

**NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON
MONDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 10:00 HOURS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
LYMINGTON TOWN HALL, AVENUE ROAD, LYMINGTON**

Present:

Members:

Gordon Bailey
Mary Davies - Chair
David Harrison
Victoria Mander
Joe Reilly
Ann Sevier
Derek Tipp

Officers:

Alison Barnes	Chief Executive
Nigel Stone	Head of Resources (CFO)
Hilary Makin	Communications Manager
Paul Walton	Interim Monitoring Officer
Jim Mitchell	Access and Learning Manager
David Stone	Corporate Services Manager
Tom Knott	Finance and Sustainable Performance Officer
Frances Connolly	Executive Assistant

13. Apologies for absence

13.1 Apologies for absence were received from Barry Dunning and David Bence.

14. Declarations of Interest

14.1 None

15. Chair's announcements

15.1 Mary Davies informed members that in November 2024 she and David Bence had a beneficial meeting with Anthony Harvey the Deputy Head of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership. The main point of the meeting was for Anthony Harvey to discuss the overview of the Partnership and their relationship with the New Forest National Park, the role of the Chief Internal Auditor, and also the reports that Resources, Audit and Performance Committee would expect from the internal audits. There were also forthcoming changes due to the information of the Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS) which needed to be adopted in 2025, and Nigel Stone would update the Committee about that in due course.

16. Minutes

16.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

Resolved, that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

Voting: Unanimous

17. Public Question Time

None.

18. Third Quarter Progress Report 2024–25 (RAPC 552-25)

- 18.1 Members considered the third quarter progress report of the 2024/25 Work Programme. On the performance indicators, members commented on the very good return for the quarter in determining planning applications which exceeded the performance targets for the year. Nigel Stone and Paul Walton responded to queries with regard to the latest timescale for the implementation of the new national KPIs (via the Targets and Outcomes Framework) which were due to be ready by July 2025. Nigel Stone advised that the new Work Programme for 2025/26 would be brought to the Committee for consideration at its meeting on 3 March 2025.
- 18.2 Members then considered the third quarter progress report which included the following discussion:
- The Chair requested that more information be included in the new 2025/26 Work Programme on sustainability levels of new developments and how these were measured. Nigel Stone advised that this point would be included in the updated Local Plan, but could also be covered in the Work Programme, and advised that a report on the NPA's own Carbon Reduction Programme would likely be brought to the Committee for consideration on 3 March 2025.
 - In response to a suggestion from a member, Paul Walton advised that he would liaise with officers at Forestry England with a view to the possibility of carrying out an updated survey of ancient and ornamental woodland, the last one having been done in the 1960's.
 - Commenting on Biodiversity net gain, Alison Barnes advised members that she would be allocating resources in the new Work Programme towards data gathering which supported a spatial plan for the New Forest area and drafting local guidance on BNG. Members asked if they could be updated with regard to BNG and possibility visiting some site restoration schemes where the NPA had been involved.
 - Members noted that aspects of some actions rated an amber status whilst the overall action was green. They suggested that, where appropriate, actions in the new Work Programme be broken down into bullet points and a RAG status be allocated to each point to better determine the progress made against these during the year.
 - In discussing the Dark Sky Reserve status for the National Park, members suggested that an information leaflet on dark skies be published seeking commitment from New Forest communities in maintaining dark skies.

Following further brief discussion the report was noted.

19. Third Quarter Budgetary Control Report 2024-25 (RAPC 553-25)

- 19.1 Nigel Stone introduced his report and drew members attention to the Authority's financial performance for the first nine months of 2024/25 (April-December). The overall expenditure position showed a £4.02 million spend (61% of budget) and the income position which showed £4.29 million received (65% of budget).
- 19.3 In section 4 of the report Nigel Stone informed members that after nine months of the financial year the figures were still largely on track and there were no significant issues that needed to be brought to their attention.
- 19.4 Nigel Stone raised the point that the Authority had been successful over the last year in bidding for external funding to leverage its core Defra grant. He highlighted the Authority-led Partnership Projects for 2024/25 which were shown in Annex 4 to highlight the breadth of the Defra grant leverage.

Resolved, that the current income and expenditure position, including the potential savings and pressures identified be noted.

Voting: Unanimous

20. Any other items that the Chair decides are urgent

None

The meeting closed at 11:25 hours.

Signed**Date.....**
(Chair)