

Navigation Committee

Agenda 09 January 2025

10.00am

Yare House, 62-64 Thorpe Road, Norwich, NR1 1RY

John Packman, Chief Executive – Thursday, 19 December 2024

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations (2014), filming, photographing and making an audio recording of public meetings is permitted. These activities however, must not disrupt the meeting. Further details can be found on the [Filming, photography and recording of public meetings](#) page.

Introduction

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive declarations of interest (see [Appendix 1](#) to the Agenda for guidance on your participation having declared an interest in the relevant agenda item)
3. To note whether any items have been proposed as matters of urgent business
4. **To receive and confirm the minutes of the Navigation Committee meeting held on 7 November 2024** (Pages 4 - 17)
5. **Summary of actions and outstanding issues following discussion at previous meetings** (Pages 18 - 21)

Reports for information

6. **Chief Executive's report and current issues** (Pages 22 - 29)
Report by Chief Executive
7. **Proposed budget 2025/26 and financial strategy 2027/28** (Pages 30 - 56)
Report by Director of Finance
8. **Consultation on proposed General Direction** (Pages 57 - 66)
Report by Head of Ranger Services
9. **Consultation on the appointment to the Navigation Committee** (Pages 67 - 69)
Report by Senior Governance Officer
10. **Construction, Maintenance, and Ecology work programme – progress update** (Pages 70 - 75)

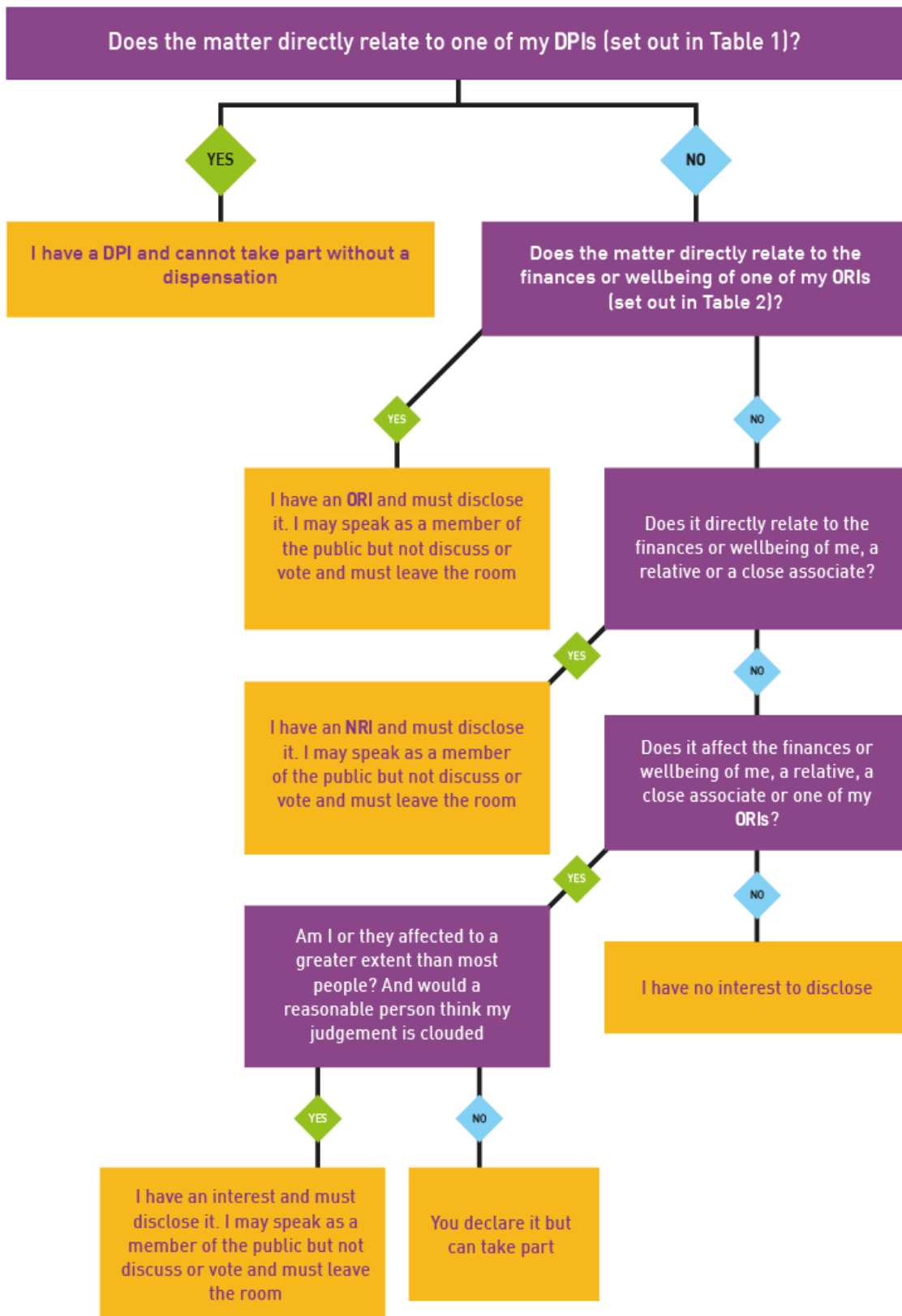
Report by Head of Construction, Maintenance, and Ecology and Ecology & Design Supervisor

Other matters

11. **To note the date of the next meeting – Thursday 3 April 2025 at 10.00am at Yare House, 62-64 Thorpe Road, Norwich, NR1 1RY**

For further information about this meeting please contact the [Governance team](#)

Appendix 1 – Extract from the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct



Navigation Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 07 November 2024

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Present

Alan Goodchild – in the Chair, Harry Blathwayt, Stephen Bolt, Mark Collins, Peter Dixon, Tony Grayling, Leslie Mogford, Bob Neate, Michael Scott, Simon Sparrow, Paul Thomas, and Daniel Thwaites.

In attendance

Emma Krelle – Director of Finance, John Packman - Chief Executive, Rob Rogers - Director of Operations, Marie-Pierre Tighe – Director of Strategic Services (items 1 to 7), Sara Utting – Senior Governance Officer, Lorraine Taylor – Governance Officer.

Others in attendance

Jonathan Goolden –Monitoring Officer

1. Apologies and welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Remus Sawyerr.

Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

The Chair explained that the meeting was being audio-recorded. All recordings remained the copyright of the Broads Authority and anyone wishing to receive a copy should contact the Governance Team. The minutes remained the formal record of the meeting. He added that the law permitted any person to film, record, photograph or use social media in order to report on the proceedings of public meetings of the Authority. This did not extend to live verbal commentary. The Chair needed to be informed if anyone intended to photograph, record or film so that any person under the age of 18 or members of the public not wishing to be filmed or photographed could be accommodated.

2. Declarations of interest

Members expressed their declarations of interest as set out in Appendix 1 of these minutes.

Following Simon Sparrow and Daniel Thwaites both having declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in agenda item 7, the Monitoring Officer advised that he had granted them a dispensation to participate/speak and vote on that item.

3. Matters of urgent business

No items were proposed as a matter of urgent business.

4. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2024 were signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting.

5. Summary of actions and outstanding issues following discussions at previous meetings

Members received a report summarising the progress on issues that had recently been presented to the Committee. The Chief Executive (CE) said that all items were up to date, except for the item in relation to Haven Bridge. He advised that, together with the Broads Authority Chair, he had recently attended a meeting with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association (NSBA) who advised that there was to be a 'Haven Bridge Lifting Arrangements' meeting held by Peel Ports on 14 November 2024. The CE confirmed that the Broads Authority had not received an invitation to that meeting, however, he had asked the Head of Ranger Services (HRS) to make contact with Peel Ports so that the Authority was present at the meeting. The CE added that this was an important issue for the Broads Authority in terms of the effect the opening of the bridge had on the toll payers and would therefore continue to follow up this issue. The Monitoring Officer (MO) added that he had corresponded with the Clerk to the Port Authority in relation to this matter.

In response to questions to why the meeting differed from the normal leisure group users' meetings and why the Broads Authority was not invited to the meeting, the CE said that the HRS would follow this up on behalf of the Authority. The CE added that he had thought the Authority had some success in that, after the MO wrote to the Port Authority, a meeting had been set up, however, this was subsequently cancelled.

A Member asked whether there had been any update in relation to the letter on Funding the Waterways of the Broads National Park sent to the Minister. The CE said that the Authority had not yet received a reply or acknowledgement of the latest letter sent by the Chair of the Authority, however, he and the Chair were keen to fix a meeting with the new Minister to discuss the issue face-to-face.

A Member asked whether there was any indication on the Government's view on the way that waterways should be funded. The CE said that there was a national campaign, led by the Inland Waterways Association, but in light of the budget and reduction in Defra's funding things were likely to be tight, however, the Authority still needed to press the point.

6. Chief Executive's report and current issues

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (CE) who drew members' attention to two items in particular. The first was a summary of the result of the modelling of flood risk on the River Bure by the Environment Agency's consultants. The second was the General Direction and the CE wanted to alert Members that there would be a formal consultation in due course.

A Member commented that the General Direction section of the report referred to the intention to apply the restriction of all vessels over 24 metres rather than just to commercial vessels as agreed by Members in January. The Director of Operations (DO) said that the General Direction would make it clear that any vessels over 24 metres would need to operate under a specific risk assessment which would include the potential for pilotage. The Chair said

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that any such case would probably only require a passage plan by the skipper of any vessel over that size.

In response to a question, the CE stated that there would not be any implications on the infrastructure of the Broads and the DO added that if there were to be a new commercial enterprise that brought larger vessels in, then there would have to be a lot of planning involved as there was currently no infrastructure for this to happen, but it did not currently affect the General Direction.

7. Proposed navigation charges for 2025/26 in the navigation area and adjacent waters

The Chair stated that, following presentation of the report written jointly by the Chief Executive, Director of Finance (DF) and Collector of Tolls, and after members had the opportunity to ask questions, he would invite Members in turn to present their preference for the tolls increase together with their reasons, so that the Navigation Committee could provide clear direction and recommendations to the Broads Authority.

The Chief Executive reminded Members of the paper circulated to them in September setting out the challenges that the Authority faced in terms of income and expenditure, followed by the briefing/workshop in October. The key issues were that there had been a decline in the number of small private boats which had an adverse impact on income. The CE referred Members to section 3 of the report which set out the pressures in terms of costs. The CE said that, in the October briefing, Members were polled on the level of toll increase they thought appropriate, which was set out in a graph in section 4.2 of the report. The CE reminded Members that, in addition to the discussion on tolls, there were two smaller issues to discuss: one regarding hired sailing craft; and the other about day hired petrol/diesel craft.

The DF provided an update on the financial figures and referred Members to table 4 on page 31 of the papers which gave figures up until the end of September. She said that the forecast had since improved to £209,956 surplus, the majority of the increase had been because the pay award for staff had finally been agreed. A figure of £1,925 per FTE had been budgeted for but a settlement was reached at £1,290 per FTE. Staff would receive this in the December pay and it would be backdated to 1 April 2024. With additional costs of national insurance and pension contributions, it equated to an £853 saving per FTE. The DF said that in table 5, the result in the change to the forecast meant that reserves would be £564,850 which was 13.1%.

The DF said that as part of the toll setting process, officers had been looking at savings on the navigation side of the budget, and one area was to move some of the operation technician work to National Park. This had been achieved by moving some land holdings into the Countryside Stewardship scheme which offered high payment rates than other land management schemes. Therefore, by moving a portion of the work to National Park, this equated to £91,940. At present, the operation technician split was 70/30 and it would now be 60/40 – a 10% shift.

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The CE said that the paper produced in September showed that if the Authority were to maintain the level of service as currently provided, it would require a 12% increase in tolls and the paper made it clear that in his, and the Management Team's view, was too much in terms of the impact on the toll payers and what was needed was to look at where savings and cuts in services could be made. Fortunately, there had been some changes in the financial position which the DF had explained.

The CE explained that there was a complex arrangement where some elements of the Broads Authority work was entirely National Park such as planning, some elements entirely Navigation such as the collection of tolls, however, there was a lot of shared costs which were set out in a transparent basis in the accounts. A critical part in terms of navigation was the work of the operations technicians and in the current year, the basis of time spent was 70% navigation and 30% National Park. The CE said that through Natural England, the Broads Authority had been awarded a significant amount of money through the Countryside Stewardship programme to look after the wildlife sites and conservation sites, it meant that for next year it was possible to increase the amount of time the operations technicians spent on conservation work rather than navigation work, to the equivalent of over £90,000/three members of staff. The key thing to remember, however, was that less work would be done to the benefit of navigation as a result of this shift. The Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology (HCME) would have to reprogramme some of the navigation work such as dredging and maintenance and would look at where efficiencies could be made to make the most of the resource available.

A Member asked whether this would be a one-year change, or would it be into the future. The CE confirmed that it would be into the future.

The CE presented some slides providing an update to the information available in September and October. The CE said that there was concern that income from tolls was on the decline, which was mainly due to the reduction of small boats and this seemed to be a national trend and not just restricted to the Broads. There had been a huge growth in smaller craft during the pandemic, however, that growth had tailed off significantly – confirmed by the figures provided by Paddle UK. The CE added that fortunately the Authority's income in October was in line with the forecast.

The CE said that following the Chancellor's budget earlier in the week, he had been in contact with Defra following the announcement of the increase in Employers NI contributions in 2025/26. Since the budget, the Chancellor had confirmed that local government would be expected to pay the additional contributions, and therefore the expectation was that the Broads Authority would not get relief from this. The CE said that he had not, as yet, heard back from Defra on this point.

The CE referred to the graph in 4.2 of the report, which showed Members' preferences on toll increases by percentage. He said that there was a wide variety of views, from 10% increase to 0%, with a mean of ~ 6%. The CE said that his job was to find a series of options that gave Members a degree of unanimity about what the outcome would be. The CE talked through a slide showing a table providing different scenarios of tolls increases through toll income/boat

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levels vs service cuts. The CE said that his own view was that £50,000 of service cuts was quite a lot and that he thought the Authority should be making some provision for the potential loss of boats.

The CE said that in addition to the discussion around the setting of tolls, he asked Members to consider freezing the tolls for hired sailing craft in the two classes, the pure sailing craft and the auxiliary sailing craft. He added that hiring a sailing craft was something special in the Broads and it would be sending a signal to those small commercial hire operators that the Authority had listened and responded to their concerns. In addition, the CE said that there was an existing difference between day hired craft powered by diesel and petrol, and day hired craft powered by electric. The CE said that he did not suggest that by an increase in the toll for diesel/petrol powered boats and a lower increase in tolls for electric would encourage the move away from diesel/petrol to electric overnight, but it would encourage greener boating.

Lastly, the CE said that he would like Members to consider minor charge increases at Ranworth, Reedham, Great Yarmouth and Norwich to align charges with other organisations, as detailed in the report.

A Member commented that the existing infrastructure was a restricting issue for electric boats and that there were not enough charging points, as was the cost of development of electric boats which required a lot of investment from hire boat companies. The CE said that the Member was correct about the infrastructure and that the Authority had looked at various options, in particular with the innovation centre at Hethel, but thought that these were some years from being deployed. This, however, reinforced the case that there should be a bigger differential between the cost of tolls for electric day hire boats and diesel/petrol day hire boats.

A Member referred to the table of options and asked what would cuts look like in respect of the safety on the Broads and other services – both in terms of frontline and backroom costs. The CE referred the Member to the exercise carried out at the tolls briefing meeting, where members were asked to indicate on a chart where they thought the Authority could make service cuts. The two service areas that came top was the practical work, which was in second place, where the Authority had been able to make a reduction of £90,000, and the Rangers in first place. The CE said that following the accidents in Great Yarmouth, the Authority had increased the Ranger service so that Ranger launches were out every day of the week over the summer season, the cost of which was currently £137,000 of extra money. The Head of Ranger Services (HRS) had completed some additional work to look at what reductions of £20,000, £50,000 and £75,000 would mean if the Authority were to look to Ranger Services for those cuts. This was as follows:

- £20,000 – would mean a reduction of 6 patrol days per week;
- £50,000 – would mean a reduction of 12 patrol days per week; and
- £75,000 - would mean a reduction of 18 patrol days per week.

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The CE said that it would be feasible to reduce the level of Rangers, although not to the level before the accident at Great Yarmouth, without any significant adverse impact on safety. One of the things that the HRS would like to do was to review how patrol levels were organised to ensure that there was the right level of coverage. The CE said that the reduction of the £137,000 by £50,000 would still leave a margin above the patrolling the Authority had traditionally carried out.

The CE advised that there was a possibility of bidding for funding under the Landscapes Connections programme which could deliver £10m of funding, however, if the Authority were to remove some other services, this would mean that there would not be the personnel to develop and deliver that bid.

A Member commented that he was nervous about reducing Ranger Services and would like to see cost savings from other services, and asked whether savings in other areas had been looked at thoroughly. The CE said that once the Navigation Committee had submitted their recommendation as to where the tolls should be set, the Management Team would look at all options and how savings would be achieved and then present those to the Authority. The CE said that he did not expect Members at the Navigation Committee to commit to any areas of service cuts, but thought it was helpful to provide Members with an indication of what any cuts would mean.

A Member commented that any decision would need to be grounded in the rate of inflation. The CE said that the current rate of inflation was 1.7%, however, the impact to the Authority was much greater, for example staff costs had increased by 4%, repair costs to Ranger launches had gone up 6% and in general, costs were going up significantly, and would estimate that the total cost of rises was about 6%. The Member replied that he thought that on the basis of that percentage, it would be entirely reasonable to keep the toll rises in line with that and not to go below and suggested that the Authority create a basic rationale to align future rises with the cost of inflation to the Broads Authority.

In response to a question regarding diversification of income and whether the Authority had looked at other income streams, the CE said that in terms of raising additional income, the big opportunity was the National Lottery which the Authority would pursue. In addition, the Authority had used plant and equipment for private work such as weed cutting on Wroxham Broad, but had since received legal advice that was not positive from a navigation point of view, therefore, that route of income stream would be unlikely.

In response to a question about why the Authority was not charging for moorings outside of Ranworth, Reedham, Great Yarmouth and Norwich, the CE said that the Authority only charged for moorings where a service was provided, such as mooring help and facilities. It would be difficult to charge at other moorings where there were no staff because it would be very difficult to collect fees and enforce non-payment, therefore it would not be straightforward.

A member asked how many staff the Broads Authority employed and how many of those were part of the frontline maintenance team and Rangers. The CE responded that the

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Authority had approximately 100¹ FTE staff and the Director of Operations (DO) confirmed that there were 72 FTE staff in the maintenance and Ranger teams which would shrink slightly once the seasonal staff had finished the season.

A Member commented that there had been a reduction in dredging, and that finance and support services directorate was over 20% of the budget, and said that he was worried that there had been two years of above inflationary increases on the tolls and the Authority had not addressed the real issue: that there were too many staff. The CE replied that the Authority could achieve less with less staff but referred the Member to the survey by the NSBA that highlighted the need for more moorings, weed cutting, dredging and tree management. The CE said that the process was trying to find a balance between what users want and what they were prepared to pay.

A Member commented that last year contributions to the reserves were paused and asked whether this was the plan for the coming year. The DF said that the plan, when agreed to not contribute to the reserves in 2024/25, was to restart contributions in 2025/26 and the figures Members had in front of them included the planned contributions for 2025/26. The Member asked if there were no contributions to the reserves in 2025/26 would that mean that the Authority would have to dip into the reserves taking them below the 10% threshold. The DF confirmed that the Authority had not contributed to the earmarked reserves and the 10% related only to the Navigation reserve. The DF said that the Authority had a minimum reserve policy which was 10% which was maintained as working capital. The earmarked reserves were used for instances where a new capital purchase was needed and money could be taken from the reserves rather than from the budget. The CE said that if the reserves did go below the 10% threshold, then it might mean that certain work was not undertaken. The CE said that he had planned to contact Defra to see if there was any likelihood of further capital money which might ease the position.

A Member commented that he supported the CE's comments about a reduction in Rangers and thought that it would not have an impact on safety, bearing in mind that there were fewer boats on the water and the hire boat season was shorter, and asked could the Authority justify the number of Rangers with the reduction in boat numbers. The DO said that the number of boats and the number of incidents were not directly related and although there was a reduction in boat numbers in 2024, the Authority had seen an increase in incidents and an increase in overstaying. For example, in August alone there were a number of incidents on the Broads. In addition, there were a lot of sailing vessels that capsized and there had been increase in notices of contravention for overstaying, which was all dealt with by the Ranger services team.

A Member asked whether the CE could clarify whether the changes already mentioned, such as staff time being allocated to the Countryside Stewardship scheme and the pay award, had been included in the table of options chart. The CE confirmed that this was built into the table, however, the HCME would need to look in detail as to what the practical effect of the

¹ Following the meeting it was confirmed that there were approximately 140 FTE staff.

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allocation would be. The CE said that in September, the Authority was looking at a 12% increase to maintain services but was now looking at 7.3%.

A Member commented that he was pleased to hear that the HRS would be looking at the way in which Rangers were used and said that he thought there were ways that they could be used more effectively and efficiently, and added that the Authority should find smarter ways of doing things without reducing services provided. The Member also commented that visibility was critical and suggested that workboats be branded which would have an impact on people's behaviour.

A Member asked whether the DO had record of the police patrols on the Broads and whether the number had reduced. The DO said that the Broads Beat vessel was still operational but, on many occasions, personnel were using cars rather than the boat. A Member commented that the Broads Beat did visit boat yards by car and speak to single sex boat parties as a prevention measure. A Member commented that the Broads Beat were often seen on the River Yare.

Another Member suggested that the Authority should consider using drones as part of the Ranger services.

A Member commented that he would not encourage charging for all moorings and said that it was well known that the main cause of accidents on the Broads were trips and falls when alighting from their boats. By encouraging use of informal moorings might put hirers, in particular, at risk.

A Member commented that eight years ago Ranger Services was 15% of the navigation budget whereas now it was 22% and asked whether there were more Rangers out on the Broads now. The DO said that the Ranger force was increased so that patrolling would be seven days per week throughout the season.

The Chair then asked each Member in turn what their preferred option of increase would be. The comments and suggested increase were:

- Although expected the trend of boat numbers to reduce, did not want to reduce head count and therefore should stretch budgets rather than cutting jobs by finding efficiencies and improvements – 6%
- Need to drastically look at what the Authority did, why it does it, and cut costs accordingly – 5%
- No service cuts and agreed with stretched budget. Not sustainable for toll payers to continue to pay for services in the long-term – 7.5%
- Understand some cuts and savings needed to be achieved but there must be no compromise on safety. Agree that the Authority should look at income diversification to give a more considered view when setting 2026/27 tolls – 7.5%
- Based on the real inflation that the Broads Authority was experiencing in addition to the cost of, and negating the impacts of, climate change – 6%

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- Inflation costs needed to be taken into consideration and suggested another reserves holiday – 6.6%
- Agreed with looking at efficiencies and should put pressure on staff to look at cost savings, however, was against using safety as a reason – 5%
- Safety costs were paramount, inflation to the Broads Authority was greater than it was to the person buys the 'basket of goods'. Other bodies that had similar costs were looking at 12% increase in their tolls, and one was looking at 12% each year for the next four years – 6.5%
- Did not think costs should be increased over the cost of inflation and anything above that would lead to criticism – 5%
- 5%
- Believed that there were opportunities to improve services and agreed with the suggestion that the Authority should consider using drones, as well as AI – 6%
- Based on what boat companies could charge their customers and increased costs within business - 5%

Michael Scott proposed, seconded by Peter Dixon

It was resolved by 9 votes in favour and 1 against (with 2 abstentions) to recommend to the Broads Authority a 5.9% increase in tolls for 2025/26.

Members discussed the cost of tolls in relation to hired sailing craft and petrol/diesel day hire boats versus electric day hire boats.

A Member commented that there should be some differentiation on hybrid boats as well as electric. The CE confirmed that hybrid day hire boats did currently have a reduction on tolls compared to petrol/diesel hire boats, but the differential could be looked at.

A Member asked how much freezing the tolls on hired sailing craft would equate to. The CE said that he did not think it would make a big difference in income.

A Member said that he did not think that reducing tolls for electric day hire boats would make any difference in encouraging firms to move to electric boats. The CE said that it was important that the Broads Authority supported sustainable transport on the Broads.

A Member asked why tolls were not being frozen for private sailing craft. The CE said that private sailing craft currently received a significantly lower toll than hired sailing craft - £13.66 per square metre compared to £25.08 per square metre. A Member commented that the hired sailing craft was a vital part of introducing people to sailing on the Broads.

Members supported the CE's request for flexibility on rounding up or down figures when setting the tolls for the various groups of craft.

Michael Scott proposed, seconded by Tony Grayling.

It was resolved unanimously

- i. to recommend to the Broads Authority that the tolls be frozen on hired sailing craft and**
- ii. to instruct the Chief Executive to explore the differentials between electric, hybrid and diesel-powered day hire boats ahead of the Broads Authority meeting on 29 November.**

In relation to the increase in charges for the yacht stations as set out in 5.1 of the report, Stephen Bolt proposed, seconded by Michael Scott.

It was resolved unanimously to recommend to the Broads Authority that the charges for Ranworth Staithe and Reedham Quay be increased by £2 to £12 for an overnight stay, and the overnight charge at Norwich and Great Yarmouth Yacht Stations be increased from £16 to £17.50.

The Committee adjourned at 12:05pm and reconvened at 12:15pm with the exception of Leslie Mogford and Michael Scott who had left the meeting.

8. Construction, Maintenance and Ecology work programme – progress update

The Director of Operations (DO) presented the report by the Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology and confirmed that there were no further updates.

A Member asked whether all three of the water plant cutting vessels had been in use during the season. The DO said that the cutting vessels had been moored at various places, north and south, around the navigation area as an efficiency saving, however, there was not always staff available to run all three vessels at the same time. The DO said that there would be an update for Members at a future meeting about the amount of water plant cutting carried out during 2024. The Member asked whether there were any staffing shortages across any other maintenance tasks. The DO said that the shortage was only in relation to operating all three water plant cutters at the same time and added that through the capital grant the Authority was able to purchase modern equipment, but did not have the budget to employ extra staff.

A Member asked whether the Broads was being affected by Floating Pennywort. The DO said that through reporting from the Rangers and the construction and maintenance team, the ecologists then attended any site and would create a plan to deal with any presence of the plant. He confirmed that some of the Authority's sites had been quite badly affected, however, there were robust plans in place to deal with any invasive species, including Floating Pennywort.

9. Broads Authority 2009 Provision – Removal of wrecks

Members received the report of the Director of Operations (DO). The Broads Authority had seen a proliferation of non-compliant vessels, but wanted to be very clear that the Authority

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was not adding a new rule about vessel condition and it was not looking to remove ‘scruffy’ vessels, just non-compliant vessels. The DO said that another term often used was ‘abandoned vessels’, and confirmed that to be an abandoned vessel under the terms of the Broads Act, it had to have no registered keeper. While any vessel had a registered keeper, the Authority would always work with the owner to try and resolve any problem. This, however, did leave the Authority with a number of vessels on the Broads network that were not registered and were abandoned which needed to be dealt with. The DO said that in 2020 the Broads Authority dealt with four abandoned vessels; in 2023 the Authority dealt with 19 abandoned vessels; and in 2024 the Authority were currently up to 28 abandoned vessels, 17 of which were at the Dockyard awaiting disposal. The DO added that a special compound had to be created at the Dockyard to break up the vessels and to be able to handle any waste from the bilge carefully and responsibly. The DO said that the disposal of such vessels cost the Authority ~ £4,000 each.

The proposal was for a strengthening in the criteria applied. In the 2009 Act, additional words were added to include the term ‘unserviceable’ but did not define what unserviceable was. In 2013 the Boat Safety Management Group (BSMG), chaired by the Chair of the Navigation Committee, produced a definition of what unserviceable meant. With the help of the BSMG at the October 2024 meeting, the Authority had now added to the list of criteria which defined what an unserviceable vessel was, and this was set out in italics in section 5.4 of the report.

The Monitoring Officer (MO) commented that during this exercise, the Authority looked at Marine Law and unserviceable was defined as ‘unfit for sea service’ or ‘neglected as unfit for sea service’. The MO said that unfit did not mean unseaworthy and the Broads Authority was entitled to define what was unfit, and therefore a sailing vessel with no mast would be deemed to be unfit – it would be capable of going on water but it would be unfit to do so.

The Chair clarified that at the BSMG meeting, there had been some debate around sailing boats concerning masts, standing rigging, and shrouds being in a position where the boat was probably rotten beneath, which would pose a significant risk during strong winds causing the mast to fall. This was why the criteria in section 5.4 had been added.

Stephen Bolt proposed, seconded by Tony Grayling.

It was resolved unanimously to recommend to the Broads Authority that the listed criteria for ‘Unserviceable Vessels’ in relation to the removal of wrecks be redefined and adopted.

10. Principal and effectiveness of body worn cameras

Members received the report of the Director of Operations (DO) reviewing the outcomes of the trial of body worn cameras following feedback from the Health and Safety Committee who had observed an increased trend in reports of abusive and violent behaviour towards frontline staff. The Authority ran a trial and public consultation at the same time. However, the overriding feeling from those who used the body-worn cameras in the trial was that rather than calming the situation, the cameras were seen to inflame it, which was the opposite of what the Authority was trying to achieve. The DO said that it was quite an

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expensive system. Although the Authority should not tolerate bad behaviour, it was expected that when enforcing bylaws, there would be some bad behaviour. Body-worn cameras did not seem to mitigate that, and the DO said that the Authority already had robust procedures in place to protect staff as set out in section 5 of the report.

A Member asked whether there was CCTV in areas where incidents had occurred. The Chief Executive said that often many of the incidents happened in remote locations. The DO said that the Authority did have CCTV at Ranworth and at the Yacht Stations, however, they did not capture audio and any footage was not evidential.

A Member commented that it was good that the Authority trialled the cameras and gathered information and suggested that it might be worth revisiting in the future.

The Members of the Navigation Committee supported the recommendation not to continue with body worn cameras, noting the decision would be made at the Broads Authority meeting on 29 November 2024.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Navigation Committee would be held on 9 January 2025 at Yare House, 62-64 Thorpe Road, Norwich, NR1 1RY commencing at 10am.

The meeting ended at 12:30pm

Signed

Chairman

Appendix 1 – Declaration of interests: Navigation Committee, 07 November 2024

Member	Agenda/minute	Nature of interest
Harry Blathwayt, Stephen Bolt, Mark Collins, Peter Dixon, Alan Goodchild, Leslie Munford, Bob Neate, Simon Sparrow, Paul Thomas and Daniel Thwaites	7	Private toll payer. The Member Code of Conduct allowed for these Members to participate and vote.
Mark Collins	7	Commodore of the Northern Rivers. The Member Code of Conduct allowed for this Member to participate and vote.
Simon Sparrow and Daniel Thwaites	7	Commercial hire boat operators. Disclosable pecuniary interest. Granted a dispensation by MO to participate and vote.

Navigation Committee

09 January 2025

Agenda item number 5

Summary of actions and outstanding issues following discussions at previous meetings

Title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Summary of actions	Progress so far	Target date
Network Rail Swing Bridge £10 million refurbishment programme	19/10/2017	John Packman	Network Rail Whole Life Strategy planning for swing bridges.	<p>Historical updates (date range October 2019 to April 2024) have been removed. All historical updates can be found in previous versions of the Summary of Actions and Outstanding Issues available via the committee papers on the Broads Authority website.</p> <p>April 2024: Network Rail confirmed that the work to the Somerleyton and Reedham swing bridges was complete. Work included extensive brickwork repairs to reinforce the control boxes, a full upgrade to the electrical system, a full upgrade and replacement of the manual winch system to enable the bridge to be swung open manually by the bridge operator if there was a problem with the machinery, and replacement of the navigation lights. What was not clear was whether, as part of the scheme, the lifting equipment and jacks within the control box had been completed and the Authority was waiting to receive confirmation from Network Rail.</p> <p>Network Rail had been unable to go ahead with the Oulton swing bridge repairs as they were more substantial than first thought.</p> <p>May 2024: Network Rail have confirmed that they are continuing to look at ways in which, in the long term, they might be able to address the issue of the two Swing Bridge thermally expanding and not being operable in very hot weather. However, these are likely to entail structural works and will require additional funding, so they do not currently have a timeline for this.</p> <p>For the time being, they have instead undertaken a smaller, though still significant, set of works. Together with a consistent maintenance regime, these will prevent the bridges from deteriorating and make failures less likely.</p> <p>June 2024: As agreed in Navigation Committee meeting on 06/06/2024, historic updates have been removed up until April 2024 updates.</p> <p>December 2024: No updates to report.</p>	

Title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Summary of actions	Progress so far	Target date
Carrow Road Bridge Repairs	15/04/2021	John Packman	Briefing provided at Navigation Committee meeting in April 2021, outlining Norfolk County Council's proposals for the repair of Carrow Road bridge. Further information is awaited from the County Council.	<p>Historical updates (date range October 2019 to April 2024) have been removed. All historical updates can be found in previous versions of the Summary of Actions and Outstanding Issues available via the committee papers on the Broads Authority website.</p> <p>April 2024: It is understood that some repairs have been carried out and the bridge was fit for purpose at present.</p> <p>June 2024: No further update. As agreed in Navigation Committee meeting on 06/06/2024, historic updates have been removed up until April 2024 updates.</p> <p>August 2024: Norfolk County Council reported that repairs were due to take place to the Bridge on 22 August 2024.</p> <p>September 2024: The council carried out urgent repairs to the surface of the road.</p> <p>December 2024: No update to report.</p>	10/06/2021
New on-line tolls software	07/09/2023	Bill Housden	Strategic Priority for 2023 and 2024. Scoping work complete.	<p>September 2023: Currently engaged on pre-market engagement on upgrade of internal system.</p> <p>Progress report on viability of updating internal system to the latest software due in January 2024.</p> <p>October 2023: Progress report on viability of updating internal system to the latest software due in January 2024.</p> <p>December 2023: Schedule of works received to upgrade internal system to latest software version. Meeting has taken place to discuss possible future cloud hosting and costs of hosting have been requested. Printing and database adhoc reporting for cloud based hosting under investigation.</p> <p>March 2024: Costings for upgrading the internal tolls system for cloud hosting have been received along with costs for reworking the existing online payment application. This work, which replicates current functionality in a supported & secure environment is scheduled for the period April to June 2024.</p> <p>April 2024: A contract had been let for the upgrade of the internal system software for cloud hosting this underpins the online tolls system, and this part of the project is planned to be completed by end of June 2024.</p> <p>May 2024: Work on upgrading the internal system to the latest software version is progressing well.</p> <p>August 2024: Upgraded internal system is undergoing testing, and work has started on the replacement public facing annual toll payment site.</p> <p>October 2024: The online payment site is progressing and testing is ongoing.</p>	24/01/2024

Title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Summary of actions	Progress so far	Target date
				<p>December 2024: We are at a critical point of this project and very close to completion of the first phase. Every effort is being made to enable a go live date in early January, however there remains a risk that the go live date might have to be delayed.</p>	
Funding the waterways of the Broads National Park	11/01/2024	John Packman	To track the progress on making the case for central Government funding to support the maintenance of the Broads waterways.	<p>January 2024: The paper was presented to the committee on 11 Jan. 2024 and received unanimous support to endorse the paper for adoption by the Broads Authority. On 26 Jan. 2024, the Broads Authority unanimously endorsed the paper and supported the Chair in writing to the Secretary of State for the Environment.</p> <p>March 2024: Funding paper sent to the Minister and a response received on 18 March.</p> <p>April 2024: As reported at the Navigation Committee on 11 April, the Minister confirmed that the Government remained committed to supporting the vital role Protected Landscapes play in protecting our precious wildlife, and the importance they have for tourism, the regional economy, and public access. The Minister was optimistic that a more sustainable funding model for our Protected Landscapes could be developed.</p> <p>June 2024: As discussed at the Navigation Committee meeting held on 6 June 2024, the Chair would write to the Minister again following the General Election.</p> <p>August 2024: Broads Authority Chair has written to the new Minister.</p> <p>November 2024: No reply received from the Minister, however, the Chair and Chief Executive of the Authority are trying to set up a meeting with the Minister in the near future to discuss the issue face-to-face.</p>	
Haven Bridge	06/06/2024	John Packman	The Great Yarmouth Ports Leisure Users meeting on 2 April had a long discussion regarding the problems with the Haven Bridge. There is a dispute between Peel Ports and Norfolk County Council regarding opening the bridge which is having an adverse impact on commercial and private boat owners based in the Broads.	<p>June 2024: The Chief Executive has been in touch with the CEO at Norfolk County Council to help facilitate a way forward between the two parties - Norfolk County Council and Peel Ports.</p> <p>July 2024: Temporary arrangements agreed by Peel Ports and Norfolk County Council have allowed the bridge to open. The Monitoring Officer has written to the Great Yarmouth Port Authority reminding it of its statutory duties.</p> <p>August 2024: Response received from Great Yarmouth Port Authority and meeting to be arranged to discuss Haven Bridge.</p> <p>September 2024: Great Yarmouth Port Authority wrote to the Chief Executive to defer the meeting until they have had their AGM on 18 September.</p>	

Title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Summary of actions	Progress so far	Target date
				14 November 2024: Meeting with users on lifting arrangements. Peel Ports proposed that charges be introduced for lifting the bridge and the Port Users Group would formulate a response to that proposal.	
EA Modelling of the Lower Bure	06/06/2024	Dan Hoare	Environment Agency contractors modelling the impact of the removal of sediment from the Lower Bure.	<p>August 2024: Awaiting final report.</p> <p>September 2024: The Environment Agency anticipated that the report would be published in October 2024.</p> <p>October 2024: Publication of report.</p> <p>Broadland Bure Loop Dredging Scenario Technical Note Summary</p> <p>Broadland Bure Loop Dredging Scenario Technical Note Full Report</p> <p>Appendix B Results</p> <p>November 2024: Item closed.</p>	

Date of report: 10 December 2024

Navigation Committee

09 January 2025

Agenda item number 6

Chief Executive's report and current issues

Report by Chief Executive

Purpose

To provide a briefing on significant matters relating to the maintenance and management of the waterways.

Broads Plan context

All strategic actions under Theme C: Maintaining and enhancing the navigation.

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1. Broads Authority meeting

- 1.1. At its meeting on the 29 November the Authority approved the navigation and mooring charges for 2025/26 in line with the recommendation from this Committee. A copy of the report can be found using this link: [Proposed navigation charges for 2025/2026 in the navigation area and adjacent waters](#)

2. Haven Bridge

- 2.1. Peel Ports is consulting with the Port Users Group on a proposal to introduce charges for raising the Haven Bridge. The Group has written to the Great Yarmouth Port Authority highlighting Clause 59 of the Great Yarmouth Port and Haven Act 1866 which states that “no charge shall be made in respect of opening the Bridge”. They have also pointed out that the introduction earlier this year of a transit fee on pleasure craft contravenes Clause 113 of the same Act. The Authority is seeking a meeting with the Port Authority and Peel Ports to establish the position.

3. Navigation patrolling and performance targets

- 3.1. The average navigation/countryside splits for the last period it set out in Appendix 2. With the winter countryside work now underway the variance in favour of navigation is being corrected. The Ranger’s exercise of powers and patrolling duties for the last period is set out in Appendix 1 and reflects the quieter late autumn and early winter season.

4. Sunken, abandoned and unserviceable vessel update

- 4.1. The sunken, abandoned and unserviceable vessel update is contained in Appendix 3. We continue to deal with a number of sunken and abandoned vessels around the system. Several of the sunken vessels are awaiting the dredging kit to be available to assist in removing them. We have issued one unserviceable vessel notice which is currently ongoing.

5. Planning enforcement update

- 5.1. There are no further enforcement matters with navigation implications to report.

Author: John Packman

Date of report: 11 December 2024

Appendix 1 – Rangers exercise of powers analysis

Appendix 2 – Ranger duties total time allocated and actual days

Appendix 3 – Sunken, abandoned and unserviceable vessels current position as at 06 December 2024

Appendix 4 – Prosecutions dealt with in court for non-payment of tolls since 07/11/2024

Appendix 1 – Rangers exercise of powers analysis

Table 1

Verbal warnings	Wroxham launch Wroxham and upper Bure	Irstead launch Ant	Ludham launch Hickling, Potter Heigham, upper Thurne	Ludham launch 2 lower Thurne and lower Bure	Norwich launch Norwich and upper Yare	Hardley Launch Reedham, Chet and middle Yare	Burgh St Peter launch Oulton Broad and upper/middle Waveney	Breydon launch Breydon water, lower Waveney and Yare
Care and caution	76	53	14	60	24	2	34	
Speed	1727	699	408	334	150	80	171	44
Other	231	88	15	19	153	15	33	36

Table 2

Written warnings	Wroxham launch	Irstead launch	Ludham launch	Ludham launch 2	Norwich launch	Hardley Launch	Burgh St Peter launch	Breydon launch
Care and caution	1	3			1			3
Speed	35	1		3	4	2	3	1
Other	10	22	5	3	2	19	8	5
Special directions	46	10	1		25	60	191	214

Table 3

Launch patrols	Wroxham launch	Irstead launch	Ludham launch	Ludham launch 2	Norwich launch	Hardley Launch	Burgh St Peter launch	Breydon launch
Launch staffed by ranger	214	211	198	197	205	191	204	214
Volunteer patrols			2				3	
IRIS reports	16	7	7	10	7	14	8	26

Table 4

Broads Control total calls

Contact method	Number of calls
Telephone	16,306
VHF	2,330
Total	18,636

Appendix 2 – Ranger duties: total time allocated and actual days

Table 1

Broads Authority corporate duties

Work area	Annual allocation (days)	Actual days to date
Training	122	93.65
Broads Control	362	277.30
Team meetings, work planning	318	302.14
Partnership working	76	37.91
Assisting other sections	76	37.91
Billets and boatsheds	25	16.55
Launch – general		8.48
Trailers - general		1.69
Vehicle maintenance		5.41
Other equipment repair		9.73
Total	979	768.53

Table 2

Navigation duties

Work area	Annual allocation (days)	Actual days to date
Patrolling	2136	1740.59
Escorts	44	27.50
Prosecution files	0	20.07
Bankside tree management	108	48.34
Obstruction removal	26	13.45
Channel markers and buoys	30	17.06
Signs and boards maintenance	34	32.97
Adjacent waters	96	72.77
Reactive mooring maintenance	100.5	42.30
Total		

Table 3

Conservation, recreation, countryside maintenance

Work area	Annual allocation (days)	Actual days to date
Fen management	146	45.95
Lake, riverbank restoration	100	0.00
Invasive species control	32.5	1.28
Other conservation work	145	64.86
Pollution response		2.09
Visitor site maintenance	194	146.72
Public Engagement	97	59.26
Public footpath work	38	11.25
Education work	69	2.84
Total	821.5	334.26

Team total up to 09 December 2024

Percentage Navigation: 86%

Percentage National Park: 14%

Appendix 3 – Sunken, abandoned and unserviceable vessels current position as at 06 December 2024

Description	Location found	Action	Notice affixed	Result
Motor Cruiser	Old River Yare, Thorpe	Vessel sunk at owner's moorings	No	Not affecting the navigation
Motor Cruiser	Sutton/Stalham cut	Hull only, marked with yellow posts	No	Not affecting the navigation
Motor Cruiser	River Wensum, Trowse	Vessel sunk behind rail bridge wooden fenders	Yes	Not affecting the navigation
Motor Cruiser	River Wensum, Trowse	Sunk at mooring, marked with yellow buoys	No	Waiting for dredging kit to be in area
Motor cruiser	River Yare, Thorpe Marshes	Believed abandoned	Yes	Notice expired; vessel removed
Yacht	River Waveney, Gillingham	Vessel sunk	Yes	Awaiting notice expiry
Aux Yacht	River Wensum, Trowse.	Vessel unserviceable	Yes	Awaiting notice expiry

Appendix 4 – Prosecutions dealt with in court for non-payment of tolls since 07 November 2024

Type of vessel	Fined	Costs awarded	Victim surcharge	Compensation
Motor	£220	£300	£88.00	£166.40
Motor	£220	£400	£88.00	£663.78
43 cases for the current toll year have been submitted and await a hearing date.				

Navigation Committee

09 January 2025

Agenda item number 7

Proposed budget 2025/26 and financial strategy to 2027/28

Report by Director of Finance

Purpose

To:

- i. inform the Committee of the actual Navigation income and expenditure for the seven-month period to 31 October 2024 and provide a forecast of the projected expenditure at the end of the financial year (31 March 2025).
- ii. consult on the preparation of the Draft Budget for 2025/26 and Financial Strategy to 2027/28 prior to its consideration by the Broads Authority on 24 January 2025.

Broads Plan context

All strategic actions under Theme C: Maintaining and enhancing the navigation.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report covers two items: Navigation Income and Expenditure and the draft budget.
- 1.2. Section 2 to 5 provide a summary of income and expenditure for the Navigation element of the budget up until 31 October, any amendments to the Latest Available Budget (LAB), Forecast Outturn (predicted year end position) and the movements on the earmarked reserves.
- 1.3. Section 6 onwards contains the updated draft budget for 2025/26 and the draft financial strategy to 2027/28. The draft budget for 2025/26 has been shaped by the 5.9% increase in navigation charges considered by this committee on 7 November 2024 which was formally adopted by the Authority on 29 November 2024.

2. Overview of actual income and expenditure

Table 1

Actual Navigation income and expenditure by Directorate to 31 October 2024

Directorate	Profiled Latest Available Budget £	Actual income and expenditure £	Actual variance £
Income	(4,500,528)	(4,336,026)	- 164,502
Operations	2,154,829	1,500,418	+ 654,411
Strategic Services	330,828	312,819	+ 18,009
Finance & Support Services	746,035	658,322	+ 87,713
Projects, Corporate Items and Contributions from Earmarked Reserves	(466,100)	(81,164)	- 384,936
Net (Surplus) / Deficit	(1,734,936)	(1,945,631)	+ 210,695

2.1. Core Navigation income is below the profiled budget at the end of month seven. The overall position as at 31 October 2024 is a favourable variance of £210,695 or a 12.14% difference from the profiled LAB. This is principally due to:

- An overall adverse variance of £164,502 within toll income:
 - Hire Craft Tolls is £54,116 below the profiled budget.
 - Private Craft Tolls is £144,663 below the profiled budget.
 - Short Visit Tolls and Other Toll income is £17,707 above the profiled budget.
 - Investment income is £16,570 above the profiled budget.
- An underspend within Operations relating to:
 - Construction, Maintenance and Ecology salaries is £55,846 under the profiled budget due to the budgeted pay award (£1,925 per Full Time Equivalent (FTE)) being less (£1,290 per FTE) than what was agreed by the unions.
 - Equipment, Vehicle and Vessels is £185,254 under the profiled budget due to capital items that were originally due to be funded from the earmarked reserves being funded from DEFRA capital grant. There has also been income that has been transferred to the earmarked reserves as a result of selling old equipment, this had not been budgeted for.
 - Practical Maintenance is £120,819 under the profiled budget partly due to timing issues and the delays of work at Potter Heigham and Martham. The forecast has been updated for this.
 - Ranger Services is £257,674 under the profiled budget on salaries due to the pay award. The vehicle replacements have been delayed but are scheduled for delivery in November. The Ranger launch replacement has been delayed until 2025/26. There have also been timing differences on the launch repairs.
 - Safety is £17,989 under the profiled budget due to delays in the Head of Safety Management post being filled. The new post holder started in September and the forecast has been adjusted to reflect the vacancy.
- An underspend within Strategic Services relating to:
 - Human Resources is £10,628 under the profiled budget due to timing differences on staff training.
- An underspend within Finance & Support Services relating to:
 - Asset Management is £15,500 under the profiled budget due to a vacancy between June and August for the Asset Officer. The forecast has been updated to reflect this. There is also a timing difference on expenditure.

- Finance and Insurance is £28,014 under the profiled budget due to a timing difference on external audit costs and salaries as a result of the pay award and vacancies at the start of the financial year.
 - Collection of Tolls is £10,217 under the profiled budget due to the pay award.
 - ICT is £35,417 under the profiled budget due to timing differences on the tolls replacement system.
 - An adverse variance within reserves relating to:
 - Plant, Vessels and Equipment is under the profiled budget due to the equipment now being funded via the DEFRA capital grant.
 - Computer Software is under the profiled budget due to minimal spend so far on the upgrade to the tolls system.
- 2.2. The charts at Appendix 1 provide a visual overview of actual income and expenditure compared with both the original budget and the LAB.

3. Latest Available Budget

- 3.1. The Authority’s income and expenditure is monitored against the Latest Available Budget (LAB) for 2024/25. The LAB is based on the original budget for the year, with adjustments for known and approved budget changes such as carry-forwards and budget virements. Full details of movements from the original budget are in Appendix 2.

Table 2
Adjustments to Navigation LAB

Item	Authorisation reference	Amount £
Original budget 2024/25 - surplus	Broads Authority 26/01/24 Agenda item number 10	(114,294)
Carry forward requests	Broads Authority 10/05/24 Agenda item number 10	27,080
LAB as at 31 October 2024	n/a	(87,214)

- 3.2. The LAB therefore provides for a navigation surplus of £87,214 in 2024/25 as at 31 October 2024.

4. Overview of forecast outturn 2024/25

- 4.1. Budget holders have been asked to comment on the expected income and expenditure at the end of the financial year in respect of all budget lines for which they are responsible.

- 4.2. As at the end of October 2024, the forecast indicates that:
- The total forecast income is £4,524,339.
 - Total expenditure is forecast to be £4,314,383.
 - The resulting surplus for the year is forecast to be £209,956.
- 4.3. The forecast outturn reflects the following changes from the LAB as shown in Table 3. The forecast surplus represents a favourable variance of £122,742 against the LAB.

Table 3

Adjustments to Forecast Outturn

Item	Amount £
Forecast outturn surplus as per LAB	(87,214)
Adjustments reported 07/11/24	(2,056)
Salary savings from lower than budgeted pay award	(125,686)
Increased costs for Oil Spil exercise	5,000
Forecast outturn surplus as at 31 October 2024	(209,956)

5. Navigation Earmarked Reserves

Table 4

Navigation Earmarked Reserves

Reserve name	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	In-year movements £	Current reserve balance £
Property	(618,682)	(1,296)	(619,978)
Plant, Vessels and Equipment	(492,192)	29,527	(462,665)
Premises	(217,435)	2,920	(214,515)
Computer Software	(127,533)	12,152	(115,381)
Total	(1,455,842)	43,303	(1,412,539)

- 5.1. The Property reserve contains the income from land rental at Oulton Broad. The Plant, Vessels and Equipment reserves contains the income from the sale of the old vehicles, JCBs and trailers. It has also funded two vehicles. The Premises Reserve has funded the final items for Reedham Quay hut replacement and feasibility reports for the Dockyard solar project. The Computer Software reserve has funded the work on the new tolls and finance systems.

6. 2025/26 budget proposals

- 6.1. The draft budget is set out in Appendix 3 and the financial strategy to 2027/28 to provide context.
- 6.2. As with the 2024/25 budget the draft for 2025/26 has been prepared by Management Team rather than letting budget holders request their own allocations. The main objective of this approach is to minimise underspends at the end of the financial year.
- 6.3. The draft budget takes into account the following factors:
- A provisional pay increase of 4%, this is approximately what the 2024/25 flat cash of £1,290 per FTE equated to.
 - Hire boat numbers will remain at 2024/25 levels and private numbers will reduce income by a further £20,000 when compared to 2024/25.
 - National Park Grant will remain at 2019/20 allocation. This is subject to confirmation from DEFRA.
 - Expenditure has been reduced in line with the 5.9% toll agreed.
 - The contributions to the earmarked reserves have been reinstated following the payment holiday in 2024/25.
 - £50,000 will be transferred from Navigation reserves annually to repay the £250,000 payment from National Park reserves.
 - Maintaining the Navigation reserve at 10% of net expenditure.
- 6.4. Total core Navigation income for 2025/26 is budgeted to be £4,697,800, including £1,489,000 for hire craft tolls and £3,057,000 for private craft tolls. This income takes into account of the latest available information on boat numbers. Net navigation expenditure is budgeted at £4,706,271. This will result in a budget deficit of £8,471 which will be balanced through the Navigation reserve. After taking into account the transfer of £33,000 interest to earmarked reserves and the fourth instalment of the £50,000, reserves at the end of March 2026 are forecast to be £474,007, 10.1% of net expenditure for the year.
- 6.5. Table 5 sets out an overview of the proposed 2025/26 budget, which is provided in more details in Appendix 3.

Table 5

Draft 2025/26 Budget

Source	National Park £	Navigation £	Consolidated £
National Park Grant	(3,414,078)	0	(3,414,078)
Navigation Tolls	0	(4,642,800)	(4,642,800)
Investment Income	(55,000)	(55,000)	(110,000)

Source	National Park £	Navigation £	Consolidated £
Total Income	(3,469,078)	(4,697,800)	(8,166,878)
Operations	1,427,286	3,520,589	4,947,875
Strategic Services	1,476,954	505,994	1,982,948
Finance & Support Services	989,982	1,161,699	2,151,681
Contributions from earmarked reserves and corporate items	(259,632)	(482,011)	(741,643)
Total Expenditure	3,634,590	4,706,271	8,340,861
Net (Surplus) / Deficit	165,512	8,471	173,983
Opening Reserves (Forecast)	(977,017)	(565,478)	(1,542,495)
(Surplus) / Deficit for the year	165,512	8,471	173,983
Interest transfer	33,000	33,000	66,000
Contribution to National Park (General) Reserve	(50,000)	50,000	0
Closing Reserves (Forecast)	(828,505)	(474,007)	(1,302,512)

7. Operations

- 7.1. Salary budgets have seen an increase to reflect the provisional 4% pay increase, subject to negotiations by the NJC. Construction and Maintenance salaries has seen a decrease to the Navigation side with the switch on the Senior and Operations Technicians time from 30/70 to 40/60 (National Park/Navigation) following the additional income from the Countryside Stewardship scheme. Practical Maintenance has seen an increase to allow for dredging on the river Yare between Carrow Bridge and Postwick, removal of shoals on the Bure between Stokesby and Great Yarmouth, and the Upper Thurne at Catfield Dyke and Somerton Dyke. Also, within Practical Maintenance there is the increase in mooring maintenance following the delayed works at Martham in 2024/25 and a decrease to other Navigation works following the completion of the marker post replacements on Breydon Water. Ranger services has seen a decrease to salaries whilst maximising patrolling during the busy season.
- 7.2. As with previous years, however, it is important to recognise that the Operations budget has no capacity to take on additional projects or ad-hoc work in 2025/26.

8. Strategic Services

- 8.1. As with the Operations budget, staff costs have increased for the same reasons. Visitor Centres and Yacht Stations income assumes charging at Reedham will start from the beginning of the season. Again, there is little capacity to take on additional projects or ad-hoc work.

9. Finance and Support Services

9.1. As per Operations and Strategic Services staff costs have increased for the same reasons.

10. Central and shared costs and cost apportionment

10.1. Cost apportionments remain broadly the same as those for 2024/25 and are consistent with the principles agreed by the Resources Allocation Working Group. Full details of apportionments by budget line for 2025/26 are set out in Appendix 3.

10.2. The overall split of estimated income and proposed net expenditure in 2025/26 remains broadly the same, 44% National Park and 56% Navigation.

10.3. Table 6 provides further details of central and shared costs. These should not be seen as synonymous with overheads but have been identified in line with those areas specifically examined by the Resource Allocation Working Group. As such, they reflect costs across the Authority included within the budgets of Operations, Strategic Services and Finance and Support Services directorates.

Table 6

Central and shared costs

Year	Central and Shared Costs £000's	Apprenticeship levy costs £000's	Total £000's	Percentage split of central and shared costs	Total Core Income £000's	Central and shared costs as percentage of core income
2024/25 National Park	2,290	5	2,295	61%	(4,034)	57%
2024/25 Navigation	1,433	4	1,437	39%	(4,524)	32%
2024/25 Consolidated	3,723	9	3,732	100%	(8,558)	44%
2025/26 National Park	1,585	4	1,589	50%	(3,469)	46%
2025/26 Navigation	1,608	4	1,612	50%	(4,697)	34%
2025/26 Consolidated	3,193	8	3,201	100%	8,166	39%

Year	Central and Shared Costs £000's	Apprenticeship levy costs £000's	Total £000's	Percentage split of central and shared costs	Total Core Income £000's	Central and shared costs as percentage of core income
2026/27 National Park	1,539	5	1,544	50%	(3,464)	45%
2026/27 Navigation	1,520	4	1,524	50%	(4,855)	31%
2026/27 Consolidated	3,059	9	3,068	100%	(8,319)	37%
2027/28 National Park	1,548	4	1,552	50%	(3,459)	45%
2027/28 Navigation	1,518	4	1,522	50%	(4,898)	31%
2027/28 Consolidated	3,066	8	3,074	100%	(8,357)	37%

10.4. Central and shared costs have been identified in line with the work of the Resource Allocation Working Group to include operational property, finance and insurance; communications; collection of tolls; ICT; legal; head office; office expenses and pool vehicles; directorate management and administration costs; human resources and staff training; governance and member's allowances; and the Chief Executive. All of these play a vital role in supporting the delivery of front-line services.

11. Assumptions used for the budget and financial strategy

11.1. The following key assumptions have been applied in developing the draft budget and financial strategy:

- Navigation tolls will be collected in line with the budget and boat numbers will remain as forecast.
- Salary negotiations for 2025/26 will be in line with the 4% budgeted and increases from 2026/27 onwards are based on a provisional increase of 2%, subject to negotiations with the NJC.
- Staffing levels will remain at 100% of budget. Staff turnover may result in timing differences between vacancy and appointment. Where these savings arise, the

forecast will be adjusted accordingly. This represents an approximate reduction of three full time equivalents (FTE) on permanent contracts in 2025/26 when compared to the budget this time last year of 126 FTE.

- The contributions to the earmarked reserves have been reinstated following the payment holiday in 2024/25.
- Ranger Services patrolling will be reprioritised in 2025/26 to reflect the reduced budget.
- The forecast outturn position for 2024/25 will be delivered in line with budget holders' projections; and
- 2025/26 will see the fourth instalment of £50,000 being transferred back to the National Park reserve.

11.2. A detailed sensitivity analysis for some of these key assumptions is set out below in table 7.

Table 7

Budget sensitivity analysis

Assumption	Change in assumption	Approximate financial impact of change £ (+/-)
National Park Budget for 2024/25 will be delivered in line with forecast outturn	1% under/overspend against National Park budget	39,000
Navigation Budget for 2024/25 will be delivered in line with forecast outturn	1% under/overspend against Navigation budget	43,000
Overall salary increase of 4% in 2025/26	1% change in salary inflation	60,000
Boat numbers and distribution remain as predicted in 2025/26	1% change in navigation toll income	45,000
National Park Grant in line with current allocations and no further reductions in 2025/26	1% change in National Park Grant income	34,000
Inflation	1% increase on non-salary budget	22,000

12. Earmarked reserves

- 12.1. The Authority's earmarked reserve strategy for the period 2025/26 to 2027/28 is set out in Appendix 4. The strategy details the actual balance of earmarked reserves at the end of October 2024, planned expenditure until the end of the financial year, and provides an analysis of movements in reserves, split between national park and navigation in all years to 2027/28.
- 12.2. Navigation earmarked reserves stand at £1,412,539 at the end of October 2024 and are forecast to decrease (to £1,332,280) by the end of the financial year due to expenditure on the tolls system and the piling works.
- 12.3. Appendix 4 reflects the contributions to reserves allowed for in the budget and financial strategy set out in Appendix 3. Planned expenditure from reserves is itemised within Appendix 4 and includes in 2025/26:
- Replacement of two vehicles.
 - Replacement of a hydraulic grab, workboat and mower.
 - Replacement Ranger launch.
 - Phase two of the online tolls system.
 - Dockyard piling and solar project; and
 - Mutford Lock technical review.
- 12.4. Planned expenditure from earmarked reserves in 2026/27 and 2027/28 includes the replacement of seven further vehicles, two excavators and bucket, tracked carrier, iron horse, two hydraulic power packs, winches and additional functionality for the finance system.
- 12.5. Taking account of all these items, the forecast balance of navigation earmarked reserves at the end of 2027/28 is £1,254,623, although it should be noted that expenditure plans for 2026/27 and beyond are likely to be refined again when the financial strategy for 2026/27 is developed later next year.

13. Risk implications

- 13.1. Loss of income is identified in the corporate risk register under risk number four. This is a significant risk to the Authority, table 7 highlights the impact of a 1% movement. The cost-of-living crisis means that many people, including hire boat operators, may face some difficult decision regarding their continued boat ownership.

14. Conclusion

- 14.1. The draft budget presented here incorporates the navigation charges for 2025/26 and is designed to allow the Authority to continue to deliver priority navigation activities at the required level, while making prudent provision for asset maintenance over the life

of the strategy and beyond. Minor adjustments have also been made reflecting the latest staffing forecasts. As a result of all these factors, there is no capacity within the budget for additional projects.

- 14.2. The National Park part of the budget shows a deficit for 2025/26 which will be balanced via the National Park reserve. This will result in a reserve balance of £828,505 at the end of 2025/26. While confirmation on the settlement is awaited, figures for 2026/27 onwards should be viewed with a high degree of uncertainty. Work will be undertaken during 2025/26 to identify further savings and income generation opportunities and bought back to members in due course. The impact of any change (positive or negative) will need careful consideration to make sure National Park expenditure is sustainable.
- 14.3. It is important to recognise that the budget is highly sensitive to changes in salary inflation, with a significant proportion of the budget being made up of staff costs. The budget is based on a 4% increase in salaries for the period April 2025 to March 2026. As in previous years there continues to be uncertainty about the amount and the timing of the likely award.
- 14.4. For navigation the small deficit of £8,471 allowed for in the 2025/26 budget will be balanced via the Navigation reserve and continue to maintain the reserve above the 10%. Despite falling inflation, the impact of cost increases should not be underestimated and its effect on purchasing materials and services.
- 14.5. On the Navigation side of the budget the level of reserves held by the Authority provides a cushion to increasing costs and allows time to plan for achievable medium-term savings that will benefit both side of the budget whilst maintaining appropriate minimum level of reserves.
- 14.6. As in previous years, it remains the case that the indicative tolls increase in 2026/27 and beyond will need to be revisited during next year's budget setting process to ensure that remain appropriate. This could be as a result of any variations from current assumptions or changes to outturn figures for 2024/25.

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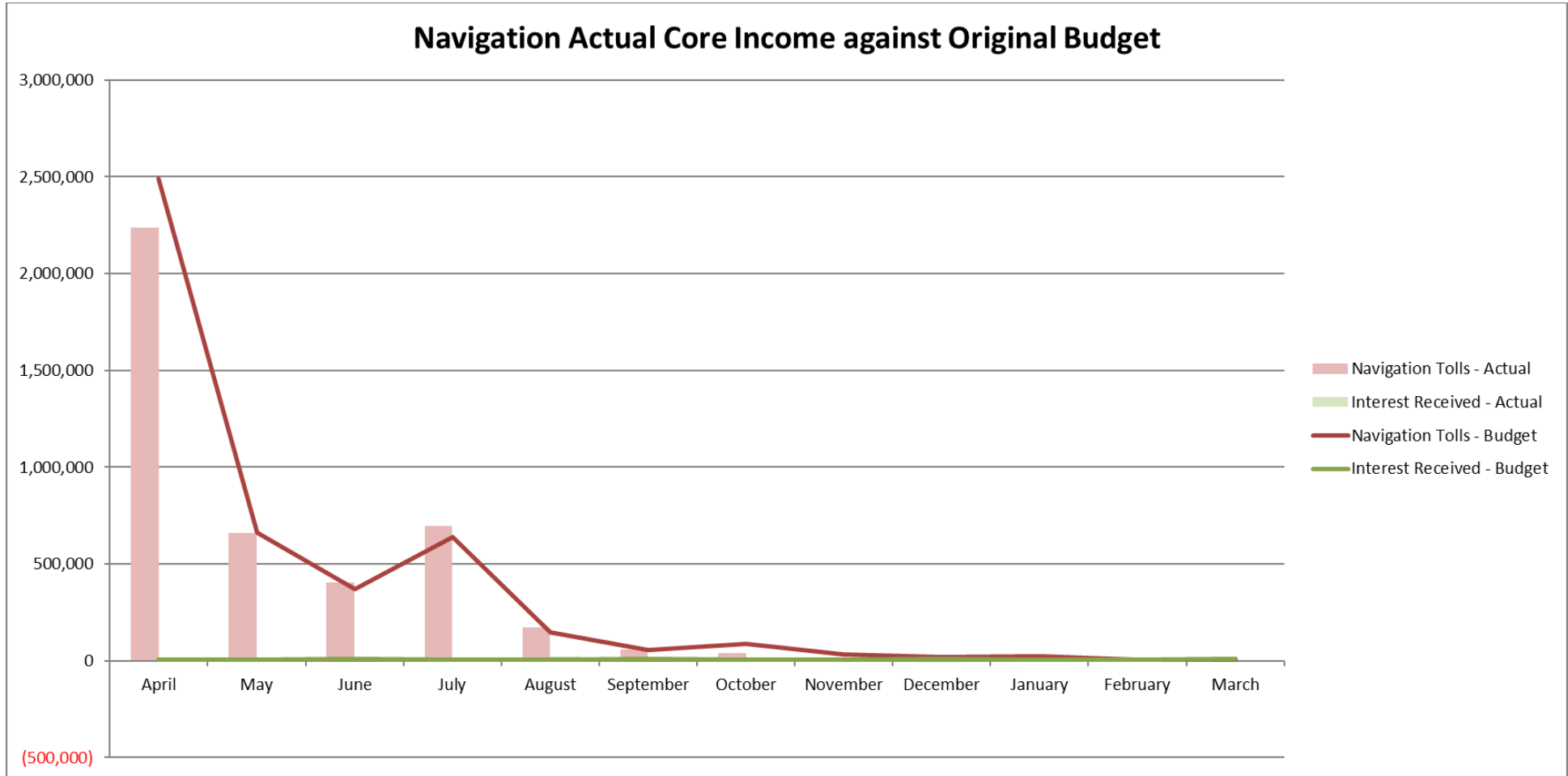
Appendix 1 – Navigation actual income and expenditure charts to 31 October 2024

Appendix 2 – Financial monitor: Navigation income and expenditure 2024/25

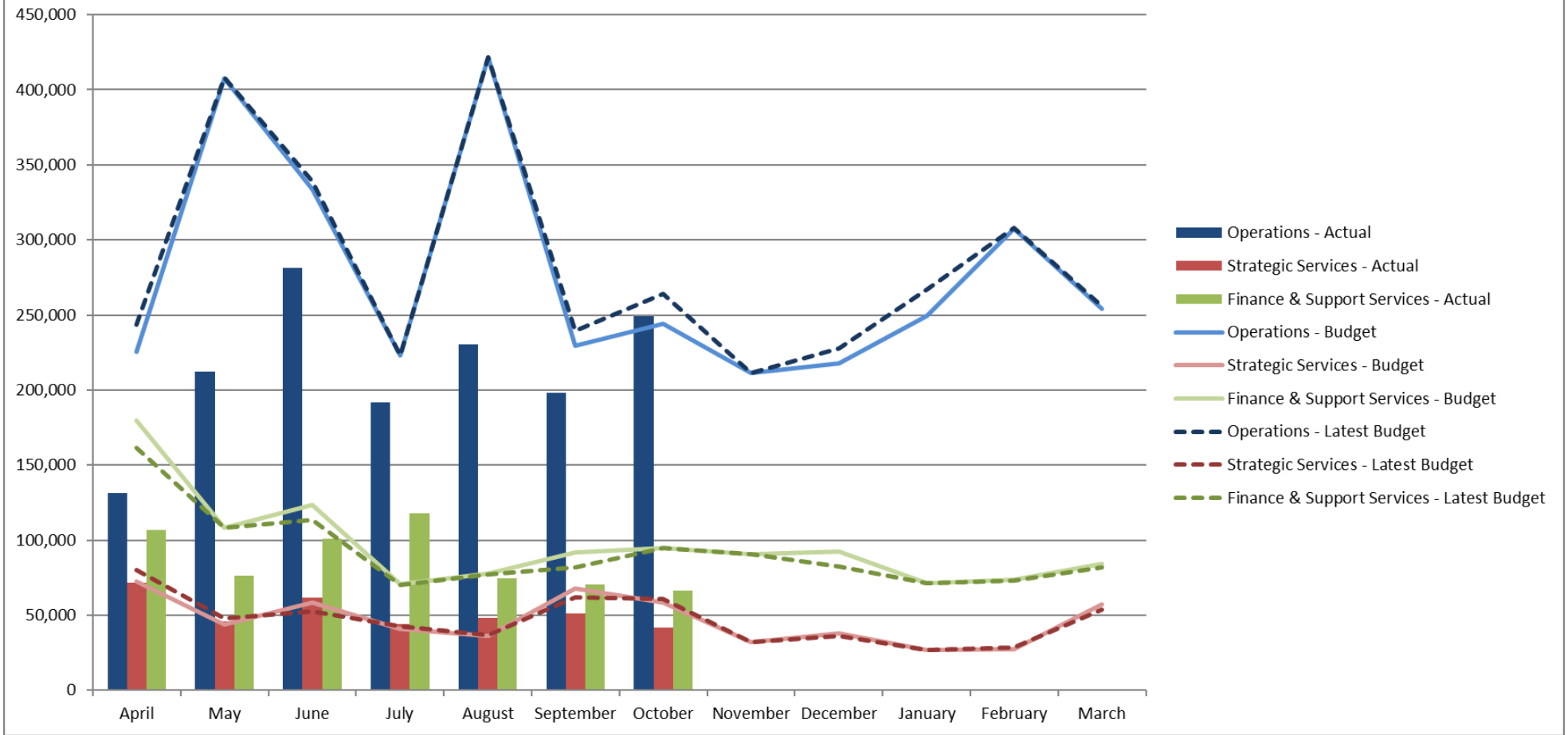
Appendix 3 –2025/26 Budget and Financial Strategy to 2027/28

Appendix 4 - Earmarked reserves 2024/25 to 2027/28

Appendix 1 – Navigation actual income and expenditure charts to 31 October 2024



Navigation Net Actual Expenditure against Original and Latest Budget



Appendix 2 – Financial monitor: Navigation income and expenditure 2024/25

Table 1

Income

Row Labels	Original budget (Navigation) £	Budget adjustments (Navigation) £	Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £
Total Income	(4,624,930)	0	(4,624,930)	(4,524,339)	- 100,591
National Park Grant	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Income	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Hire Craft Tolls	(1,436,000)	0	(1,436,000)	(1,403,559)	- 32,441
Income	(1,436,000)	0	(1,436,000)	(1,403,559)	- 32,441
Private Craft Tolls	(3,006,000)	0	(3,006,000)	(2,907,850)	- 98,150
Income	(3,006,000)	0	(3,006,000)	(2,907,850)	- 98,150
Short Visit Tolls	(60,000)	0	(60,000)	(60,000)	+ 0
Income	(60,000)	0	(60,000)	(60,000)	+ 0
Other Toll Income	(32,930)	0	(32,930)	(32,930)	+ 0
Income	(32,930)	0	(32,930)	(32,930)	+ 0
Interest	(90,000)	0	(90,000)	(120,000)	+ 30,000
Income	(90,000)	0	(90,000)	(120,000)	+ 30,000

Table 2
Operations

Row Labels	Original budget (Navigation) £	Budget adjustments (Navigation) £	Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £
Total Operations	3,408,924	32,330	3,441,255	3,227,336	+ 213,918
Construction and Maintenance Salaries	1,041,095	0	1,041,095	1,006,392	+ 34,703
Salaries	1,041,095	0	1,041,095	1,006,392	+ 34,703
Expenditure	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Equipment, Vehicles & Vessels	430,780	0	430,780	430,780	+ 0
Income	(840)	0	(840)	(840)	+ 0
Expenditure	431,620	0	431,620	431,620	+ 0
Water Management	75,000	0	75,000	75,000	+ 0
Expenditure	75,000	0	75,000	75,000	+ 0
Land Management	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Income	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Expenditure	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Practical Maintenance	366,825	27,080	393,905	293,905	+ 100,000
Income	(26,425)	(38,025)	(64,450)	(64,450)	+ 0
Expenditure	393,250	65,105	458,355	358,355	+ 100,000
Waterways and Recreation Strategy	31,530	0	31,530	31,100	+ 430

Row Labels	Original budget (Navigation) £	Budget adjustments (Navigation) £	Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £
Income	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Salaries	25,130	0	25,130	24,700	+ 430
Expenditure	6,400	0	6,400	6,400	+ 0
Ranger Services	1,192,875	0	1,192,875	1,133,302	+ 59,573
Income	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Salaries	842,525	0	842,525	782,952	+ 59,573
Expenditure	350,150	0	350,150	350,150	+ 0
Pension Payments	200	0	200	200	+ 0
Safety	99,780	0	99,780	82,955	+ 16,825
Income	(500)	0	(500)	(500)	+ 0
Salaries	72,190	0	72,190	50,365	+ 21,825
Expenditure	28,090	0	28,090	33,090	- 5,000
Premises	76,888	5,250	82,138	82,138	+ 0
Income	(1,820)	0	(1,820)	(1,820)	+ 0
Expenditure	78,708	5,250	83,958	83,958	+ 0
Operations Management and Administration	94,152	0	94,152	91,764	+ 2,388
Salaries	90,492	0	90,492	89,664	+ 828

Row Labels	Original budget (Navigation) £	Budget adjustments (Navigation) £	Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £
Expenditure	3,660	0	3,660	2,100	+ 1,560
Project Funding	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Pension Payments	0	0	0	0	+ 0

Table 3

Strategic Services

Row Labels	Original budget (Navigation) £	Budget adjustments (Navigation) £	Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £
Total Strategic Services	482,086	0	482,086	493,156	- 11,070
Development Management	5,126	0	5,126	5,049	+ 77
Income	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Salaries	5,126	0	5,126	5,049	+ 77
Expenditure	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Pension Payments	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Strategy and Projects Salaries	29,287	0	29,287	28,859	+ 427
Income	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Salaries	29,287	0	29,287	28,859	+ 427
Expenditure	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Biodiversity Strategy	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Income	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Expenditure	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Human Resources	84,408	0	84,408	83,587	+ 821
Income	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Salaries	51,720	0	51,720	50,899	+ 821

Row Labels	Original budget (Navigation) £	Budget adjustments (Navigation) £	Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £
Expenditure	32,688	0	32,688	32,688	+ 0
Volunteers	22,577	0	22,577	18,770	+ 3,807
Salaries	18,122	0	18,122	14,315	+ 3,807
Expenditure	4,455	0	4,455	4,455	+ 0
Communications	96,141	0	96,141	94,646	+ 1,495
Income	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Salaries	86,496	0	86,496	85,001	+ 1,495
Expenditure	9,645	0	9,645	9,645	+ 0
Visitor Centres and Yacht Stations	202,523	0	202,523	223,225	- 20,702
Income	(143,960)	0	(143,960)	(123,960)	- 20,000
Salaries	277,903	0	277,903	278,605	- 702
Expenditure	68,580	0	68,580	68,580	+ 0
Strategic Services Management and Administration	42,024	0	42,024	39,018	+ 3,006
Salaries	40,704	0	40,704	38,253	+ 2,451
Expenditure	1,320	0	1,320	765	+ 555
Strategy and Projects	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Expenditure	0	0	0	0	+ 0

Table 4

Finance & Support Services

Row Labels	Original budget (Navigation) £	Budget adjustments (Navigation) £	Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £
Total Finance & Support Services	1,157,763	0	1,157,763	1,137,279	+ 20,484
National Park Grant	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Expenditure	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Legal	35,000	0	35,000	35,000	+ 0
Income	(5,000)	0	(5,000)	(5,000)	+ 0
Expenditure	40,000	0	40,000	40,000	+ 0
Governance	132,947	0	132,947	131,484	+ 1,462
Salaries	101,557	0	101,557	99,431	+ 2,125
Expenditure	31,390	0	31,390	32,053	- 663
Chief Executive	53,696	0	53,696	52,985	+ 711
Salaries	53,301	0	53,301	52,589	+ 711
Expenditure	396	0	396	396	+ 0
Asset Management	76,606	0	76,606	69,982	+ 6,624
Income	(4,135)	0	(4,135)	(4,135)	+ 0
Salaries	25,466	0	25,466	18,842	+ 6,624

Row Labels	Original budget (Navigation) £	Budget adjustments (Navigation) £	Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £
Expenditure	55,275	0	55,275	55,275	+ 0
Finance and Insurance	318,119	0	318,119	309,792	+ 8,327
Salaries	159,768	0	159,768	151,441	+ 8,327
Expenditure	158,351	0	158,351	158,351	+ 0
Collection of Tolls	228,380	0	228,380	220,270	+ 8,110
Salaries	215,880	0	215,880	207,770	+ 8,110
Expenditure	12,500	0	12,500	12,500	+ 0
ICT	262,695	0	262,695	260,646	+ 2,050
Income	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Salaries	119,750	0	119,750	117,701	+ 2,050
Expenditure	142,945	0	142,945	142,945	+ 0
Premises – Head Office	50,320	0	50,320	57,120	- 6,800
Income	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Expenditure	50,320	0	50,320	57,120	- 6,800

Table 5

Projects and Corporate items

Row Labels	Original budget (Navigation) £	Budget adjustments (Navigation) £	Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £
Total Projects and Corporate Items	4,263	0	4,263	4,263	+ 0
Partnerships / HLF	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Income	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Salaries	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Expenditure	0	0	0	0	+ 0
Corporate Items	4,263	0	4,263	4,263	+ 0
Expenditure	4,263	0	4,263	4,263	+ 0

Table 6

Contributions from earmarked reserves

Row Labels	Original budget (Navigation) £	Budget adjustments (Navigation) £	Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £
Total contributions from Earmarked Reserves	(542,400)	(5,250)	(547,650)	(547,650)	+ 0
Earmarked Reserves	(542,400)	(5,250)	(547,650)	(547,650)	+ 0
Expenditure	(542,400)	(5,250)	(547,650)	(547,650)	+ 0

Table 7

Net (Surplus) / Deficit

Row Labels	Original budget (Navigation) £	Budget adjustments (Navigation) £	Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn (Navigation) £	Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £
Grand Total	(114,294)	27,080	(87,214)	(209,956)	+ 122,742

Year	Earmarked Reserves	Property Reserve - National Park	Property Reserve - Navigation	Property Reserve - TOTAL	Plant, Vessels and Equipment Reserve - National Park	Plant, Vessels and Equipment Reserve - Navigation	Plant, Vessels and Equipment Reserve - TOTAL	Premises Reserve - National Park	Premises Reserve - Navigation	Premises Reserve - TOTAL	Other Earmarked Reserves - National Park	Other Earmarked Reserves - Navigation	Other Earmarked Reserves - TOTAL	HLF	Total Earmarked Reserves - National Park	Total Earmarked Reserves - Navigation	GRAND TOTAL Earmarked Reserves	
2026/27	<u>Contributions to Reserves to 31/03/27</u>																	
	Vessels and Equipment (VES000451)	0	0	0	(27,600)	(64,400)	(92,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0		(27,600)	(64,400)	(92,000)	
	Vehicles (VEH000451)	0	0	0	(19,200)	(44,800)	(64,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0		(19,200)	(44,800)	(64,000)	
	Mutford Lock (MLK000451)	0	(25,000)	(25,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	(25,000)	(25,000)	
	Mutford Lock Rent (MLK000451)	0	(2,000)	(2,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	(2,000)	(2,000)	
	Asset Management (SIM000451)	(46,000)	0	(46,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		(46,000)	0	(46,000)	
	Launches (LAU000451)	0	0	0	0	(30,000)	(30,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	(30,000)	(30,000)	
	Ranger Vehicles (RAN000451)	0	0	0	(5,000)	(20,000)	(25,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0		(5,000)	(20,000)	(25,000)	
	Dockyard Site (PRM009451)	0	0	0	0	0	0	(9,000)	(21,000)	(30,000)	0	0	0		(9,000)	(21,000)	(30,000)	
	Pool Vehicles (PCP000451)	0	0	0	(6,700)	(3,300)	(10,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0		(6,700)	(3,300)	(10,000)	
	Building repairs (PRM000451)	0	0	0	0	0	0	(16,200)	(6,300)	(22,500)	0	0	0		(16,200)	(6,300)	(22,500)	
	Computer Software (ICT000451)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(13,400)	(6,600)	(20,000)		(13,400)	(6,600)	(20,000)	
	Potter Heigham Chalet Income (UTE000451)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(21,000)	0	(21,000)		(21,000)	0	(21,000)	
	Catchment Partnership (CAT000451)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(29,350)	0	(29,350)		(29,350)	0	(29,350)	
	<u>Contributions from Reserves to 31/03/27</u>																	
	Replacement of 2 x Hilux , Van & Ford Ranger (VEH000450)	0	0	0	31,500	73,500	105,000	0	0	0	0	0	0		31,500	73,500	105,000	
	Clamshell bucket (E12k), Deposit for excavator (E20k), Yamnar tracked carrier (E15k) Iron horse (E18k) & Hydraulic power pack (E28k)	0	0	0	27,900	65,100	93,000	0	0	0	0	0	0		27,900	65,100	93,000	
	Additional functionality for finance system est (ICT000450)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10,720	5,280	16,000		10,720	5,280	16,000	
	Replacement of AU66 ZYL (RAN000450)	0	0	0	10,500	24,500	35,000	0	0	0	0	0	0		10,500	24,500	35,000	
	Catchment Partnership (CAT000450)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29,350	0	29,350		29,350	0	29,350	
	Transfer to revenue	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	150,000	0	150,000		150,000	0	150,000	
Forecast Balance 01 April 2027	(362,405)	(594,682)	(957,087)	(127,526)	(278,993)	(406,519)	(201,745)	(173,463)	(375,208)	(833,373)	(61,535)	(894,908)	0	(1,525,050)	(1,108,673)	(2,633,723)		
2027/28	<u>Contributions to Reserves to 31/03/28</u>																	
	Vessels and Equipment (VES000451)	0	0	0	(27,600)	(64,400)	(92,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0		(27,600)	(64,400)	(92,000)	
	Vehicles (VEH000451)	0	0	0	(19,200)	(44,800)	(64,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0		(19,200)	(44,800)	(64,000)	
	Mutford Lock (MLK000451)	0	(25,000)	(25,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	(25,000)	(25,000)	
	Mutford Lock Rent (MLK000451)	0	(2,000)	(2,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	(2,000)	(2,000)	
	Asset Management (SIM000451)	(46,000)	0	(46,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		(46,000)	0	(46,000)	
	Launches (LAU000451)	0	0	0	0	(30,000)	(30,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	(30,000)	(30,000)	
	Ranger Vehicles (RAN000451)	0	0	0	(5,000)	(20,000)	(25,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0		(5,000)	(20,000)	(25,000)	
	Dockyard Site (PRM009451)	0	0	0	0	0	0	(9,000)	(21,000)	(30,000)	0	0	0		(9,000)	(21,000)	(30,000)	
	Pool Vehicles (PCP000451)	0	0	0	(6,700)	(3,300)	(10,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0		(6,700)	(3,300)	(10,000)	
	Building repairs (PRM000451)	0	0	0	0	0	0	(16,200)	(6,300)	(22,500)	0	0	0		(16,200)	(6,300)	(22,500)	
	Computer Software (ICT000451)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(13,400)	(6,600)	(20,000)		(13,400)	(6,600)	(20,000)	
	Potter Heigham Chalet Income (UTE000451)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(21,000)	0	(21,000)		(21,000)	0	(21,000)	
	Catchment Partnership (CAT000451)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(30,810)	0	(30,810)		(30,810)	0	(30,810)	
	<u>Contributions from Reserves to 31/03/28</u>																	
	Replacement of Vauxhall (VEH000450)	0	0	0	10,500	24,500	35,000	0	0	0	0	0	0		10,500	24,500	35,000	
	Hydraulic power pack, 2 winches & JCB JS220 excavator	0	0	0	13,500	31,500	45,000	0	0	0	0	0	0		13,500	31,500	45,000	
	Replacement vehicles Renault Kango & Zoe (PCP000450)	0	0	0	43,550	21,450	65,000	0	0	0	0	0	0		43,550	21,450	65,000	
	Catchment Partnership (CAT000450)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30,810	0	30,810		30,810	0	30,810	
	Transfer to revenue	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	225,511	0	225,511		225,511	0	225,511	
	Forecast Balance 01 April 2028	(408,405)	(621,682)	(1,030,087)	(118,476)	(364,043)	(482,519)	(226,945)	(200,763)	(427,708)	(642,263)	(68,135)	(710,398)	0	(1,396,089)	(1,254,623)	(2,650,712)	

Navigation Committee

09 January 2025

Agenda item number 8

Consultation on proposed General Direction

Report by Head of Ranger Services

Purpose

To provide a summary and update on progress following the Pilotage Review 2023. To consult the Navigation Committee as a statutory consultee under Schedule 1, paragraph 2 of the Broads Authority Act 2009 on the proposed General Direction to restrict vessels entering the Broads.

Broads Plan context

Broads Plan objective C4 includes an action to ‘manage adherence to boat safety measures including up to date Safety Management Systems’ which pilotage is included within.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Following a consultation process involving external consultants, the Navigation Committee and Broads Authority, this paper sets out the summary of the work

completed so far into the review of pilotage on the Broads and includes a copy of the proposed General Direction for members' comments.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Broads Authority Act 2009 granted the Authority additional powers, the primary purpose being to introduce greater safety controls on broads and rivers. These powers include the ability to give of general directions to vessels.
- 2.2. The Authority is a "Competent Harbour Authority" as defined the Pilotage Act 1987. This arises from The Broads Authority (Pilotage Powers) Order 1991 which remains extant. As such, it has a duty to determine whether any and, if so, what pilotage services need to be provided to secure the safety of ships navigating in or in the approaches to its harbour; and whether such pilotage should be compulsory.
- 2.3. This duty is reinforced in the Port Marine Safety Code, which goes on to state that authorities should exercise control over the provision of pilots by means of controlling recruitment, examination and authorisation of pilots.
- 2.4. The Authority has not issued any pilotage directions, which set out the types of vessel movements for which pilotage would be compulsory.

3. Requirements for Pilots

- 3.1. The Authority is looking to review its pilotage service as with almost no commercial vessel movements, maintaining a service fit for purpose is very challenging.
- 3.2. Historically there has been one circumstance where the Authority provided a regular pilotage service, which was for the coaster vessels travelling from Great Yarmouth up to the sugar beet factory at Cantley. The pilotage was strongly recommended for these vessels but was not made compulsory by means of a pilotage direction. It has been over 15 years since these vessels came into the Broads and the sugar beet factory no longer has the infrastructure required to bring in such vessels.
- 3.3. In 2014 there were two occasions where pilotage was provided to third parties. The first was a large barge carrying plant to Cantley that was piloted by the Broads Authority. The second was a historic trading barge; the Cumbria also had onboard a pilot for its passage. Since 2014, all vessel movements have been escorted by Ranger patrol launches but have not required a pilot on board.
- 3.4. There is no expectation that large freight vessels, which may require pilotage, will return to the waterways in the foreseeable future. Without a regular requirement for a pilotage service, it is very difficult for the Authority to maintain training of pilots to be able to undertake this role as well as being very costly to the Authority for a service not being used.

4. Pilotage Review 2023

- 4.1. In 2023, the Broads Authority contracted Marine and Risk Consultants Limited (Marico Marine) to review the pilotage provisions currently in place on the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads with a view to ensuring they were fit for purpose going forward.
- 4.2. This review considers pilotage provision by:
 - Giving an overview of the Authority's responsibilities for navigation safety, and current levels of activity on the Broads.
 - Undertaking a brief review of applicable legislation.
 - Considering the historical and current requirements for the provision of a pilotage service, and possible options for the future of the service.
 - Undertaking a simple navigation risk assessment to establish the effectiveness of pilotage as a risk control measure and identify additional or alternative mitigations.
- 4.3. Considering the current and expected future traffic profile of the Broads Navigation Area, and the result of the navigation risk assessment, the following recommendations were made to the Authority by the consultants as set out in their report:
 - Engage with Great Yarmouth Port Authority to confirm whether providing pilotage under a joint arrangement is feasible.
 - Assuming the above is not an option, undertake a full review of the Safety Management System to document formal arrangements for the discontinuation of any form of pilotage, while still maintaining the status of a Competent Harbour Authority.
 - Seek specialist marine legal advice to support the above review, including amending Vessel Dimension byelaws, or issuing a General Direction.
 - Clarify the procedures which will be followed (based on full risk assessment) should any vessels of greater size than defined in the revised byelaws / Directions wish to enter the navigation area.
- 4.4. Alternatively, if there is no appetite for maintaining CHA status, consider the formal removal of CHA powers by application to the Secretary of State.

5. Consideration of Pilotage Review Recommendations

- 5.1. Discussions with Peel Ports about sharing pilotage have been had previously, 5 years ago and more recently last year. While the Port has not declined to provide a service, at an operational level there is very little appetite to take this forward. Training of pilots and maintaining their competence in the Broads navigation area (as required under the PMSC and at a cost to the Broads Authority), when there is likely to be no, or extremely low, need for this service would not be cost-effective.

- 5.2. The issuing of a General Direction or the updating of the Vessel Dimension Byelaws, to restrict all vessels requiring a pilot from entering the Broads would allow the Authority to remove this requirement while still retaining the 'Competent Harbour Authority' status. The length of 20m was proposed in the report.
- 5.3. At the Navigation Committee, Members raised concerns that many vessels over 20m enter the Broads and by setting the limit at 20m this would be too restrictive. It was instead suggested to use 24m as the limit which falls in line with MGN280 which requires commercial vessels up to 24 metres load line length to comply with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) Small Commercial Vessel and Pilot Boat Code of Practice.
- 5.4. The Authority does not currently request vessels up to 24m to have either a pilot or an escort when moving around the Broads (subject to restrictions set out in the Vessel Dimension Byelaws) and so the risk of increasing the length of vessels to be restricted to 24m and above is low.
- 5.5. The original recommendation in the report includes the ability for the Authority to permit on a case-by-case basis any vessels over the prescribed length requested permission to enter the Broads, subject to individual risk assessment. The risk assessment would determine what safety measures would be needed to allow safe passage. This may include ensuring any passage would be undertaken with a suitably qualified crew, or the vessel being escorted by a patrol launch.

6. Decision

- 6.1. At the Broads Authority on 26 January 2024, it was resolved unanimously, pending checks on the outstanding questions raised in the report, that a General Direction be put in place, to restrict all commercial vessels over 24m from entering the Broads, subject to a risk assessment to see if such vessels could be safely accommodated without a pilot. This was updated at the Broads Authority meeting on 29 November 2024 to include all vessels over 24m.

7. Open Port Duty

- 7.1. A question was raised in the Pilotage Report (2023) whether the Open Port Duty, which applies to Harbour Authorities by virtue of the Harbours, Docks and Piers Clauses Act 1847, would restrict the Authority ability to put in place a length restriction.
- 7.2. The Authority asked for legal advice on this matter. The conclusion was that it does not prohibit the proposed restrictions/general direction.

8. General Direction

- 8.1. The Authority has the power to make General Directions to all vessels, or classes of vessels, in respect of vessels in, or proposing to enter, or leaving, the navigation area for the purpose of promoting or securing conditions conducive to the ease, convenience or safety of navigation and the safety of persons and property in the navigation area. A detailed procedure for the consultation, issue and publication of such direction is set out in the Broads Authority Act 2009 Schedule 1.
- 8.2. The Authority may give directions under this section (“general directions”) in respect of vessels in, or proposing to enter, or leaving, the navigation area for the purpose of promoting or securing conditions conducive to the ease, convenience or safety of navigation and the safety of persons and property in the navigation area. This includes (section 4 of the 2009 Act):
- (e) for prohibiting or regulating—
 - (i) entry into the navigation area by a vessel which for any reason would be or would be likely to become a danger to other vessels or to persons or property, in or near the navigation area; or
 - (ii) entry into, or navigation within, any designated fairway or channel during any temporary obstruction thereof;
 - (g) for requiring the master of a vessel to give to the navigation officer information relating to the vessel or the qualifications of the master reasonably required by the navigation officer for effecting any of the purposes of this subsection;
- 8.3. The General Direction made for this purpose will, as set out above, restrict vessels over 24m from entering the Broads area, on any occasion when this could be requested, subject to a risk assessment being carried out to see whether a vessel could be safely accommodated without the need for a pilot.

9. Implementation of the General Direction

- 9.1. Following on from the navigation risk assessment, undertaken as part of the Pilotage Review 2023, Marico Marine is now carrying out work to review and update the Broads Authority’s navigational risk assessments based on the General Direction being in place. Copies of the updated risk assessments will be available at this Navigation Committee meeting where a summary of the review will be shared.
- 9.2. Along with the ongoing input into the review of pilotage, the Navigation Committee is also a statutory consultee under Schedule 1, paragraph 2 of the Broads Authority Act 2009. The proposed General Direction is set out in Appendix 1 along with details of the consultation process.
- 9.3. As set out in the s4(1) of the Broads Authority Act 2009, the consultation runs for 42 days, the Navigation Committee meeting on 9 January 2025 marking the start of this. If

the Navigation Committee wishes to make representations (in support or against) the proposed General Direction this can be done in writing (details in Appendix 1) or during the meeting.

- 9.4. Following receipt of any representations, an Independent Person, appointed in consultation with the statutory consultees will provide any objecting consultee and the Authority with a report containing its conclusions on the direction and on the objection. The Authority will be able to respond to the objection as part of this process. Except in an emergency, the Authority is required to consider the report before giving the General Direction.

Author: Lucy Burchnall

Date of report: 06 December 2024

Background papers: Pilotage Review

[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: C4

Appendix 1 – Broads Authority – General Direction To Shipping – Navigation Committee Consultation

Appendix 1 – General Direction to Shipping – Navigation Committee Consultation

Introduction

The purpose of this letter is to consult you on the Authority's proposal to make a General Direction pursuant to s4(1) of the Broads Authority Act 2009.

As a statutory consultee, the Navigation Committee are entitled to be consulted upon the proposed General Direction under Schedule 1, paragraph 2 of the Broads Authority Act 2009.

The text of the proposed General Direction is in Appendix 1 to this letter.

Consultation Process

The Authority is directed by the Act to engage the statutory consultees on any intention to make, amend, or repeal a General Direction, except in a case of emergency, where the consultation period is not less than 42 days.

Statutory Consultees are:

- Broads Authority Navigation Committee;
- Associated British Ports;
- Great Yarmouth Port Authority;
- British Marine Federation;
- Inland Waterways Association;
- Royal Yachting Association;
- Such other bodies appearing to the Authority to represent boating interests; and,
- The intention to do so will be published in the Eastern Daily Press and on the Authority website.

As a statutory Consultees the Navigation Committee may object to the proposed General Direction.

To make an objection, written representation from the Committee, setting out the case must be sent to the Authority by the end of the consultation period or made at the meeting of 9th January which is the start of the consultation period. Following receipt of any representations, an Independent Person, appointed in consultation with the statutory consultees will provide any objecting consultee and the Authority with a report containing its conclusions on the direction and on the objection. The Authority will be able to respond to the objection as part of this process.

Except in an emergency, the Authority is required to consider the report before giving the General Direction.

Summary Background

The General Direction would restrict specific vessels from entering the Broads that – by reason of their size – could present a potential hazard to the harbour without being steered by a trained and competent pilot. Such vessels would be allowed to enter, subject to approval of a satisfactory risk assessment.

The Broads Authority has traditionally provided a service of employing pilots in order that they can be available when necessary to steer larger vessels within the Broads. The Authority provided this service as a Competent Harbour Authority (CHA) under the Pilotage Act 1987. That Act amongst other things requires the Broads Authority to keep under consideration whether: any and, if so, what pilotage services need to be provided to secure the safety of ships navigating in or in the approaches to its harbour; and in the interests of safety, pilotage should be compulsory for ships navigating in any part of that harbour or its approaches. A pilotage service requires a pilot, of sufficient training, to be available to provide necessary pilotage services.

In the light of current circumstances, it is no longer considered to be useful or viable to maintain a pilotage service within the Broads. Commercial traffic levels have fallen to such an extent that the requirement for vessels to take pilots has become extremely infrequent. It is not considered economically feasible to employ even one full time pilot, so the Authority is reliant on part time personnel who may require considerable notice periods to ensure availability (and who may not in fact be authorised Pilots under the Pilotage Act). Further, the numbers of vessels requiring pilots has fallen to such an extent, that it is very difficult for existing personnel providing advice to maintain the required levels of competency through undertaking a minimum required number of voyages each year. The Authority no longer employs any officers suitably qualified to train or assess new pilots or PEC applicants. And potentially, the level of pilotage actually undertaken cannot generate sufficient revenue to cover the ongoing costs incurred.

Thus, the absence of a pilotage service in the Broads is the context to the proposed General Direction. Its impact will not be to block any ships from entering the Broads, however. To address the 'Open Port Duty', allow commercial flexibility and capture any future opportunity, the Authority will retain a dormant CHA status yet limit routine access to the port of vessels of length over all (LOA) to 24m or greater. As part of the necessary mitigation, the boat may for example demonstrate that the captain is competent to navigate the ship. Notice must be given together with a Formal Safety Assessment in the form of a navigation risk assessment (NRA) specific to that vessel, date, time and commercial operation. There is no impact on vessels 24m and below, because they are not caught by the proposed direction.

Statutory Consultees

If the Navigation Committee wishes to make representations (in support or against) the proposed draft General Direction, a representative should write to the Broads Authority by email at Committees@broads-authority.gov.uk no later than 20th February 2025, which is 42 days from the date of this notification or representations can be made at the meeting of 9th January in response to this paper.

The Broads Authority

GENERAL DIRECTION

LARGE VESSELS

The Broads Authority, in the exercise of their powers under Section 4 and Schedule 1 of the Broads Authority Act 2009 (the Act), and having carried out the consultations required by that schedule, has given the following General Direction:

1. This General Direction applies throughout the entirety of the navigation area as defined in s8(1) of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 (“**the Navigation Area**”).
2. No vessel of length of 24m or greater (“**Large Vessel**”) may enter or navigate within the Navigation Area unless permitted to do so in accordance with paragraphs 3-7.
3. Any person wishing to navigate a Large Vessel within the Navigation Area (“**the Applicant**”) may apply to the Broads Authority for permission to do so, subject to the following procedure:
 - a. The application must be made using the form published on the Broads Authority website.
 - b. Upon receipt of an application, a risk assessment shall be conducted on behalf of the Broads Authority into the proposed journey, using the details supplied by the Applicant.
 - c. The application must be completed in full and received by the Broads Authority not later than 42 working days prior to the date when it is proposed that the vessel will enter the Broads.
 - d. Applications shall be sent by email to Broadscontrol@broads-authority.gov.uk
 - e. The Applicant must supply any further information requested by the Broads Authority as soon as practicable after this is requested.
4. Following receipt of an application duly submitted in accordance with paragraph 3, the Broads Authority in its absolute discretion may grant permission for a Large Vessel to enter and navigate within the Navigation Area (“**Permission**”).

5. Upon the grant of a Permission, the Large Vessel named within the Permission may enter and navigate within the Navigation Area on the date(s) specified within the Permission, and subject to a record of the Permission being available for inspection during the journey.
6. A Permission may not be transferred, and it may be revoked at any time, for any reason, upon the Broads Authority giving notice to the Applicant.
7. Any person navigating a Large Vessel within the Navigation Area must comply with any conditions stated within the Permission.

Navigation Committee

09 January 2025

Agenda item number 9

Consultation on the Appointment to the Navigation Committee

Report by Senior Governance Officer

Purpose

In accordance with the provisions in the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 the Authority shall consult the Navigation Committee before appointing any member of the Navigation Committee.

Broads Plan context

Theme C – “Maintaining and enhancing the navigation”. The role of the Navigation Committee is to advise the Authority on matters relating to strategic management of the waterways.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The appointment process for the co-opted members of the Navigation Committee is conducted on a four yearly basis and as additionally necessary to fill any casual vacancies on the committee. Terms of appointment are for four years with a maximum aggregated term of eight years.
- 1.2. The membership of one current co-opted member, representing Category A: Such bodies appearing to the Authority to represent the owners of pleasure craft available for hire or reward as it considers appropriate, is due to end on 31 March 2025. Therefore, the recruitment process for the forthcoming vacancy on the committee has been underway.

2. Appointment process

- 2.1. Details of the vacancies were advertised on the Broads Authority’s website (on the Navigation Committee page). They were also advertised on the Authority’s social media channels of Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The closing date for applications was 4 December with interviews on 11 December 2024.
- 2.2. In total, one application was received by the closing date.
- 2.3. The recruitment panel comprised:

- Charles Monteith – Panel Chair (one of the Authority’s two Independent Persons)
- Lesley Robinson – Chief Executive, British Marine Federation
- Harry Blathwayt – Chair, Broads Authority

2.4. The following criteria were used to assess and score the candidate:

- Understanding of the navigation area and relevant issues.
- Good knowledge of the varied recreational uses of the Broads Authority.
- Independence of thought.
- Ability to see more than one side to every argument and take a balanced view.
- Experience of equality, diversity and inclusion issues, and the relevance of these in the Broads context.

2.5. A scoring system was used to mark the candidate’s responses as follows: A = strong evidence, B = good evidence, C = satisfactory evidence; D = weak evidence, E = no evidence.

3. Consultation

3.1. As part of the appointment process, 3 organisations under Category A were contacted for their inclusion in the consultation process in accordance with paragraph 9 of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act. These were:

- British Marine
- Broads Canoe Hire Association
- Broads Hire Boat Federation

3.2. Each organisation was provided with the name of the short-listed candidate and advised that they could request further information, if they wished, before submitting their comments. A total of two organisations responded and their comments were forwarded to the panel for its consideration prior to the interview.

4. Recommendation

4.1. The panel has agreed to recommend that Susan Cadamy be appointed to the Navigation Committee wef 1 April 2025. The appointment is for a four-year term.

5. Conclusion

5.1. The shortlisting and interview processes were thorough and designed to ensure that all candidates were given equal opportunity. This was enhanced by the panel members, two of whom are external to the Broads Authority.

5.2. The Committee is invited to recommend the appointee to serve on the Navigation Committee as outlined in paragraph 4.1 above. The recommendation will be considered by the Broads Authority at its meeting on 14 March 2025 when the final decision will be made.

Author: Sara Utting

Date of report: 11 December 2024

Background papers: None

[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: C

Navigation Committee

09 January 2025

Agenda item number 10

Construction Maintenance and Ecology work programme progress update

Report by Head of Construction, Maintenance & Ecology, and Ecology & Design
Supervisor

Purpose

To provide the Committee with an update on the Authority's management activities to maintain public navigation, develop mooring facilities for public use and demonstrate the effective use of available resources in managing the Broads waterways.

Broads Plan context

C1: Maintain navigation water depths to defined specifications, reduce sediment input, and dispose of dredged material in sustainable and beneficial ways.

C2: Maintain existing navigation water space and develop appropriate opportunities to extend access for various types of craft.

C3: Manage water plants, riverside trees and scrub, and seek resources to increase operational targets.

C4: Maintain and improve safety and security standards and user behaviour on the waterways.

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1. Maintaining water depths for navigation

- 1.1. The detailed breakdown in Appendix 1 gives progress and volumes for the dredging programme for 2024/25 (April 2024 to end November 2024). A total of 17,330 m³ of dredged sediment was removed from the prioritised sites. This figure represents 47% of the programmed target of 36,630 m³ for the year.
- 1.2. The dredging in the River Bure between Wroxham Viaduct and Coltishall Lock has been completed. The final volume removed reflected the maintenance dredging requirement to take out the sediment deposited in recent times. Three areas had variations to the original dredging plan. This was at Bridge Broad where 2,900 m³ was removed from the target, following the landowner taking back management of this site from the Broads Authority; 1,000 m³ was found to be hard gravel inside the marker buoys at Caen Meadow and therefore outside the scope of purely maintenance dredging; and 1,200 m³ upstream of Coltishall Rising Sun, again where patches of natural gravel bed were within the channel. The gravel features are not included as part of the maintenance dredging programme, as these very upper reaches are where the River Bure retains some characteristics of its original chalk stream heritage.
- 1.3. Stalham Staithe dredging is due to start in the second week of December and run until Christmas. During the dredging works, Stalham Staithe 24-hour mooring will also be closed. The Notice to Mariners of the navigation and 24 hour mooring closure is [here](#).

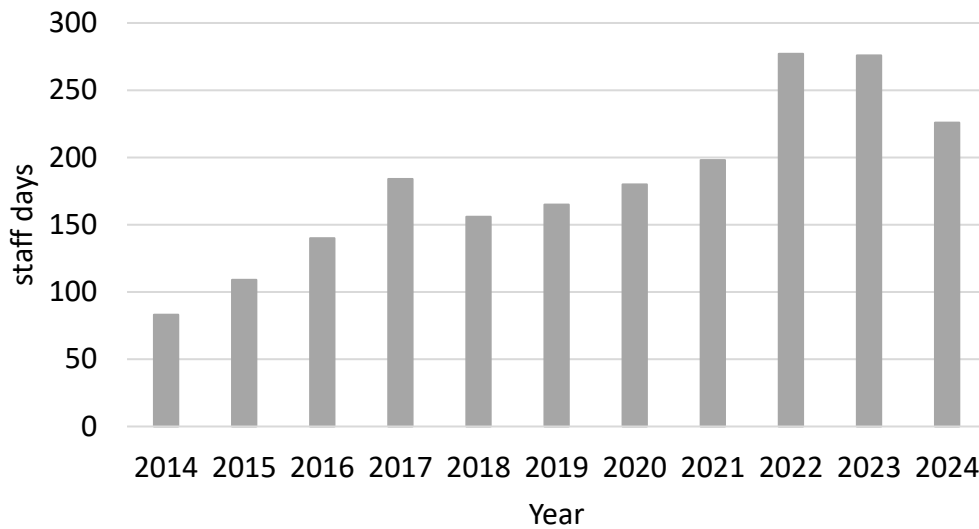
2. Maintaining safe public mooring facilities

- 2.1. Refurbishment of the timber capping and waling at North Cove 24 hour mooring on the River Waveney is underway. Essential maintenance is being carried out on the timbers and the pathway, from Monday 9 December to Monday 23 December, with the mooring closed to the public during these times. More information can be found on the [Boating News page](#).
- 2.2. For the more detailed reports on the minor mooring maintenance work completed, these are included in the Chief Executive's regular public [Broads Briefings](#).

3. Water Plant Management

- 3.1. The water plant cutting season during 2024 has ended with another successful year of continued maintenance of the river reaches and marked channels where water plants commonly grow. Cutting has continued in the marked channels of the Upper Thurne; the River Bure upstream of Wroxham; the Waveney between Beccles and Geldeston, the River Ant around Wayford Bridge and Dilham; Thorpe River Green and in the channels of Rockland and Bargate Broad on the River Yare; and the River Wensum upstream of Trowse.

Figure 1. Total annual workdays spent on water plant cutting in the Broads



- 3.2 In 2024, slightly less time was spent cutting water plants compared to 2022 and 2023. However, the overall trend shows that the current level of cutting to maintain access throughout the Broads public navigation is more than twice as much as it was ten years ago. As water quality and clarity continues to improve throughout the Broadland rivers, this trend of increased water plant growth is also set to continue.

4. Riverside Tree Management

- 4.1. Work over the coming autumn and winter (2024/25) will be the third year of the Authority's five-year programme (2022/23 to 2026/27) aimed solely at maintaining safety and clear visibility within the navigation. Prioritised sections for management in 2024/25 are shown in the maps on the Authority [website](#). The landowners of these stretches have all been contacted and agreements are in place for the work to be carried out this winter.
- 4.2. The remaining stretches of riverside tree management to be completed in the final years of the plan are shown in another set of [maps](#), with indications of which year each stretch will be targeted.

5. Our resources

- 5.1. At Mutford Lock in Oulton Broad, one of the penstock sluices failed entirely on the set of gates on the freshwater side. These steel framed sluices regulate water from one side of the lock gates to the other, with each individual gate leaf having one penstock each. The lock has been able to operate adequately with one penstock in this affected set of gates, but a longer-term fix is essential. To enable the repair, the first set of gates on the freshwater side needs to be lifted out entirely, which is not a simple or quick task. Once they have been lifted, we are using this opportunity to inspect the wooden gates, make any required repairs to the timbers and replace both penstocks in the set.

- 5.2. A 60-ton crane is booked for the lift. It has more than enough capacity to lift each gate leaf and can do so from a safe distance to protect the lock walls from excessive additional ground pressure. During the works, and to allow time for repairs to the gates, Mutford Lock will be closed for all vessels from Monday 3 February until Friday 28 March. To avoid disruption to those seeking entry to the Broads from the North Sea, the closure at Mutford Lock has been planned to be after the expected maintenance which will prevent lifting of Haven Bridge at Great Yarmouth. Mutford Lock is aimed to open again before the Easter Holidays. A Notice to Mariners will be issued prior to Christmas.
- 5.3. Following the 2024 Tolls Review and the Broads Authority decisions for 2025/26 budgeting, the allocation of operational staff time has changed to a time split of 60:40 (National Park: Navigation). The shift from the previous 70:30 split effectively means a reduced amount of time available in 2025/26 for Operations Technicians to carry out navigation maintenance tasks. In real terms, this reduction is the same as reducing the Operations Technicians posts by a 1.6 full-time equivalent (FTE) on navigation tasks.
- 5.4. The allocation between National Park and Navigation activity is managed through detailed work programming and tracking through the year via timesheets. The main area that will be reduced from the Navigation allocation will be dredging, with 405 Operations Technician workdays removed from the programme. As the total number of employed staff has not changed, the time available will be added to the conservation management programme, as additional funding has been made available over the next five years via the agri-environment schemes the Authority delivers in the biodiversity rich fens.

Author: Dan Hoare & Sue Stephenson

Date of report: 05 December 2024

[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: C1, C2, C3, C4

Appendix 1 – Annual dredging progress 2024/25 (April 2024 to end November 2024)

Appendix 1 – Annual dredging progress 2024/25 (to end November 2024)

Project title Dredge site and sediment re-use location	Active Broads Authority dredging weeks completed/planned	Planned volume removed m ³	Actual volume removed m ³	Planned annual project cost ¹	Actual project cost
River Bure (continuation from 2023/24) Juby's Farm to Hoveton Viaduct	28/27	17,900	12,810	£190,710	£191,920
<i>Lagoon re-use site</i> <i>NB: Planned volume includes Bridge Broad (2,870m³) which is no longer part of the work programme</i>					
River Yare Rockland Broad (channels & dykes)	8/26	13,500	4,520	£190,020	£55,380
<i>Rockland Short Dyke & Postwick Marshes re-use sites & Postwick Tip. Running December to March</i>					
River Ant Stalham Dyke	0/3	830	0	£37,140	£1,810
<i>Hunsett Mill re-use site; work planned to start December 2024</i>					
River Yare Bargate Broad	0/4	2,400	0	£45,150	£1,920
<i>Postwick Marshes re-use & Postwick Tip. Running in February 2025 concurrently with Rockland dredging</i>					
River Thurne Catfield Dyke	0/4	2,000	0	£27,350	£580
<i>Deferred to 2025/26 due to delays in completing the Upper Bure project</i>					

Project title Dredge site and sediment re-use location	Active Broads Authority dredging weeks completed/planned	Planned volume removed m³	Actual volume removed m³	Planned annual project cost¹	Actual project cost
Site restoration	-	-	-	-	£3,750
Future site preparation Survey, mitigation & set-up	-	-	-	-	£3,640
Dredging support activities	-	-	-	-	£4,980
Total	36/64	36,630	17,330	490,370	263,980