

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

FOR DISCUSSION

Title: RISK MANAGEMENT

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Purpose

This paper presents an update of the Authority's strategic risk register.

The paper also sets out a specific consideration of the strategic risks around reputational management, following the Board's consideration of these matters in September, with a view to update and rationalise the risks included in the risk register

Recommendations

The Audit & Risk Committee is asked to:

- a) **review the updated strategic risk register and comment on any element of the Authority's strategic risk management position;**
- b) **consider whether there are any strategic risks potentially impacting on delivery of the Authority's strategic objectives not covered by current risk management approaches;**
- c) **agree proposed amendments to the strategic risks on reputational management as set out in paragraph 7;**
- d) **agree that other risks flagged for deletion in Annex I are removed from the risk register.**

Executive Summary

1. The Cairngorms National Park Authority has a well-established and embedded approach to strategic risk management. Our current strategic risk register is reproduced at Annex I to this paper. The more operational risk management of the Authority's COVID19 and Business Continuity responses is considered elsewhere on the agenda for the current meeting.
2. The Board considered the Authority's strategic risk management position as part of its review of the update on the 2018 – 2022 Corporate Plan delivery at its meeting in September. The risk register has been reviewed by senior managers to update risk trends, mitigation actions and commentary on risk management since that Board meeting.

3. The Audit and Risk Committee is invited to review the updated strategic risk register and comment on any element of the Authority's strategic risk management position. The Committee is also invited to consider whether there are any strategic risks potentially impacting on delivery of the Authority's strategic objectives not covered by current risk management approaches.

Reputational Management

4. The Board considered a number of strategic risks around the Authority's reputational management risks at its September meeting:
 - a) the Authority's reputation is impacted by a small number of vociferous social media opinion leaders
 - b) high profile incidents or one off stories, such as those associated with wildlife crime, mountain hares, affordable housing can have an undue influence on the Authority's wider reputation
 - c) the Authority is not perceived to be appropriately addressing the potential for conflict between 4 statutory aims
5. The risks at 4a (risk A14 in the risk register) and 4b (risk A15) have both been on a downward risk trend for some time and were highlighted for removal from the risk register. The risk at 4c (risk A21) has remained level since its introduction to the strategic register by the Committee in March 2019 following consideration of an internal audit report. The Board discussed whether some form of rationalisation of these risks may be merited, rather than removing risks A14 and A15 completely as had been suggested.
6. The risk around addressing conflict between the National Park's 4 statutory aims involves a significant aspect of policy evaluation and explicit decision making rationale and therefore goes beyond reputational management. This risk is also still evaluated as a valid risk to remain under consideration and management. Therefore, it is proposed that the risk remains in its current form in the strategic risk register.
7. I suggest that risks A14 and A15 could be rationalised into a single strategic risk: One-off, high profile incidents and / or vociferous social media correspondents have an undue influence on the Authority's positive reputation. This leaves a specific reputational management strategic risk in the register on which to focus our mitigation activity around communications, reputation and profile management. The Committee is invited to consider this proposal and determine whether and how the Strategic Risk Register should be adapted.

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