



Draft Minutes of Meeting held at 2.00pm on Tuesday 2 December 2025, John Muir Suite, Balloch

National Park Authority Audit and Risk Committee

Paper for information

Present.....	2
In Attendance	2
Apologies	2
Items and Actions.....	2
1. Welcome and Apologies	2
2. Declarations of Interest.....	2
3. Minutes of meeting held on 2 September 2025	3
4. Matters Arising.....	3
5. Final External Annual Report to Members (including Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25 Final Update	3
6. Azets Progress Report.....	3
7. Internal Audit Report 2025/26 – Financial Sustainability.....	4
8. Follow-up – Part 2.....	5
9. Fraud Risk Register	5
10. Any Other Business.....	6
11. Date of Next Meeting.....	6

Present

David Mackie (DM) (Chair)

Ronnie Erskine (RE)

Maurice Corry (MC)

Martin Earl (ME)

In Attendance

Stephanie Hume (SH), Azets

Rachel King (RK), Azets

Simon Jones (SJ), Director of Environment and Visitor Services

Jane Kemp (JK), Head of Governance and Performance

Tom Reid (TR), Forvis Mazars

Douglas Smith (DSm), Corporate Performance Manager

Deborah Spratt (DS) (Committee Clerk)

Michael Ward (MW), Finance Manager

Apologies

William Sinclair (WS)

Christopher Spray (CS)

Items and Actions

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Chair ran through a few procedural points and welcome was extended to any members of the public who may be listening. There were no members of the public attending in person and apologies were received from William Sinclair, Christopher Spray and Boardroom Apprentice, James Messis. The Chair advised that William Sinclair is taking on a new role at Argyll and Bute Council and has advised that he will be stepping down from his position on the NPA Board. Thanks were extended to WS for his time served on the Audit and Risk Committee.

Members agreed under s50A (4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (as amended) to hold confidential items in closed session in accordance with the motion.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest from Committee Members.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 2 September 2025

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2025 were proposed by ME, seconded by MC and approved by Members present.

4. Matters Arising

DSm presented the Matters Arising noting that all matters were now closed. For clarity, DSm advised that for previous agenda item 11, a meeting has been held to agree the revised approach which will ensure continued oversight of recommendations while reflecting the development of the People and Engagement strategy, as reflected in the Internal Audit Follow Up Report from December 2025. DSm also advised members that dates have been sourced for OnBoard Training and these will be sent out to Members in due course.

DECISION: Members were happy to note the report.

5. Final External Annual Report to Members (including Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25 Final Update)

TR presented Forvis Mazars final External Annual Report to Members and the final update on the Annual Accounts for 2024/25.

TR advised that audit procedures are now complete for the year ended 31 March 2025. TR drew Members attention to the main change in the report from the draft version presented to the Committee in September. This is in relation to an error identified by the Strathclyde Pension Fund external auditor which was not material and as such is reported as an unadjusted error on page 22. TR confirmed that after considering the unadjusted misstatements, both individually and in aggregate, in the context of the financial statements taken as a whole, that no adjustments are required.

TR also advised that there was an amendment required to page 44 of the Annual Audit Report for the implementation date of the Information and Data Security internal control point – the correct date should be 30 September 2026 not 2027.

DECISION: Members were happy to note the report.

6. Azets Progress Report

SH presented Azets Progress Report which provides the Audit and Risk Committee with a summary of internal audit activity since its last meeting and

confirms the reviews planned for the coming quarter, identifying any changes to the annual plan.

SH reported that two reviews have been completed since the last Audit and Risk Committee meeting, Financial Sustainability and Follow Up Part 2. Due to staff sickness within Azets the Management Information/Information Security review which was also due to be presented to the December Audit and Risk Committee, will now be presented to the March 2026 meeting. Azets remain on track to provide their annual internal audit opinion to the June 2026 Audit and Risk Committee.

SH advised that Elizabeth Young is moving on from Azets and that she will be stepping in to her role, working alongside Rachel King, Audit Manager. SH reassured Members that she did not foresee any issue with the workload and that everything is on track with the plans.

In relation to the scope of the Stakeholder Engagement Audit, SH advised that all the evidence has been gathered and any issues are being worked through with Management. No external stakeholders have been consulted (as agreed at the last ARC meeting), the focus has been on the Management engagement with stakeholders.

DECISION: Members were happy to note the report and look forward to receiving the next set of reports at the March 2026 Committee meeting:

- Management Information/Information Security
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Follow Up – Part 3

Members previously approved the increase in audits days at the September Committee meeting and approved the audit plan for the next quarter.

7. Internal Audit Report 2025/26 – Financial Sustainability

SH presented Azets Audit Report on Financial Sustainability noting an overall 'minor improvement' audit rating. SH advised that three improvement actions have been identified from the review, two of which relate to the design of controls in place.

Thanks were extended to all members of management and staff for the help, courtesy and co-operation extended to Azets during the year. In response, JK also acknowledged thanks to Stephanie and Sophie for their excellent approach which made it easy to work with them.

DECISION: Members were pleased to note the report and extended their thanks for presenting a good and reassuring report.

8. Follow-up – Part 2

SH presented Azets Follow-up report (part 2).

SH confirmed that three actions (27%) were completed in the period to November 2025. Three actions (27%) were incomplete and five actions (46%) have been assessed as partially complete.

Members discussed and the following points were noted:

- Procurement - JK advised that the Procurement policy and associated guides are in final review stages and training has taken place to introduce staff to the new documents. The aim is to have all evidence over to the Auditor by the end of the week.
- Succession Planning - JK advised that there has been changes since this was originally received. The idea is that the new People and Engagement Strategy will take on all the Audit points so this action won't be closed off until the People and Engagement Strategy is completed at the end of March 2026 but will be subject to the recruitment of the new permanent HR Manager.
- Workforce Planning will be subject to the recruitment of the HR Manager in January which will delay all this package of work.
- Members requested a review of policies to see if there are any that require to come to Board or Committee for approval. Need to be clear on what is a 'policy' and what is a 'strategy'. JK advised that there is an enormous list of policies and there needs to be careful consideration given about what is realistic and about where to focus efforts. JK agreed to develop a pragmatic approach to the ask to help give members reassurance.

DECISION: Members were happy to note the report and thanks were extended to SH/RK/TR.

ACTION:

- It was requested that SH add reference numbers to the actions.
- JK to create a definition of 'policies' and 'strategies' and a proposal for which items should come to Board Members

9. Fraud Risk Register

DSm presented the Fraud Risk Register which is to provide members of the Audit and Risk Committee with an update on the Fraud Risk Assessments undertaken by staff and to provide assurance on the level of risk identified across the organisation.

DECISION: Members were happy to note the three presented Fraud Risk Registers and although there are a large number of potential fraud risks identified in the Appendices, Members were reassured and content that all are rated as low.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 3 March 2026.

Signed

David Mackie, Chair