

National Park Authority Audit Committee Meeting



Minutes of Meeting held on 26th November 2013
John Muir Suite, Carrochan, Carrochan Road, Balloch

Present: Lindsay Morrison (Chairman)
 Angus Allan
 David McCowan
 David McKenzie
 James Robb
 Hazel Sorrell

In Attendance: Jaki Carnegie, Director of Corporate Services, NPA
 Gordon Watson, Director of Operations, NPA
 Peter Stevenson, Governance Manager, NPA
 Brian Curran, KPMG
 Ursula Lodge, Audit Scotland
 Gillian McCreadie, Audit Scotland

Item	Title / Discussion	Action by
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Chairman opened the meeting, welcoming Gillian McCreadie to her first NPA Audit Committee meeting. It was noted that Gillian would take a more prominent role in working with the NPA going forward.</p>	
2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
3	<p>Minute of previous meeting held on 5th March 2013</p> <p>The minutes were proposed as an accurate record of the meeting by David McCowan and seconded by Hazel Sorrell.</p>	
4	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>Peter Stevenson referred to action 4 from 30th April 2013 and stated that a discussion of future training needs would take place at a Board Business Session to be arranged early in 2014. He confirmed that this discussion had not taken place due to delays in publishing revised On Board guidance for Board Members.</p> <p>Jaki Carnegie referred to action 5.1 from March 2013 and noted that this had not been taken forward recently as the NPA was still in the process of appointing a Finance and Performance Manager.</p> <p>Jaki Carnegie confirmed that item 7.1 from 29th November 2012 had not been progressed and confirmed that she would check if David Cameron still intended to produce a paper relating to pension fund liability.</p>	

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	<p>Members discussed the ongoing need for this paper and agreed that this was no longer a priority action.</p> <p>ACTION: Paper relating to participation in Strathclyde Pension Fund to be removed from Matters Arising.</p>	<p>Jaki Carnegie</p>
	<p>Peter Stevenson provided an update on item 8 from 27th October 2011. He confirmed that work was in hand to implement the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's Model Complaints Handling Procedure, and that this would be in place by the end of March 2014. He confirmed that this would be brought to the Audit Committee for comments.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the status of the actions.</p>	
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p>	<p>Internal Audit</p> <p>2011/12 – 13/14 Strategic Internal Audit Plan and 2013/14 Annual Internal Audit Plan</p> <p>Brian Curran introduced the draft Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2013/14. He confirmed that there would be a focus on Planning, Carbon Management and Regulatory Compliance. He noted that the internal audit would not cover Partnership Working, Staff Performance Management or Visitor Experience, as these had all been addressed through prior internal audits. Jaki Carnegie confirmed that Financial Management and Controls Risk Self-Assessments had already been undertaken and that the remaining audits identified by Brian Curran would take place in December.</p> <p>Members queried the timescale of any internal audit of commercial income generation processes. It was agreed that as no further action had taken place in this regard it would be too soon to cover it in this round of internal audits. Jaki Carnegie confirmed that a new three-year plan would be established after April and that commercial income generation would comprise part of this.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the report.</p>	

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5.2	<p>Summary of Outstanding Actions</p> <p>Gordon Watson confirmed that the action under VE02 on page 1 had been completed.</p> <p>Jaki Carnegie confirmed that the actions on page 6 relating to stakeholder engagement remained in progress.</p> <p>Lindsay Morrison suggested that timescales for actions should be updated where relevant – e.g. where delivery not possible within allotted timescale due to departure of staff member responsible.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the report.</p>	
5.3	<p>Report on Controls Risk Self-Assessment</p> <p>Jaki Carnegie asked Members to note that there was only one ‘moderate’ recommendation arising from this report. Brian Curran confirmed that the report presented a positive picture. He noted that in one instance a risk had been identified over electronic expenses forms, which management had indicated they were prepared to accept.</p> <p>Lindsay Morrison noted that the risk associated with purchase invoice authorisation had not yet been rectified and asked that the new Finance and Performance Manager address this. Jaki Carnegie clarified that this risk related to scenarios where purchase orders were required but not completed by staff.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the report.</p>	
5.4	<p>Report on Financial Management, Planning & Efficiencies</p> <p>Brian Curran confirmed that this report followed up on work carried out in the first year of the three-year internal audit plan. He confirmed that the report showed a strong position overall, with only one low recommendation relating to efficiency savings. He noted that otherwise the NPA had well developed financial planning processes which were linked to the organisation’s strategic objectives. He thanked the NPA for the open access provided and prompt supply of information. Members noted the strong feedback.</p>	

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<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p>	<p>Lindsay Morrison suggested that the NPA should be involved in assessing KPMG's KPIs. He clarified that this should be provided by the Committee and management as appropriate.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the report.</p> <p>External Audit</p> <p>Audit Scotland Annual Report on the 2012/13 Audit</p> <p>Ursula Lodge introduced the report, noting that overall it showed positive results. She clarified that this report shows wider corporate issues compared to the report presented to the June Committee meeting.</p> <p>She noted that a formal staff register of interests was to be implemented. She also noted the ongoing work to resolve issues with the title documentation to the Gateway Centre in Balloch. She highlighted the stable position identified as part of the review of the NPA's outturn and financial position, and noted that sound corporate governance arrangements were in place. She thanked NPA staff for their support and assistance.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the report.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Risk Register</p> <p>Lindsay Morrison introduced the updated Risk Register, confirming that he was happy that the process was back on track. He clarified that Jaki Carnegie had been tasked with ensuring there were an appropriate number of actions and that the Register was in an appropriate format. He asked Members to provide feedback as to the content of the Register and the scoring of risks. Jaki Carnegie noted that the Register now focussed only on strategic risks. She proposed that the Register be reviewed quarterly by the Executive and annually by the Audit Committee prior to sign-off by the Board.</p> <p>David McKenzie suggested that the actions around Risk 5 could be strengthened, noting that the Community Partnership intended to appoint a Broadband Officer for the Park area.</p> <p>David McKenzie also queried the wording of the actions relating to Risk 12, suggesting that the current wording suggested that the Park may seek to influence the electorate. Gordon Watson noted that the intention was to encourage people to participate in the election process.</p>	

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	<p>David McCowan asked if any of the risks were outwith NPA control. Jaki Carnegie clarified that where this was the case it should be acknowledged. Gordon Watson added that the Register should be clear where the NPA can facilitate opportunities.</p> <p>Angus Allan welcomed the strategic overview provided by the updated Register and thanked Jaki Carnegie for her work on the document.</p> <p>James Robb asked that the layout be re-considered, and suggested that the decision on this be delegated to Jaki Carnegie.</p> <p>Lindsay Morrison clarified that the Register would be submitted to the Board for discussion in December. David McKenzie reminded the Executive of previous discussions relating to Members supporting the Executive in particular areas of work.</p> <p>Jaki Carnegie confirmed that she would look to the Audit Committee to champion the Risk Register during discussions with the wider Board.</p> <p>ACTION : The Risk Register will be submitted to the Board for discussion in December 2013.</p>	<p>Jaki Carnegie</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>No other business was raised.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>It was confirmed that the next meeting was likely to take place on 4th March 2014, pending approval by the Board of the 2014 calendar of events.</p>	

Signed _____
L. Morrison, Chairman