



Corporate Policy Review

Agenda Item 8

National Park Authority Audit and Risk Committee

Tuesday 4th June 2024

Paper for noting

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1. Purpose

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to set out;

1.1.1. Progress against the Corporate Policy Review Plan for 2023/24;

1.1.2. Corporate Policy Review Plan for 2024/25

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. Members are asked to note the report.

3. Contribution to National Park Partnership Plan and/or Our 5-year Plan

3.1. This contributes towards the commitment within Our 5 Years Plan to continuously improve and develop resilient systems, processes and services.

4. Background

4.1. At the December 2020 Audit & Risk Committee meeting we presented a new process for updating the Committee on progress on policy reviews, as follows:

- a) Each policy will be allocated a risk rating of low, medium, or high. The rating is based on the level of organisational risk associated with a delay to a review of the policy.
- b) As a rule of thumb, high risk policies will be reviewed annually, medium risk policies every three years, and low risk policies every five years. If there are particular reasons to update an individual policy sooner or later than these timescales, we will adjust our approach accordingly. An earlier or later review could arise from an identified management need (e.g. efficiency, effectiveness or broader corporate goals), from an internal audit of an area, or from changes to the external environment (e.g. new statutory requirements).
- c) At a minimum, policy reviews will check that the policy is still compliant with statutory requirements and in line with broader organisational development since its last review. In some cases policy reviews may be more comprehensive depending on the priorities of the organisation or the level to which the external environment has changed.
- d) Each year at its June meeting, we will present the Audit & Risk Committee with our policy review plan for the year, setting out which policies will be reviewed through the year and detailing progress against the previous year's plan.

5. Progress update

5.1. 2023/24 Review Plan - Appendix 1

- 5.1.1. As per the paper submitted in June 2023, we planned to review 34 policies in 2023/24; this was made up of seven carried over from 2022/23 and 27 policies on their standard review cycle. In addition to this, there were four new policies planned for development.
- 5.1.2. Of those 38 policies, we have completed 25.
- 5.1.3. The thirteen that have not been reviewed or developed in 2023/24 will be carried forward into 2024/25. The main reasons for non-completion have been related to staffing changes in Information Management and Information Systems, absence of key staff in Estates and the desire to streamline the review of all Finance policies in line with open audit recommendations.
- 5.1.4. The 2023/24 plan for policy reviews is at **Appendix 1**.
- 5.1.5. Policies marked with an asterisk were policies carried over from 2022/23.

5.2. 2024/25 Review Plan and progress updates – Appendix 2

- 5.2.1. In 2024/25, we plan to review 32 policies; this is made up of thirteen carried over from 2023/24 and 19 policies on their standard review cycle.
- 5.2.2. Policies marked with an asterisk are policies carried over from 2023/24.

5.3. Corporate Policy Review 5 Year Plan – Appendix 3

- 5.3.1. For completeness, we have included at Appendix 3 an overview of all policies maintained by the National Park Authority, and the schedule with which they are reviewed in accordance with.

6. Risks

- 6.1. Staff capacity to review the policies has remained the biggest risk to this process; there are often business critical activities which are required to take priority over policy reviews. This will continue to be monitored by the Corporate Performance Manager to help achieve our deadlines.

7. Next steps

- 7.1. We will provide a report to committee in June 2025, alongside the plan for 2025/26.

8. Appendices

- 8.1. Appendix 1 - Review Plan 2023/24
- 8.2. Appendix 2 - Review Plan 2024/25
- 8.3. Appendix 3 - 5 year Corporate Policy Review Plan

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