

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2019/20

Summary: To note the Statement of Accounts and Annual Return 2019/20.

Recommendations: That the Committee notes the Bank Reconciliation, Section 2 of the Annual Return and the Statement of Accounts 2019/20.

Officer Ref: Andy Parsons (Chief Executive) and David Shelmerdine (Finance Officer)

Key Issues

1. The Board is required to prepare its Accounting Statements and supporting papers in a specified format; and to submit these for external audit review in accordance with a statutory time-table.
2. The attached papers set out details of the Board's financial performance in 2019/20.
3. The results show a very positive result for the year, recognising in particular the significant grant award received from Network Rail to finance future Board initiatives.

Background

4. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the Board to prepare its annual accounts in accordance with proper practice. From 2018/19, Conservation Boards have been specifically covered by the formal guidance issued annually by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance "*Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioners Guide*". The guide sets out proper practice for the preparation of the Board's Statement of Accounts and its Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).
5. As part of the approval process, the external auditor requires the Board to review the organisation's year-end bank reconciliation. This is attached at Appendix A.

Section 2 of AGAR 2019/20

6. Whilst the Board chooses to prepare and publish a Statement of Accounts for its own purposes, it is required by law to:
 - prepare Accounting Statements for the year in the form required by proper practice (Section 2 of the AGAR);
 - approve the AGAR and submit it to the external auditor by 31 July 2020;
 - publish the unaudited AGAR by 1 August 2020; and
 - publish the audited AGAR by 30 November 2020.

7. These Accounting Statements, set out in the form of Section 2 of the AGAR, are attached at Appendix B.
8. When approved by Board, these papers will be published on the Board's website.

Statement of Accounts 2019/20

9. The Board's draft Statement of Accounts for the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 are attached at Appendix C. These have been prepared in accordance with the National Park model, so as to facilitate comparability between organisations.
10. The Income and Expenditure Account shows the costs of providing services across the various activities and projects that the Board has supported during the year, and how these projects were supported from grants and income.
11. Gross income for the year was £1,459,727 (2018/19: £1,065,774), whilst expenditure was £989,479 (2018/19: £941,720). Taken together, these items show a net surplus for the year of £470,248 (2018/19: a surplus of £124,054). The significant increase in income, and surplus, results primarily from the additional £500k in grant which was received from Network Rail in April 2019.
12. Several of the allocations to the National Park themes show significant variance between years. This has resulted from the re-categorisation of some staff time, central and project costs in 2019/20. Detailed analysis has shown that the current allocations present a clearer and more meaningful picture.
13. The Balance Sheet summarises the Board's overall financial position as at 31 March 2020. It shows total reserves of £735,504, consisting of £664,536 in Restricted Funds and £70,968 in more "useable" funds.

Supporting Papers:

Appendix A	Bank Reconciliation as at 31 March 2020
Appendix B	AGAR Accounting Statements
Appendix C	Statement of Accounts 2019/20