

**CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Title: FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK GOVERNING THE NATIONAL PARK

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Purpose

To inform the Committee of the formal arrangements required between the National Park Authority and the Scottish Executive in relation to finance related matters. Annex 1 contains the current draft of the Scottish Executive Management Statement and Financial Memorandum.

Recommendations

- That committee members note the content of the document attached.

Executive Summary

As an Executive NDPB the financial arrangements of the Park Authority are governed by the provisions contained in a Management Statement and Financial Memorandum to be agreed between the Park Authority and the Scottish Executive. This document is prepared by the Scottish Executive in line with guidance contained in the Scottish Public Finance Manual. Once agreed between the Park Authority and the Scottish Executive it forms the framework within which CNPA's internal procedures operate. These procedures will incorporate guidance and instruction to staff on such functions as authorising payments, ordering of goods and services and monitoring of budgets.

FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK GOVERNING THE NATIONAL PARK

Non Departmental Public Bodies

1. A NDPB is the term for a whole range of public bodies which operate at arms length from, but are accountable to Scottish Ministers, from whom they receive funding. Such bodies (which include SNH and SEPA, for example) are therefore quasi autonomous, which means they have some degree of independence in how they act, but only within the framework of the legislation under which they were established (the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, in the case of National Parks Authorities, and the accompanying Designation Order), and any guidance or directions issued by Scottish Ministers. The key guidance for each NDPB is the Management Statement/Financial Memorandum.

Management Statement/Financial Memorandum (MS/FM)

2. This document takes a fairly standard format across all NDPBs, but may differ in detail for each. The Park Authority's FM/MS was issued in draft when the Park Authority came into existence, and the latest draft of the document is attached at Annex 1. In due course the Park Authority should formally respond to the Scottish Executive with any comments it wishes to make on the document. Once agreement is reached, the Executive will formally issue the MS/FM in final form. It is unlikely that fundamental changes to the framework will be acceptable, as it is formulated to ensure satisfactory controls on accountability for public funds, for which Ministers are ultimately accountable to Parliament. However, some detailed aspects such as levels of delegated authority, may be open to some debate. Even while in draft form the National Park Authority is expected to comply with the statements and guidance in the MS/FM.
3. It should also be noted that the MS/FM leaves a number of issues open for agreement between the Park Authority and Ministers - for example, the Park Authority's objectives, the timetable for issuing the corporate plan, etc. The MS/FM therefore offers a framework for the Park Authority's financial operation, but within that there is flexibility, and a close working relationship between the Park Authority and the Executive's sponsoring Division (Countryside and Natural Heritage) will be essential, especially in the early years. The main points covered by the MS/FM are considered below.

Responsibility and Accountability

4. The main points covered in Part 1 and Part 2 sections 1, 2 and 3 are:
 - The rules and guidelines relevant to the exercise of the Authority's functions, duties and powers;
 - The conditions under which any public funds are paid to the Authority;
 - How the Authority is to be held to account for its performance;
 - The respective roles and responsibilities of the Scottish Ministers, the sponsor department and the Authority;
 - The document is to be reviewed by the Department at least every 2-3 years.

Financial Controls

5. These are largely covered in the draft document at Annex 1, and can be summarised as:
- EC Funding: requiring the National Park Authority to notify the Department of any proposal to seek funding from EC programmes;
 - Cash balances to be kept as low as possible;
 - Excess income, i.e. not budgeted, to be identified, reported to the Department and surrendered if the Department decides so;
 - Borrowing to be approved by the Department in advance;
 - Lending: whether by grant or loan the Authority has the power to determine terms and conditions;
 - Procurement: all contracts (goods or services, including consultancy) should be in accordance with the Scottish Public Finance Manual and therefore generally by competition;
 - Single tender over £10,000 must be approved by the Department;
 - The Department shall also approve, prior to any award without competition, of work estimated to cost over £20,000 to in-house staff;
 - Any asset costing more than £20,000 shall be approved by the Department as shall any lease where the costs across the lifetime of the lease exceed £20,000, when discounted to present values.
 - An Asset Register must be maintained and disposal of assets should be at market value. Any disposal of more than £5,000 or any proposal to exclude competition must be approved by the Department;
 - All projects should be appraised in accordance with the SPFM guidance for capital investment, procurement and evaluation;
 - The Authority should not normally enter into finance leases without Departmental approval;
 - Where the costs for a project previously approved by the Department appear about to exceed 10% of the approved cost the project must be resubmitted for scrutiny;
 - Consultancy projects costing more than £50,000 must be submitted to the Department, even where these form part of project already within the Authority's delegated authority;
 - Any investment must be approved by the Department;
 - Any proposal for Commercial Activity undertaken by the Authority should be addressed in the National Park Plan;
 - Banking arrangements must be specifically approved by the Department and reviewed every 2 years;
 - Gifts, Losses and special payments: this relates to the provision of gifts, the write-off of losses and special payments. The Department approves:
 - All gifts costing more than £75,
 - All special payments of more than £1,000,
 - Write-off of losses from theft or vandalism to vehicles, or the destruction or damage of vehicles by road traffic accident or fire exceeding £5,000.
 - Novel, unusual or contentious: the Department and Authority will agree guidelines on these issues and periodically review these.
 - Under the Financial Memorandum the Scottish Executive also delegates authority in relation to staffing matters (Part 2 Section 6).

The effects of the requirements for accountability to the Scottish Executive

6. In practice the various 'rules' are intended to allow delivery of agreed tasks and priorities within the resources provided to the National Park Authority. It is important for the whole organisation to understand that the rules are not there to stop work being

taken forward, but to provide a framework that ensures regularity and propriety in how that work is delivered.

7. The basis of these requirements is to establish accountability and responsibility throughout an organisation and this is usually achieved through a system of delegated authority to all staff. These systems will be put in place, and it will be the work of the Auditor, overseen by the Audit Committee, to constantly review whether these systems are adequate.

Budgeting

8. This is covered in Part 2 section 4 at paragraphs 4.1 to 4.5. The budget for the National Park Authority sits within the Scottish Executive allocation for devolved responsibilities from the Westminster Parliament. The Scottish Executive, through the Scottish Public Finance Manual and a Management Statement and Financial Memorandum for each body it supports, has lead responsibility for ensuring the proper management and application of funds. (In practice the Scottish Executive remains accountable to the UK Government and the overall management and oversight of the Treasury and the Public Accounts Committee for public funds).
9. The cycle of budgeting is usually for 3 years. The arrangements for NDPBs require these bodies, through their Sponsor Department, to formulate a budget in accordance with the budget figure provided from the Department. The Department will normally have indicated priorities and key targets and will expect to see the budget supported by a plan containing outputs, targets and performance indicators indicating how the planned expenditure, including staff and running costs, delivers the relevant outputs and targets. Where the indicated budget allocation is regarded as insufficient the Department will expect a suitable business case and clear explanation of what will be provided from any additional resources. It will also expect that if a proposal is of sufficient importance all existing plans, budgets and priorities will have been reviewed.

Corporate and Operational Planning

10. The Corporate Plan is a 3-year prediction of activity and expenditure. Naturally the first year will be the most detailed, with years 2 and 3 less so. The Corporate Plan is updated annually with the original year 2 becoming more detailed and a new 3rd year being added. It is usual for the Agency/NDPB to receive a formal notification of the budget for each of the 3 years. This process is repeated each year and previously notified budget figures can be revised in the light of changed priorities, etc. The Scottish Executive itself will often seek to hold or reduce budgets. There are occasions where Scottish Ministers will require a complete review of the organisation. This is known as a 'Quinquennial Review' and is usually conducted by an officer or officers of the Scottish Executive with an in house team providing support and acting as the first point of contact.
11. The Operational Plan (Business Plan) is the first year of the Corporate Plan and contains more specific detail. It is usual to allocate staff resources to programmes of work thus justifying the complement of staff against the agreed programmes, priorities and outputs.
12. In setting priorities the Department will wish to see statements that provide assurance that:
 - Statutory priorities are being met;
 - Any specific direction from Scottish Ministers is reflected in the plan and the

- allocation of resources;
 - Park Authority wide priorities are clearly stated, and lastly;
 - Local priorities, e.g. improved recreation, habitat or landscape, community involvement, are detailed.
13. Plans usually incorporate references to efficient, effective and economic use of the resources available. This is normally given a high priority. For the National Park Authority, this is a statutory requirement, set out at section 19 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act. It therefore in effect provides a fifth aim along with the four aims described by statute. This would normally be a section of its own, but supported by all Management Units, in the Plan.

Corporate Planning

14. The 3 year plan is important in permitting the National Park Authority to set out its thinking for the delivery of its aims. It is also important in setting out the responsibilities falling to managers and staff, normally leading to the formalisation of job descriptions and annual job plans for each individual employed. These usually also contain key targets and performance indicators.
15. For the purposes of Board, Management and individual members of staff the various activities are normally clustered under 'programmes of work'. Whilst some programmes may relate to a single Management Unit, others require input from all units and staff. For example, accountability is a requirement placed on all members of staff and teams. A programme such as 'Education' or 'Grants', say, will normally require time input from more than one Unit, including Corporate Services for the establishment of cost centres, payment of bills, etc. Plans normally indicate the 'lead' Management Unit and any dependencies on other units, or external bodies, those impacts on delivery of the activity/project/policy or strategy.
16. The process for developing the Corporate Plan for CNPA will be subject to a separate report. Suffice it to say here that the process can in a large organisation become extremely resource intensive in itself, a situation that the CNPA will wish to avoid.

Internal and External Audit

17. This is covered at Part 2 paragraphs 4.6 and 5.2-5.3 of the MS/FM and falls under the remit of the Audit Committee.

Annual Cycle

18. As a new NDPB, the Park Authority is not yet into an established budgeting and corporate planning cycle. However, the cycle, once reached, can be summarised as follows:
- Annual report and Accounts submitted to Ministers
 - Mid year (or as required) — indication of predicted overspend or underspend
 - December [TBC] — submission of draft Corporate Plan and Operational Plan

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28th November 2003

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DRAFT MANAGEMENT STATEMENT/FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM FOR THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

1. This management statement and associated financial memorandum (MS/FM) has been drawn up by the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department (the Department) in consultation with the Cairngorms National Park Authority (the Authority), 14-16 The Square, Grantown-on-Spey, Moray, PH26 3HG
2. Subject to the legislation noted, the management statement sets out the broad framework within which the Authority will operate, in particular:
 - the Authority's overall aims, objectives and targets in support of the Scottish Ministers' wider strategic aims;
 - the rules and guidelines relevant to the exercise of the Authority's functions, duties and powers;
 - the conditions under which any public funds are paid to the Authority;
 - how the Authority is to be held to account for its performance.
3. The associated financial memorandum sets out in greater detail certain aspects of the financial framework within which the Authority is required to operate.
4. However, the management statement and associated financial memorandum do not convey any legal powers or responsibilities.
5. The MS/FM shall be reviewed and updated periodically by the Department, normally at least every 2-3 years.
6. The Authority, or the Department, may propose amendments to the MS/FM at any time. Any such proposals by the Authority shall be considered in the light of the Scottish Ministers' policy aims, operational factors and the track record of the Authority itself. The guiding principle shall be that the extent of flexibility and freedom given to the Authority shall reflect both the quality of its internal controls and its operational needs. The Department shall determine what changes, if any, are to be incorporated in the MS/FM. Legislative provisions shall take precedence over any part of the MS/FM.
7. The Authority shall satisfy the conditions and requirements set out in the MS/FM, together with all relevant requirements in the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM) and such other conditions as the Scottish Ministers / sponsor Department may from time to time impose. Any question regarding the interpretation of the MS/FM shall be resolved by the Department after consultation with the Authority.
8. Copies of the MS/FM shall be placed in the Scottish Parliament Reference Centre and provided to the Public Services Delivery Group in an electronic format for inclusion in the Scottish Executive internet and intranet websites. Copies shall also be made available to members of the public on the Authority's website or on request.

MODEL MANAGEMENT STATEMENT/FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM FOR THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PART 2: MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

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1. FUNCTIONS, DUTIES AND POWERS

1.1 Founding legislation; status

The Authority was established under the Cairngorms National Park Designation, Transitional and Consequential Provisions (Scotland) Order 2003. Its statutory responsibilities and functions are set out in the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 (the 2000 Act), which also sets the procedure for establishing a National Park and the framework under which all National Parks in Scotland must operate. The Designation Order 2003 (made under the 2000 Act) specifies the individual powers and functions being given to the Authority, the composition of the Authority and the boundary of the National Park. The Authority does not carry out its functions on behalf of the Crown.

1.2 The functions, duties and powers of the Authority

1.2.1 The 2000 Act gives the Authority the following:

functions: As set out at section 1, section 9 and schedule 3 of the Act.

duties: to prepare and submit to the Scottish Ministers a National Park Plan, as described in sections 11 to 14 of the 2000 Act

powers: as set out in schedule 2 of the Act and sections 7 and 8 of the Authority's Designation Order.

1.3 Classification

1.3.1 For policy/administrative purposes the Authority is classified as an executive non-departmental public body.

1.3.2 For national accounts purposes the Authority is classified to the Central Government sector.

1.3.3 References to this Authority include, where appropriate, all its subsidiaries and joint ventures that are classified to the public sector for national accounts purposes. If such a subsidiary or joint venture is created, there shall be a document setting out the arrangements between it and the Authority.

2. AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

2.1 Overall aims

2.1.1. Within the founding legislation Scottish Ministers have defined the overall aims for the Authority as follows:

(a) to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area

(b) to promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area

(c) to promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public, and

(d) to promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities

2.2 Objectives and key targets

2.2.1 The Department determines the Authority's performance framework in the light of the Scottish Ministers' wider strategic aims. The Authority's objectives and key targets shall be agreed within its corporate planning process (Section 4 below).

3. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

3.1 The Scottish Ministers

3.1.1 The Scottish Ministers are ultimately accountable to the Scottish Parliament for the activities and performance of the Authority. Their responsibilities include:

- approving the Authority's strategic objectives and the policy and performance framework within which it will operate (as set out in this management statement and associated financial memorandum (MS/FM));
- keeping the Parliament informed about the Authority's performance;
- approving the resource budget and the associated grant in aid requirement to be paid to the Authority, and securing the necessary Parliamentary approval;
- carrying out responsibilities specified in the founding legislation, including appointments to the Board, approving the terms and conditions of Board members, approving the appointment of the Chief Executive, approval of terms and conditions of staff, and laying of the annual report and accounts before the Parliament.

3.2 The Departmental Accountable Officer

3.2.1 The Head of the sponsor Department is designated as its Accountable Officer by the Principal Accountable Officer for the Scottish Administration. He is responsible for the overall organisation, management and staffing of the sponsor Department and for ensuring that there is a high standard of financial management in the Department as a whole.

3.2.2 In particular the Departmental Accountable Officer shall ensure that:

- the Authority's strategic aims and objectives support the Scottish Ministers' wider strategic aims;
- the financial and other management controls applied by the Department to the Authority are appropriate and sufficient to safeguard public funds and for ensuring that the Authority's compliance with those controls is effectively monitored ("public funds" include not only any funds provided to the Authority by the Scottish Ministers but also any other funds falling within the stewardship of the Authority, including gifts, bequests and donations);
- the internal controls applied by the Authority conform to the requirements of regularity, propriety and good financial management;
- any funding provided to the Authority is within the scope and the amount authorised by Budget Act.

3.2.3 The responsibilities of a Departmental Accountable Officer are set out in more detail in the Memorandum to Accountable Officers from the Principal Accountable Officer – see Annex 1 of the section on Accountability in the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM).

3.3 The sponsoring team in the Department

3.3.1 Within the Department, the National Parks Team is the sponsoring team for the Authority. The Team, in consultation as necessary with the Departmental Accountable Officer, is the primary source of advice to the Scottish Ministers on the discharge of their responsibilities in respect of the Authority, and the primary point of contact for the Authority in dealing with the Department. The sponsoring team shall carry out its duties under a senior officer who shall have primary responsibility for overseeing the activities of the Authority.

3.3.2 The sponsoring team shall advise the Scottish Ministers on:

- an appropriate framework of objectives and targets for the Authority in the light of the Scottish Ministers' wider strategic aims;
- an appropriate budget for the Authority in the light of the Scottish Ministers' overall public expenditure priorities;
- how well the Authority is achieving its strategic objectives and whether it is delivering value for money.

3.3.3 In support of the Departmental Accountable Officer the sponsoring team shall:

on performance and risk management –

- monitor the Authority's activities on a continuing basis through an adequate and timely flow of information from it on performance, budgeting, control and risk management, including early sight of the Authority's Statement on Internal Control;
- address in a timely manner any significant problems arising in the Authority, whether financial or otherwise, making such interventions in the affairs of the Authority as the Department judges necessary;
- ensure that the activities of the Authority and the risks associated with them are properly and appropriately taken into account in the Scottish Executive's risk assessment and management systems;
- ensure that appointments to the Board are made timeously and in accordance with the Commissioner for Public Appointments Code of Conduct.

on communication with the Authority –

- inform the Authority of relevant Scottish Executive policy in a timely manner; advise on the interpretation of that policy; and issue specific guidance to the Authority as necessary;
- bring concerns about the activities of the Authority to the attention of the full Board, and require explanations and assurances from the Board that appropriate action has been taken.

3.4 The Convener of the Authority

3.4.1 The Convener is a member of the Board and is appointed to the Authority in terms of paragraph 11(1) of Schedule 1 to the 2000 Act. The Convener's first period of appointment is for 18 months until September 2004. The Convener will be elected for a three-year term from the time of the next election.

3.4.2 The Convener is responsible to the Scottish Ministers. The Convener shall aim to ensure that the Authority's policies and actions support the wider strategic policies of the Scottish Ministers; and that the Authority's affairs are conducted with probity. The Convener shares with other Board members the corporate responsibilities set out in paragraph 3.5.2, and in particular for ensuring that the Authority fulfils the aims and objectives set by the Scottish Ministers.

3.4.3 The Convener has a particular leadership responsibility on the following matters:

- formulating the Board's strategy;
- ensuring that the Board, in reaching decisions, takes proper account of guidance provided by the Scottish Ministers / Department;
- promoting the efficient and effective use of staff and other resources;
- encouraging high standards of propriety;
- representing the views of the Board to the general public.

3.4.4 The Convener shall also:

- ensure that all members of the Board are fully briefed on the terms of their appointment and on their duties, rights and responsibilities, and receive appropriate induction training, including on the financial management and reporting requirements of public sector bodies and on any differences which may exist between private and public sector practice;
- advise the Scottish Ministers of the needs of the Authority when Board vacancies arise, with a view to ensuring a proper balance of professional and financial expertise;
- assess the performance of individual Board members on an annual basis.

3.4.5 The Convener shall also ensure that within the provisions of the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc (Scotland) Act 2000, Board Members are fully aware of the body's Code of Conduct approved by the Scottish Ministers.

3.4.6 Communications between the Board and the Scottish Ministers shall normally be through the Convener. The Convener shall ensure that the other Board members are kept informed of such communications.

3.5 The Authority's Board

3.5.1 The 25 Board Members are appointed as follows:

- all appointments to the Board are made in line with the Code of Practice issued by the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA).

- 10 members appointed by Scottish Ministers following assessment of the candidates in accordance with OCPA rules.
- 10 members appointed by Scottish Ministers following nomination by the local authorities in the area.
- 5 members elected by a postal ballot of the local electorate.
- the appointments vary in length. The minimum period for the 1st round of appointments is to 24 September 2004 (applies to the ten council nominees only). The maximum period of appointment is to 24 March 2007.

3.5.2 The Board has corporate responsibility for ensuring that the Authority fulfils the aims and objectives set by the Scottish Ministers and for promoting the efficient and effective use of staff and other resources by the Authority in accordance with the principles of Best Value – see relevant section of the SPFM. To this end, and in pursuit of its wider corporate responsibilities, the Board shall:

- establish the overall strategic direction of the Authority within the policy, planning and resources framework determined by the Scottish Ministers;
- ensure that the Scottish Ministers are kept informed of any changes which are likely to impact on the strategic direction of the Authority or on the attainability of its targets, and determine the steps needed to deal with such changes;
- ensure that any statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds (i.e. all funds falling within the stewardship of the Authority) are complied with; that the Board operates within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority agreed with the sponsor Department, and in accordance with any other conditions relating to the use of public funds; and that, in reaching decisions, the Board takes into account relevant guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers / sponsor Department;
- ensure that the Board receives and reviews regular financial information concerning the management of the Authority; is informed in a timely manner about any concerns about the activities of the Authority; and provides positive assurance to the Department that appropriate action has been taken on such concerns;
- demonstrate high standards of corporate governance at all times, including by setting up and using an independent audit committee - in accordance with the guidance on Audit Committees in the SPFM - to help the Board to address the key financial and other risks facing the Authority;
- provide commitment and leadership in the development and promotion of Best Value principles throughout the organisation;
- appoint with the Scottish Ministers' approval a Chief Executive and, in consultation with the Department, set performance objectives and remuneration terms linked to these objectives for the Chief Executive which give due weight both to the proper management and use of public monies and to the delivery of outcomes in line with Scottish Ministers' priorities.

3.5.3 Individual Board members shall act in accordance with their wider responsibility as Members of the Board – namely to:

- comply at all times with the Authority's Code of Conduct approved by the Scottish Ministers under the Ethical Standards In Public Life etc (Scotland) Act

2000 and with the rules relating to the use of public funds, conflicts of interest and confidentiality;

- not misuse information gained in the course of their public service for personal gain or for political profit, nor seek to use the opportunity of public service to promote their private interests or those of connected persons or organisations;
- act in good faith and in the best interests of the Authority.

3.6 The Accountable Officer

3.6.1 The Chief Executive of the Authority is designated as its Accountable Officer by the Principal Accountable Officer of the Scottish Administration in accordance with sections 14 and 15 of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000.

3.6.2 The Accountable Officer is personally responsible for safeguarding the public funds (i.e. all funds falling within the stewardship of the Authority) for which he/she has charge; for ensuring propriety and regularity in the handling of those public funds; and for the day-to-day operations and management of the Authority. He/she should act in accordance with the terms of the MS/FM and within the terms of relevant guidance in the SPFM and other instructions and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers – in particular the Memorandum to Accountable Officers of Other Public Bodies (Annex 2 of the section on Accountability in the SPFM).

3.6.3 The Accountable Officer has a duty to secure Best Value, which includes the concepts of good corporate governance, performance management and continuous improvement. Guidance to Accountable Officers on what their organisations should be able to demonstrate in fulfilment of the duties which make up a Best Value regime is included in the Best Value section of the SPFM.

3.6.4 As Accountable Officer the Chief Executive shall exercise the following specific responsibilities:

on planning, performance management and monitoring –

- establish the Authority's corporate and business plans in the light of the Scottish Ministers' wider strategic aims;
- establish a robust performance management framework which supports the achievement of the Authority's aims and objectives as set out in the corporate and business plans; and which enables full performance reporting to the Board, the Department and the wider public;
- inform the Department of the Authority's progress in helping to achieve the Scottish Ministers' policy objectives and in demonstrating how resources are being used to achieve those objectives;
- ensure that timely forecasts and monitoring information on performance and finance are provided to the Department; that the Department is notified promptly if overspends / underspends are likely or if performance targets are at serious risk and that corrective action is taken; and that any significant problems, whether financial or otherwise, and whether detected by internal audit or by other means, are notified to the Department in a timely fashion;

on advising the Board –

- advise the Board on the discharge of its responsibilities as set out in this document and in the founding legislation and in any other relevant instructions and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers / sponsor Department;
- advise the Board on the Authority's performance compared with its aims and objectives;
- ensure that financial considerations are taken fully into account by the Board at all stages in reaching and executing its decisions, and that standard financial appraisal techniques as set out in the Green Book are followed as far as this is appropriate and practical;
- take action as set out in section 5 of the Memorandum to Accountable Officers of Other Public Bodies if the Board is contemplating a course of action involving a transaction which the Chief Executive considers would infringe the requirements of propriety or regularity or does not represent prudent or economical administration or efficiency or effectiveness;

on managing risk and resources –

- ensure that a system of risk management is embedded in the organisation to inform decisions on financial and operational planning and to assist in achieving objectives and targets;
- ensure that an effective system of programme and project management and contract management is maintained;
- ensure that the funds made available to the Authority, including any approved income or other receipts, are used for the purpose intended by the Parliament, and that such monies, together with the Authority's assets, equipment and staff, are used economically, efficiently and effectively;
- ensure that adequate internal management and financial controls are maintained by the Authority, including effective measures against fraud and theft;
- maintain a comprehensive system of internal delegated authorities which are notified to all staff, together with a system for regularly reviewing compliance with these delegations;
- ensure that effective human resource management policies are maintained and that strategic human resource planning is related to the Authority's objectives;

on accounting for the Cairngorms National Park Authority's activities –

- sign the accounts and be responsible for ensuring that proper records are kept relating to the accounts and that the accounts are properly prepared and presented in accordance with any directions issued by the Scottish Ministers;
- sign a Statement of Accountable Officer's responsibilities, for inclusion in the annual report and accounts;
- sign a Statement on Internal Control regarding the Authority's system of internal control, for inclusion in the annual report and accounts;
- sign a Certificate of Assurance on the maintenance and review of the Authority's internal control systems, for submission to the Department;
- ensure that an effective complaints procedure is in place and made widely known;
- give evidence when summoned before Committees of the Scottish Parliament on the use and stewardship of public funds by the Authority.

3.6.5 The Chief Executive may delegate the day-to-day administration of his/her Accountable Officer responsibilities to other employees in the Authority. However, he/she shall not assign absolutely to any other person any of the responsibilities set out in this document.

3.6.6 The Chief Executive is responsible for informing the Departmental Accountable Officer about any complaints about the Authority accepted by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman for investigation, and about the Authority's proposed response to any subsequent recommendations from the Ombudsman.

4. PLANNING, BUDGETING AND CONTROL

4.1 The corporate plan

4.1.1 Consistent with the timetable for public spending reviews the Authority shall submit to the Department a draft of the Authority's corporate plan covering the spending review period. The Authority shall have agreed with the Department the issues to be addressed in the plan and the timetable for its preparation. The plan, or elements thereof, shall be updated between public spending reviews as and when considered necessary.

4.1.2 The plan shall reflect the Authority's statutory duties and, within those duties, the priorities set from time to time by the Scottish Ministers.

4.1.3 The corporate plan shall set out:

- the Authority's key objectives and associated key performance targets for the forward years, and its strategy for achieving those objectives;
- a review of the Authority's performance in the preceding financial year, together with comparable outturns for the previous 2 years, and an estimate of performance in the current year;
- alternative scenarios to take account of factors which may significantly affect the execution of the plan but which cannot be accurately forecast;
- other matters as agreed between the Department and the Authority.

4.1.4 The main elements of the plan - including the key performance targets - shall be agreed between the Department and the Authority in the light of the Department's decisions on policy and resources taken in the context of the Scottish Ministers' wider public expenditure plans and decisions.

4.2 The business plan

4.2.1 The business plan for the year immediately ahead shall be consistent with the agreed corporate plan. The business plan shall be updated annually by the Authority to include key targets and milestones for the forthcoming year and shall be linked to budgeting information so that resources allocated to achieve specific objectives can readily be identified by the Department. (See also paragraph 1.3 of the financial memorandum.) A copy of the business plan shall be submitted to the Department for information (and comment where considered appropriate) prior to the beginning of the financial year in question.

4.3 Publication of plans

4.3.1 Subject to any commercial considerations the corporate and business plans shall be published and made available on the Internet. A summary version should be made available to staff.

4.4 Reporting performance to the Department

4.4.1 The Authority shall operate management information and accounting systems which enable it to review in a timely and effective manner its financial and non-financial performance against the budgets and targets set out in its corporate and business plans.

4.4.2 The Authority shall take the initiative in informing the Department of changes in external conditions which make the achievement of objectives more or less difficult, or which may require a change to the budget or objectives set out in the corporate or business plans.

4.4.3 The Authority's performance in helping to deliver Ministers' policies, including the achievement of agreed key objectives, shall be reported to the Department on a three-monthly basis. Performance will be formally reviewed twice yearly by officials of the Department. The appropriate Scottish Minister shall meet the Board formally each year to discuss the Authority's performance, its current and future activities and any policy developments relevant to those activities.

4.4.4 The Authority's performance against key targets shall be reported in its annual report and accounts (see Section 5.1 below). Other forms of reporting performance to the public should also be considered.

4.5 Budgeting procedures

4.5.1 The Authority's budgeting procedures are set out in the associated financial memorandum.

4.6 Internal audit

4.6.1 The Authority shall establish and maintain arrangements for internal audit in accordance with the Treasury's Government Internal Audit Standards (GIAS). The Authority shall consult the Department to ensure that the latter is satisfied with the competence and qualifications of the Head of Internal Audit and the requirements for approving appointment.

4.6.2 The Authority shall arrange for periodic quality reviews of its internal audit in accordance with the GIAS. The Department shall consider whether it can rely on these reviews to provide assurance on the quality of internal audit. However, the Department reserves a right of access to carry out / commission independent reviews of internal audit in the Authority.

4.6.3 The Department's internal audit service shall also have a right of access to all documents prepared by the Authority's internal auditor, including where the service is contracted out. The audit strategy, periodic audit plans and annual audit report, including the Authority's Head of Internal Audit's opinion on risk management, control and governance

shall be forwarded without delay to the sponsoring team who shall consult the Scottish Executive's Head of Internal Audit as appropriate.

4.6.4 In addition, the Authority shall forward to the Department an annual report on fraud and theft suffered by the Authority; notify any unusual or major incidents as soon as possible; and notify any changes to its internal audit's terms of reference, its audit committee's terms of reference or its Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan.

5. EXTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY

5.1 The annual report and accounts

5.1.1 After the end of each financial year the Authority shall publish an annual report of its activities together with its audited annual accounts. The report shall also cover the activities of any corporate bodies under its control.

5.1.2 The report and accounts shall comply, so far as appropriate, with the Treasury document *Executive Non-Departmental Public Bodies: Annual Reports and Accounts Guidance*. The accounts shall be prepared in accordance with the specific accounts direction and other relevant guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers.

5.1.3 The report and accounts shall outline the Authority's main activities and performance during the previous financial year and set out in summary form the Authority's forward plans. Information on performance against key financial targets shall be included in the notes to the accounts, and shall therefore be within the scope of the audit.

5.1.4 The report and accounts shall be submitted in draft to the Department for comment and the final version shall be laid before the Parliament by the Scottish Ministers before 31 December. The Authority shall be responsible for the publication of the report and accounts.

5.2 External audit

5.2.1 The Authority's accounts are audited by auditors appointed by the Board. The Authority shall submit the audited accounts to the Scottish Ministers, who shall lay them, together with the annual report, before the Parliament.

5.2.2 The Authority shall instruct its auditors to send copies of all management letters (and correspondence relating to those letters) and responses to the Department.

5.3 VFM / 3E examinations

5.3.1 The Authority agrees that the AGS may carry out examinations into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which the Authority has used its resources in discharging its functions. For the purpose of these examinations the AGS has statutory access to documents and information held by relevant persons specified by an Order made under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000.

6. STAFF MANAGEMENT

6.1. Within the arrangements approved by the Scottish Ministers or set out in the body's legislation, the Authority shall have responsibility for the recruitment, retention and motivation of its staff. To this end the Authority shall ensure that:

- the recruitment of its staff is based on fair and open competition and equal opportunities;
- the level and structure of its staffing, including gradings and numbers of staff, is appropriate to its functions and the requirements of efficiency, effectiveness and economy;
- the performance of its staff at all levels is managed effectively and efficiently; they are satisfactorily appraised; and the Authority's performance appraisal and promotion systems are reviewed from time to time;
- its staff are encouraged to acquire the appropriate professional, management and other expertise necessary to achieve the Authority's objectives;
- proper consultation with staff takes place on key issues affecting them;
- adequate grievance and disciplinary procedures are in place;
- whistleblowing procedures consistent with the Public Interest Disclosure Act are in place;
- a code of conduct for staff is in place based on the document *Model Code for Staff of Executive Non-Departmental Public Bodies*.

7. REVIEWING THE ROLE OF THE AUTHORITY

7.1 The role of the Authority shall be reviewed periodically in accordance with the business needs of the Scottish Executive and of the Authority, normally at least every 5 years.

MANAGEMENT STATEMENT/FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM FOR THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PART 3: FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

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ANNEX: SPECIFIC LIMITS ON DELEGATED AUTHORITY

1. BUDGETING PROCEDURES

The Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL)

1.1 The Authority's current and capital expenditure form part of the sponsor Department's Resource DEL and Capital DEL respectively.

Setting the annual budget

1.2 Each year, in the light of decisions by the Scottish Ministers on the Authority's corporate plan (paragraph 4.1 of the management statement), the Department will send to the Authority:

- a formal statement of the annual budgetary provision (disaggregated by main budget headings) allocated by the Scottish Ministers in the light of competing priorities across the Scottish Executive and of the associated grant in aid and any approved forecast income;
- a statement of any planned change in policies affecting the Authority.

1.3 The Authority's annual business plan will take account both of its approved budgetary provision and of any forecast income, and will include a budget of estimated payments and receipts together with a profile of expected expenditure/consumption of resources and of draw-down of grant in aid and other income over the year. These elements will form part of the business plan for the year in question (paragraph 4.2.1 of the management statement).

1.4 Grant in aid provided by the Scottish Ministers for the year in question will be included in the annual Budget Act and will be subject to approval by the Parliament.

Transfers of budgetary provision

1.5 All transfers of budgetary provision between current and capital budgets require the prior approval of the Department. Other transfers between main budget headings may be undertaken without the prior approval of the Department.

End-year flexibility

1.6 Under the Scottish Executive's end-year flexibility (EYF) arrangements the Authority may, subject to the approval of the Department, carry forward from one financial year to the next, in part or in full, unused DEL budgetary provision. It is the Authority's underspending in terms of the use of DEL budgetary provision rather than of grant in aid that will determine the level of EYF available to be carried forward. The Authority must at the earliest opportunity submit to the Department any proposals for carrying forward budgetary provision. Any such proposals shall be considered by the Department in the light of competing priorities.

Authority to spend

1.7 Once the Authority's budget has been approved by the Department and, subject to any restrictions imposed by the Scottish Ministers/the management statement and associated financial memorandum (MS/FM), the Authority shall have authority to incur expenditure/consume resources without further reference to the Department, on the following conditions:

- the Authority shall comply with the specific delegations set out in the attached Annex. These delegations shall not be altered without the prior agreement of the Department;
- the Authority shall comply with the conditions set out in this financial memorandum regarding novel, contentious or repercussive proposals and with any relevant guidance in the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM);
- inclusion of any planned and approved expenditure in the Authority's budget shall not remove the need to seek formal departmental approval where any proposed expenditure is outside the delegated limits or is for new schemes not previously agreed;
- the Authority shall provide the Department with such information about its operations, performance, individual projects or other expenditure as the Department may reasonably require.

2. THE AUTHORITY'S INCOME

Grant in aid

2.1 Grant in aid will be paid to the Authority in monthly instalments, on the basis of a written application from the Authority showing evidence of need. The application shall provide the Department with, as a minimum, information, which will enable the satisfactory monitoring by the Department of:

- the Authority's cash management;
- actual and forecast outturn of expenditure of grant in aid;
- actual and forecast outturn of expenditure/consumption of DEL budgetary provision by main budget headings.

2.2 Grant in aid should not be paid out in advance of need. Cash balances accumulated during the course of the year from grant in aid shall therefore be kept at the minimum level consistent with the efficient operation of the Authority. No grant in aid shall be paid into any reserve held by the Authority.

Borrowing

2.3 Borrowing cannot be used to increase the Authority's spending power. All borrowing by the Authority - excluding agreed overdrafts - shall be from the Scottish Ministers in accordance with guidance in the Borrowing, Lending & Investment section of the SPFM.

Maximising income from other sources

2.4 The Authority shall seek to maximise income from other sources provided that this is consistent with its main functions and its corporate plan as agreed by the Scottish Ministers. Proposals for new sources of income or methods of fundraising should be cleared with the Department.

Receipts from the EC

2.5 The Authority should ensure that the sponsor Department is informed of all potential EU funding so that there can be a full assessment of the implications of such funding for the Scottish Executive. Structural Funds claimed by the Authority via the Scottish Executive score against the Scottish Executive's Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) and any proposals must therefore be considered by the Scottish Ministers together with all other pressures on resources. See the guidance in the EU Funding section of the SPFM.

Fees and charges

2.6 Fees or charges for any services supplied by the Authority shall be determined in accordance with the Fees & Charges section of the SPFM.

Receipts from sale of goods or services

2.7 Receipts from the sale of goods and services, rent of land, and dividends may be used to provide additional spending power subject to them being included in the approved budget.

Interest earned

2.8 Interest earned by the Authority on cash balances may be used to provide additional spending power subject to it being included in the approved budget.

Proceeds from disposal of assets

2.9 Disposals of land and buildings are dealt with in Section 7 below.

Gifts, bequests and donations

2.10 The Authority is free to retain any gifts, bequests or similar donations. These shall be treated as receipts that, where appropriate, can be used to increase spending power. NOTE: Donated assets do not attract a cost of capital charge, and a release from the donated assets reserve should offset depreciation in the operating cost statement.

2.11 Before proceeding in this way the Authority shall consider if there are any associated costs in doing so or any conflicts of interests arising. The Authority shall keep a written record of any such gifts, bequests and donations and of their estimated value and whether they are disposed of or retained.

Unforecast changes in in-year income used to provide additional spending power

2.12 If income realised or expected to be realised in-year is **less** than estimated, the Authority shall, unless otherwise agreed with the Department, ensure a corresponding reduction in its gross expenditure so that the authorised budget is not exceeded.

2.13 If income realised or expected to be realised in-year is **more** than estimated, the Authority may apply to the Department to retain the excess income for specified additional expenditure within the current financial year without an offsetting reduction to grant in aid.

The Department shall consider such applications, taking account of competing demands for resources. If an application is refused grant in aid shall be correspondingly reduced.

3. THE AUTHORITY'S EXPENDITURE: GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Delegated authority

3.1 The Authority shall not, without prior approval of the Department, enter into any undertaking to incur any expenditure, which falls outside the specific limits on the Authority's delegated authority as set out in the attached Annex.

Appraisal and Evaluation

3.2 All expenditure proposals shall, so far as appropriate, be subject to the guidance in the Appraisal and Evaluation section of the SPFM.

Procurement

3.3 The Authority's procurement policies shall reflect relevant guidance in the Procurement section of the SPFM. Procurement should be treated as a key component of achieving the Authority's objectives, as well as a means of finding the most cost-effective method for securing the quality of assets and/or services. The Authority shall also ensure that it complies with any relevant EU or other international procurement rules.

Competition

3.4 Contracts shall be placed on a competitive basis and tenders accepted from suppliers who provide best value for money overall. Proposals to let single-tender or restricted contracts above the relevant delegated limit in the attached Annex must be submitted to the Department for approval.

Value for money

3.5 Procurement by the Authority of works, equipment, goods and services shall be based on value for money, i.e. quality (in terms of fitness for purpose) and delivery against price. Where appropriate, a full option appraisal shall be carried out before procurement decisions are taken.

Timeliness in paying bills

3.6 The Authority shall pay all matured and properly authorised invoices in accordance with the terms of contracts or within 30 days, as provided for the Payments section of the SPFM.

Novel, contentious or repercussive proposals

3.7 The Authority shall obtain the approval of the Department before:

- incurring any expenditure for any purpose which is or might be considered novel or contentious, or which has or could have significant future cost implications, including on staff benefits;

- making any significant change in the scale of operation or funding of any initiative or particular scheme previously approved by the Department;
- making any change of policy or practice which has wider financial implications (e.g. because it might prove repercussive among other public sector bodies) or which might significantly affect the future level of resources required.

Risk management

3.8 The Authority shall ensure that the risks, which it faces, are dealt with in an appropriate manner, in accordance with relevant aspects of best practice in corporate governance, and shall develop a risk management strategy, in accordance with the Risk Management section of the SPFM.

3.9 The Authority shall adopt and implement policies and practices to safeguard itself against fraud and theft, in line with the Fraud section of the SPFM.

3.10 The Authority shall take all reasonable steps to appraise the financial standing of any firm or other body with which it intends to enter into a contract or to give grant or grant in aid.

4. EXPENDITURE ON BOARD MEMBERS

4.1 Remuneration, allowances and expenses paid to Board Members must comply with specific guidance on such matters issued by the Scottish Ministers.

5. EXPENDITURE ON STAFF

Staff costs

5.1 The Authority is responsible for determining the number of staff required and the most appropriate organisational structure to deliver its remit economically, efficiently and effectively within the resources available to it. However, any significant changes in staff numbers or organisational structure must be approved in advance by the Department.

Pay and conditions of service

5.2 The Authority shall submit to the Department for approval (normally annually unless a multi-year deal has been agreed) a pay remit within the terms and conditions set out in the Scottish Executive's Public Sector Pay Guidance and negotiate a pay settlement within the terms of the subsequently agreed remit. Proposals on non-salary rewards must comply with the guidance in the Non-Salary Rewards section of the SPFM. The Authority shall comply with the EU directive on contract workers "Fixed Term Employees Regulations (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment)". The terms and conditions of the Chief Executive are subject to a separate approval exercise.

Pensions; redundancy/compensation

5.3 Superannuation arrangements for staff are subject to the approval of the Department. The Authority's staff shall normally be eligible for a pension and the Authority shall provide for pension arrangements for its staff.

5.4 Any proposal by the Authority to move from an existing pension arrangement, or to pay any redundancy or compensation for loss of office, requires the approval of the Department. Proposals on severance payments must comply with the guidance in the Severance etc section of the SPFM.

6. NON-STAFF EXPENDITURE

Capital expenditure

6.1 Subject to being above the Scottish Executive's capitalisation threshold, all expenditure on the acquisition or creation of fixed assets shall be capitalised on an accruals basis. Expenditure to be capitalised shall include the (a) acquisition, reclamation or laying out of land; (b) acquisition, construction, preparation or replacement of buildings and other structures or their associated fixtures and fittings; and (c) acquisition, installation or replacement of movable or fixed plant, machinery, vehicles and vessels.

6.2 Proposals for large-scale individual capital projects or acquisitions will normally be considered within the Authority's corporate planning process and within the context of its long-term estate strategy. Any such project shall be subject to the guidance in the Major Investment section of the SPFM and, where appropriate, the Client Pack published by the Scottish Executive's Building Division. Individual capital projects or acquisitions are subject to specific delegated limits as indicated in the attached Annex.

Lending, guarantees, indemnities; contingent liabilities; letters of comfort

6.3 The Authority shall not, without the Department's prior consent, lend money, charge any asset or security, give any guarantee - excluding a guarantee of a standard type given in the normal course of business - or indemnity or letter of comfort, or incur any other contingent liability (as defined in the Contingent Liabilities section of the SPFM), whether or not in a legally binding form.

Grant or loan schemes

6.4 Proposals to make a grant or loan to a third party of £5,000 or more, whether one-off or under a scheme, shall be subject to prior approval by the Department, together with the terms and conditions under which such grant or loan is made. Guidance on a framework for the control of third party grants is included in the Grant & Grant in Aid section of the SPFM. See also below under the heading *Recovery of grant-financed assets*.

Gifts made, write-offs, losses and special payments

6.5 Proposals for making gifts or other special payments (including write-offs) outside the delegated limits set out in the attached Annex must have the prior approval of the Department. Any such proposals should address the considerations listed in the Losses & Special Payments section of the SPFM. Gifts by management to staff are subject to the guidance in the Non-Salary Rewards section of the SPFM.

Leasing

6.6 Prior departmental approval must be secured for all property and finance leases. The Authority must have capital DEL provision for finance leases and other transactions, which are in substance borrowing. Before entering into any lease (including an operating lease) the Authority must demonstrate that the lease offers better value for money than purchase.

Public/Private Partnerships

6.7 The Authority shall seek opportunities to enter into Public/Private Partnerships where this would be more affordable and offer better value for money than conventional procurement. Where cash flow projections may result in delegated authority being breached the Authority shall consult the sponsor Department. Any partnership controlled by the Authority shall be treated as part of the Authority in accordance with UK GAAP and consolidated with it, subject to any particular treatment required by UK GAAP. See also the guidance in the Public / Private Partnerships section of the SPFM.

Subsidiary companies and joint ventures

6.8 The Authority shall not establish subsidiary companies or joint ventures without the express approval of the Department. In judging such proposals the Department will have regard to the Scottish Ministers' wider strategic aims and objectives.

6.9 Any subsidiary company or joint venture controlled or owned by the Authority shall be consolidated with it in accordance with UK GAAP for public expenditure accounts purposes, subject to any particular treatment required by UK GAAP. Unless specifically agreed with the Department such subsidiary companies or joint ventures shall be subject to the controls and requirements set out in the MS/FM.

Financial investments

6.10 The Authority shall not make any investments without the prior approval of the Department, nor shall it aim to build up cash balances or net assets in excess of what is required for operational purposes. Equity shares in ventures, which further the objectives of the Authority shall equally be subject to departmental approval unless covered by a specific delegation. The Authority shall not invest in any venture of a speculative nature.

Unconventional financing

6.11 Unless otherwise agreed with the Department, the Authority shall not enter into any unconventional financing arrangement.

Commercial insurance

6.12 The Authority may only take out commercial insurance, without the prior approval of the Department, in accordance with the guidance in the Insurance section of the SPFM e.g. third party insurance required by the Road Traffic Acts. In the event of losses arising under the Scottish Executive's policy of self-insurance the Department shall consider, on a case by case basis, whether or not it should make any additional resources available to the Authority and/or agree adjustments to the targets in the corporate plan.

6.13 [A Certificate of Exemption for Employer's Liability Insurance has been issued to the NDPB.]

7. MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSAL OF FIXED ASSETS

Register of assets

7.1 The Authority shall maintain an accurate and up-to-date register of its fixed assets.

Disposal of assets

7.2 The Authority shall dispose of assets which are surplus to its requirements and in accordance with its long-term estate strategy. Assets shall be sold for the best price, taking into account any costs of sale and in accordance with the guidance in the Disposal of Tangible Fixed Assets section of the SPFM. Proceeds from the disposal of assets may be retained by the Authority subject to them being included in the approved budget.

Recovery of grant-financed assets

7.3 Where the Authority has financed expenditure on capital assets by a third party, it shall make appropriate arrangements to ensure that any such assets above an agreed value are not disposed of by the third party without the Authority's prior consent. The Authority shall therefore ensure that such conditions are sufficient to secure the repayment of its due share of the proceeds - or an appropriate proportion of them if the grant was for less than the whole cost of acquisition or improvement.

7.4 The Authority shall also ensure that if the assets created by grants made by it cease to be used by the recipient of the grant for the intended purpose an appropriate proportion of the value of the asset shall be repaid to the Authority.

8. BANKING

8.1 The Authority's Accountable Officer is responsible for ensuring that its banking arrangements are consistent with the guidance in the Banking section of the SPFM. In particular he/she shall ensure that the arrangements safeguard public funds and are carried out efficiently, economically and effectively. These arrangements shall be suitably structured and represent value-for-money, and be reviewed at least every two years, with a comprehensive review, usually leading to competitive tendering, at least every three to five years.

FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM: ANNEX

SPECIFIC LIMITS ON DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Single-tender contracts	Delegated approval for contracts estimated at £10,000 or less for external contractors and for any project estimated to cost £20,000 or less prior to awarding - without competition - any project to the in-house workforce.
Investment projects	The Authority has no delegated approval.
Acquisition of assets	Delegated approval for capital expenditure of £20,000 or less. The Authority cannot acquire new offices/accommodation, however, without the Department's prior approval.
Grant / loan scheme	Delegated approval for each scheme worth up to £5,000.
Claims waived or abandoned	£1,000
Lending	See paragraph 6.3 of Part 3. Delegated approval for loans up to £5,000 (terms of any loan must be approved by the Department on a case by case basis).
Special Payments	Delegated approval for payments of £1,000 or less.
Write-off of losses	See paragraph 6.5 of Part 3. Delegated approval for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gifts of less than £75 in value; • for theft/damage/destruction of a vehicle where cost is £5,000 or less; and • other causes of less than £1,000
Leases	See paragraph 6.6 of Part 3.
Investments	See paragraph 6.10 of Part 3.
Disposal of assets	See paragraph 7.2 of Part 3. Delegated approval for assets with a book value of up to £5,000.
Projects (such as acquiring assets by purchasing or leasing)	Delegated approval up to £50,000. The Department will consider whether to delegate approval for projects costing between £50,000 and £100,000 but a detailed appraisal of projects costing £100,000 or more is required.
Consultancy	The Authority is required to submit for approval any discrete consultancy project estimated to cost £10,000 or more. Consultancies estimated to cost £50,000 or more which form part of a project falling within the Authority's delegated authority should also be submitted for departmental approval.