Broads Authority

24 July 2026
Agenda item number 14

National Park Funding Update

Report by Chief Executive

Purpose

This report provides members an update on the 2026/27 additional revenue and capital expenditure programme funded by DEFRA.

Broads Plan context

The capital expenditure supports several Broads Plan themes: B Improving landscapes for biodiversity and nature and E Promoting understanding and enjoyment.

Recommended decision

To note the report.

1. Introduction

1.1. As agreed at the meeting on 15 May 2026 this report provides an update on the progress of this year's programme. Although at the time of writing the National Park grant agreement is still being finalised the Authority has been allocated £1,720,000 in revenue and £1,420,058 in capital. For both funding streams DEFRA have indicated that the funding should be used as follows:

- Enable protected landscapes organisations to make land greener, wilder, and more accessible to all;
- Innovation, invest to save and income generating activities; and
- Increase the contribution that protected landscapes are making to Environment Act and EIP targets, measured through the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework.

2. Progress

2.1. Recruitment to the temporary posts has been successful with two Operation Technicians, Senior Operations Technician (Volunteers) and Communications Officer (PR, Media and Content) all starting in July. Advertising has started for the Capital Projects Manager and the next round of apprentices due to start in September.

2.2. Work has also been progressing around the appointment of consultants for the information and data management project via the Crown Commercial Services framework agreement, G-Cloud 14. Ongoing updates on this will be included within the strategic priorities updated under priority number eight.

2.3. Since the meeting Management Team has adopted the Green Book Business Case model. Areas requiring business cases will be brought back to members in due course.

2.4. Appendix 1 provides an update on the progress of the capital items for 2026/27. Once the grant agreement is finalised with the indicative amounts for years two and three allocations the new project manager and Management Team will start on these priorities.

3. Financial implications

3.1. Despite delays to the final grant agreement being signed the Authority received 50% of the amounts allocated on 9 July 2026 to fund the projects identified. This will enable the Authority to progress projects to meet the 31 March 2027 deadline. To manage the timing uncertainty of when funding would be received investments since April have been managed short term. At this stage it is not expected to affect the overall level of investment return for 2026/27 based on current interest rates.

4. Risk implications

4.1. Risk three in the corporate risk register highlights reduction in income and an increase in costs. At this stage of the financial year good progress is being made with a low risk of underspend. A list of options are being maintained to enable reprioritisation if delivery times become restrictive.

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Broads Plan strategic objectives: Themes B & E

Appendix 1 – Capital Programme 2026/27

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Project	Cost	Progress
Land purchase	£300,000	Searches being undertaken by Broads Authority solicitors.
Electric cycle hire	£25,000	To be progressed once project manager in post.
Visitor Services solar panels	£90,000	To be progressed once project manager in post.
Dockyard improvements	£250,000	To be progressed once project manager in post.
Haddiscoe depot	£200,000	Details being agreed with the Environment agency.
Equipment	£325,000	Quotes being obtained for excavator, telehandler and mini excavator. Additional ROV drone items and hearing loop being investigated.
Vehicles	£175,000	Vehicle evaluation has taken place.
Project Manager	£40,000	Advert out with closing date of 13 July 2026.
Total	**£1,405,000**	