

National Park Authority

Audit Committee Meeting

Agenda Item 13



Policy Update

Paper for decision

1. Introduction

A review of Park Authority policies is underway and priority is being given to policies which an internal audit highlighted as being the most pressing. The first of these, the Whistleblowing Policy, has been updated and revised and is ready for consideration by the Audit Committee. The next policy to be updated will be the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are invited to agree the revised Whistleblowing Policy subject to any further minor amendments made by the Committee.
- 2.2 Members are invited to note that it is proposed to bring an updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy to a future Committee meeting for agreement.

3. Background

- 3.1 A review of internal policies was already underway when an internal audit highlighted the need to update several policies for which there was no record of a recent review of the content having taken place. Both activities have highlighted policies for which the Audit Committee has oversight and which need to be prioritised for updating.
- 3.2 The current Whistleblowing Policy has been in place since August 2011. This policy has been used once recently and therefore it is timely to review the policy with a number of officers and Board members having had cause to use it.
- 3.3 The main changes are in the language which has been made more user friendly and simpler to understand, the difference between whistleblowing and grievance raising has been clarified, as has the difference between confidentiality and anonymity. The line manager has been added in as a possible first point of contact. The Policy was checked against similar policies in other public bodies. The Audit Scotland Good Practice Guide for Whistleblowing, Whistleblowing in the Public Sector by Public Concern at Work (supported by the four UK audit bodies) and the Guidance for Employers and Code of Practice for Whistleblowing issued by the UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills have also been referred to.

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- 3.4 The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, last revised in 2004, is in the initial stages of being reviewed and policies from other non-departmental public bodies are being looked at for good practice in this area. When the policy is updated it is intended to include anti-bribery policy in the document as this is currently an area for which we have no policy. Therefore the document will be known as the Fraud, Corruption and Bribery Policy and will be brought to a future Committee.

Appendix 1 – draft revised Whistleblowing Policy

Author: Amanda Aikman, Governance & Legal Manager
Executive Sponsor: Jaki Carnegie, Director of Corporate Services