

# Future proofing?

Financial sustainability in Eryri National Park  
Authority

May 2026

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# Contents

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Audit snapshot	4
Key facts and figures	6
Our findings	7
Recommendations	9
Appendices	10
1 About our work	11

# Audit snapshot

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## What we looked at

- 1 We looked at how Eryri National Park Authority (the Authority) is acting to help it achieve financial sustainability. This includes its financial plans, the evidence it uses to develop its plans, and how it reports to members on its finances.
- 2 We did not look at the Authority's wider financial management or the individual financial decisions it has made or intends to make.
- 3 Our work is focused on providing assurance and to support improvement in how the Authority is working to improve its sustainability in the medium to long-term. We recognise that some things that impact on this are outside of the Authority's control. This includes the level of funding it receives and global events like the COVID-19 pandemic. The difficult context means that planning for different scenarios and being clear on the options available is important. It also shows that it is not always possible to plan in detail in the medium to long-term.

## Why this is important

- 4 The public sector faces significant financial challenges and has done for several years. This places the Authority under pressure to balance what it wants or needs to spend against funding that remains a challenge. Getting this balance right is a significant challenge and means the Authority must balance different factors to ensure it makes best use of public money. This makes planning to achieve sustainability key and supports the Authority to demonstrate value for money.

## What we have found

- 5 We found that the Authority's arrangements have helped it to achieve a relatively strong financial position. However, it is at an early stage in setting out its plans for longer-term financial sustainability and has relied on use of reserves to balance its budget in recent years.

## What we recommend

- 6 We made two recommendations to the Authority. The first is around the development of a sustainable medium-term financial strategy to close the projected funding gap. The second was about reporting on the delivery of its financial strategy and the impact on its well-being objectives.

# Key facts and figures

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£540,000 - the extra amount the Authority aims to generate each year from car parking fees to help close its budget gap of £635,000.

86% - the percentage by which the Authority estimates its general fund reserves will decrease by between 2025-26 and 2028-29. The Authority estimates they will decrease from £3.12 million to £441,000 over this time if it takes no action to address this.

# Our findings

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## **Despite its relatively strong financial position the Authority has not yet identified how it will close its projected funding gap over the medium-term**

- 7 The Authority's initial strategy to close its budget gap is focused on increasing income, followed by non-staff costs savings and then staff costs savings. Its newly established strategic approach to generate additional income is being developed, which has the potential to substantially reduce its identified deficit. However, the Authority has not identified all the savings it intends to make to close its funding gap over the medium term.
- 8 The Authority currently makes use of its reserves to manage short term pressures, but it recognises this is not sustainable over the medium-term. It currently projects that usable reserves will decrease from £3.1 million in March 2026 to £441,000 by 2028-29. The Authority recognises this as a worst case scenario if no action was to be taken, however the Authority has already begun to take action to address this.

## **The Authority is aware that its financial position is unsustainable over the medium-term unless it takes action to address it**

- 9 The Authority has a good understanding of its financial position, funding challenges and financial risks. This is set out in budget update reports to members. Senior officers also have a good understanding of the Authority's key budget pressures and how it plans to address them over the medium term.

- 10 The Authority has estimated a funding gap of £1.02 million by 2028-29. The Authority has a relatively strong reserves position. However as noted above it recognises that continuing to use its reserves to supplement its revenue budget would become unsustainable unless it takes action to address this.
- 11 The Authority's initial assumptions around additional income from car park fees are that an increase of £540,000 per annum could be raised against a deficit of £635,000 for 2025-26. However, the Authority needs to undertake further work to identify how it will address the remainder of its deficit.

### **The Authority reports regularly on its finances to members to enable oversight and scrutiny but does not explain the implications for delivering its objectives**

- 12 The Authority reports regularly on its finances to members. The reporting makes members aware of the current financial position and the Authority's current use of reserves. This can help members identify financial risks and take action to improve the Authority's financial position.
- 13 However, the Authority's reporting does not clearly explain the implications of continuing to operate within a budget deficit on the delivery of its well-being objectives. Setting out the implications can help to strengthen members' oversight and scrutiny, and therefore financial sustainability.

# Recommendations

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**R1** The Authority should build on its recent activity to develop a sustainable medium-term financial strategy to close its projected funding deficit over the medium-term (**paragraphs 7 and 8**).

**R2** The Authority should review its financial reporting to ensure that it reports regularly on the delivery of its financial strategy and the impact of this on its financial position, and the delivery of well-being objectives (**paragraph 13**).

# Appendices

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# 1 About our work

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## Scope of the audit

We looked at how the Authority is acting to help it to achieve financial sustainability. This includes its financial plans, the evidence it used to develop its plans, and then how it reports to members on its finances. We looked at the arrangements in place between October and January 2026.

We did not look at the Authority's wider financial management or the individual financial decisions it has made or intends to make.

## Audit questions and criteria

### Questions

We reached our conclusions about the Authority's financial sustainability by answering three key questions. First, we asked if the Authority has a clear and long-term plan for its financial sustainability. Second, we looked at whether the Authority knows the financial position it is in and has used its knowledge to shape its strategy. Third, we asked if the Authority's financial reports to members help them to oversee its financial sustainability.

### Criteria

We use the audit criteria to help us answer our questions on the Authority's arrangements. They help us to understand what arrangements should or could look like in context. The work of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and our cumulative knowledge shaped their development.

## Methods

Our findings are based on document reviews and interviews with senior officers, the Chair of the Authority and the Chair of the Performance and Resources Committee.

# About us

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Audit Wales

Tel: 029 2032 0500

Fax: 029 2032 0600

Textphone: 029 2032 0660

E-mail: [info@audit.wales](mailto:info@audit.wales)

Website: [www.audit.wales](http://www.audit.wales)

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