, Horrabridge SX 5124 6964

Application to reduce the crown of a mature beech tree. The works are relatively minor and will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the tree.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

Ref: 13/0046 Huish, Chagford SX 6982 8771

Notification to fell a Douglas fir and three cypress trees. The trees have limited public amenity value and the felling will have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

Ref: 13/0047

East Holm, Chagford

SX 6973 8773

Notification to reduce the crown of a Norway maple. The tree is hidden from public view and the works will have no impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

BRIAN BEASLEY