

Date: 30 January 2007

Report: PROPOSED BUDGET 2007/08

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval of the 2007/08 budget , to note the projections for the 2008/09 and 2009/10 Financial years and to note the additional work requested by the Finance and Resources Committee on 15th January 2007.

Strategic Planning Framework

2. The information and recommendations contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework, and in particular its objective 'to manage all aspects of the Authority's business so as to make the most effective use of our resources' (Best Value Performance Plan).

2007/08 Proposed Budget

3. Financial Regulations require that the Annual budget be approved by the full Authority:

***“3.1.2 Whilst the Finance & Resources Committee have the authority to approve in-year virements and other variations to the budget, the annual 'start' budget will be approved by the full Authority.”
(Financial Regulations, May 2006).***

4. The Finance and Resources Committee met on 15 January 2007 to discuss the proposed budget for 2007/08 and indicative budgets for 2008/09 and 2009/10; a copy of the papers are attached as an Annex to this report. Appendix 4 to this Annex summarises the proposed budget for 2007/08 and the Committee recommended that this be put to the Authority for Approval (**recommendation**).

Staffing Issues

5. The Finance and Resources Committee approved the recommendation that the upper limit for staff costs from 2008/09 onwards be set at 70% of the core DEFRA grant (paragraph 32 of the Annex to this report).

6. Members considered the recommendations in paragraphs 33 to 45 of the Annex and requested that further information be provided in the following areas, at a future meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee:

- **Pension Scheme Contributions** – a consideration of this has been deferred until members have considered a forthcoming paper to be presented at the Finance and Resources Committee in February 2007.
- **Staff Benefits and Contract ‘additions’** – A breakdown of these additional amounts and their purpose is to be provided.
- **Freezes on Salary Progression** – A detailed analysis of the potential savings and time implications of these options is to be reported.
- **Staffing Levels** – Officers are requested to prepare a paper on the potential impact of these across all departments.

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 (Note : These issues will be considered in the light of comparative information from other National Park Authorities and any similar appropriate organisations).

7. Members of the Finance and Resources Committee will be informed of any potential legal implications which may arise from the matters above (e.g. changes to contractual terms and conditions).

RECOMMENDATION

8. That Members approve the 2007/08 budget as summarised in Appendix 4 of the Annex to this report, as recommended by the Finance and Resources Committee on 15 January 2007.

Irene Brannon
Senior Finance Officer

Richard Burnett
Head of Finance & Resources

15 January 2007

Background documents: None