CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
RESOURCES COMMITTEE

FOR DISCUSSION

Title: **Hybrid Working Approach and Office Return: RISK REGISTER**

Prepared by: **Kate Christie, Head of Organisational Development**
Vicky Walker, Governance and Data Reporting Manager

Purpose

This risk register has been prepared to support the trial of the Hybrid Working Approach (which has been developed following management of the Authority's Business Continuity Planning (BCP) operations while the Authority remained at stages of "lockdown" as a consequence the COVID19 pandemic), together with the trial of the associated return of staff to the office.

Recommendations:

The Resources Committee is asked to: -
   a) **Consider the risks, and to advise on any omissions**
   b) **Comment on preventative and remedial actions.**

Strategic Background

1. During the 18 months of enforced home working, the organisation continued to meets its objectives, and staff continued to operate efficiently. This reflected the national trend, and the outcome of people valuing more highly the work:life balance that the home working environment facilitated. Nationally, as we start returning the workplace, there has been a shift away from entirely office-based working, to a hybrid approach, and CNPA is seeking to develop an approach that best meets operational requirements, whilst still considers the individual needs and preferences of its staff, as well as space constraints in the office, which have escalated following increasing staff numbers. Given constraints on office space, in addition to trialling the hybrid working approach, we are also moving towards an environment of hotdesking in the office, rather than of staff returning to the desks they occupied pre-pandemic.

2. The approach that we are trialling is one whereby staff have the option of working from home up to 50% of their contractual hours, without this requiring any procedure to support implementation, other than line manager approval: with regular (51% +) and permanent home-working requiring a formal application

process. This approach will be trialled for 12 months, and only after a positive evaluation of the approach would we look to developing a policy position and permanent changes to contract. This approach aligns with how we propose using the office space when we are able to return to office-based working. Staff have been fully consulted on the approach, which was developed following a staff survey on preferences (summarised results are set out in appendix 1), together with a team survey on how we might use the office space (see appendix 2), both of which informed an options analysis and comprehensive consultation on how the office space will be allocated post-Covid.

3. The following table sets out the identified risks and their assessed impacts, together with an associated score of risk likelihood (L) and impact (I). Risk mitigation measures are identified and residual risk rescores to give likelihood of risk after successful preventative action (ML) and impact of risk after successful remedial action (MI).

    Risk appetite is set at a score of 16 or more, or 15 where impact is above 3. At or above such scores, mitigation action is required, otherwise risks will be monitored by management team. Review of the risk register is coordinated by the Management Team and Operational Management Group.
    Key to abbreviations:
    L = Likelihood of risk score
    I = Impact of risk score
    ML = Likelihood of risk score after effective implementation and preventative mitigation action.
    MI = Impact of risk score after effective implementation and remedial mitigation action.
    Scores 1 Low to 5 High

CAIRNGORMS NPA: BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING
HYBRID WORKING APPROACH: RISK REGISTER
25 August 2020

Owner	Risk	Impact	L	I	Prevent	ML	Remedial	MI
	Greater demands on managers time to build and maintain relations with a dispersed staff group,	Less time to spend on operational delivery	4	3	Line manager training on managing dispersed staff	3	Ongoing review of effectiveness and risk	3
	Greater demands on staff time to develop effective and efficient professional relationships with colleagues	Less time to spend on operational delivery	3	2	Reinforce Insights profiles and refresh Insights training. Most staff will have at least 1 - 2 days in the office on the max occupancy days IT upgrade will improve communication and planning of office and home time.	2	Ensure SCF and HR feedback loops are in place New Normal Project evaluation will continue at 3, 6 and 12 months post implementation with reports to management team.	2
	Imbalance in relationships between those who see each more in the office versus those who are more homebased, leading to Increased isolation of staff working at home and exclusion from informal office networks'	Staff feeling those in the office are treated more favourably, and that staff working remotely are excluded from decision making	4	4	Line manager training on managing dispersed staff equitably. Ensure staff performance development conversations are a management priority Most staff will have at least 1 - 2 days in the	3	Ongoing review of effectiveness and risk. Ensure SCF and HR feedback loops are in place Wellbeing work within HR team to mitigate any isolation.	2

Owner	Risk	Impact	L	I	Prevent	ML	Remedial	MI
					office on the max occupancy days. Hybrid meeting space available in New Normal office to connect with staff working remotely. Strong governance structures for key decisions.		Management team to ensure all appropriate staff involved in decision making	
	Information Technology and adaptations are inadequate to meet organisational requirements during hybrid working arrangements.	Time wasted dealing with IT issues causing less time to spend on operational delivery. Ineffective organisational operations through inability to support remote working / communications.	4	4	Enhanced IT infrastructure including migration to SWAN, MS 365. Resource Central mapping app to book meeting/desk space All staff given work laptops Docking hubs at all hot desk	2	Review feedback from MT and through staff groups, adapt, invest where required, and respond.	2
	Difficulty in managing hybrid meetings	Less effective meetings leading to inefficiency	3	3	IT infrastructure, and dedicated "small office meeting space" that supports hybrid meetings Training on chairing virtual and hybrid meetings	2	Ongoing review. New Normal Project evaluation will continue at 3, 6 and 12 months post implementation with reports to management team.	2

Owner	Risk	Impact	L	I	Prevent	ML	Remedial	MI
	Inappropriate workstations leading to poor posture and potential health and musco-skeletal problems for those working at a home office / Hot desking in office	Increased absence levels, decrease productivity	4	4	Virtual DSE assessments conducted by trained DSE assessor. CNPA provide appropriate desk and chair for any staff who work at home, whether on an ad hoc or permanent basis	2	Occupational Health Service available for all staff if problems develop Ongoing review	2
	Lack of coordinated activities resulting from hybrid operations	Key priorities are missed; work is duplicated by differing staff / groups	4	4	Coordination through more regular management meetings; increase time and priority to internal communications.	2	Establish MT/OMG review of activities and implement further project management controls where required;	2
	Internal communications with hybrid working arrangements are ineffective.	Lack of coordination around activities; staff group as a whole are not engaged with organisation and not all staff understand direction of travel.	3	2	Central coordination of communications through more regular, broad based management meetings; clear responsibility for coordination of coms; internal communications identified as a key resourcing priority.	2	Undertake regular staff surveys and implement bottom up improvement recommendations; ensure there are mechanisms to regularly tap into feedback – use SCF reps.	2
	Different teams are not working collaboratively due to changed office/desk arrangements	Disconnect between team work plans and potential impact of either duplication of work, or pieces of work being overlooked	3	3	Central coordination of communications through more regular, broad based management meetings	2	Weekly collective OMG oversight of core work areas of teams	2

Owner	Risk	Impact	L	I	Prevent	ML	Remedial	MI
					Office space designed to ensure pockets of teams are able to work collaberatively			
	Public perception of reduced staff in building able to respond to queries.	Reputation of CNPA is impacted	5	5	Staff will be physically available in the office every week day. There will always be at least one member of the admin team in the office to sign post queries appropriately which can be responded to remotely	2	Complaints regularly monitored by management team.	2
	Staff with equality characteristics disproportionately affected by Hybrid Working arrangements	Staff with equality characteristics disengaged and isolated. Potential indirect discrimination. Staff from low-socio economic backgrounds may not be able to take advantage of hybrid working due to space and costs of home working (internet, heating) Staff at risk of domestic abuse at increase risk while working from home	5	5	Equality Impact Assessment of post-covid working undertaken Review from Equality Advisory Panel and Internal Equality group. Shared learning with cross-sector equality group. Domestic Abuse Policy in place	3	Monitor and review through SCF and staff reps, and through internal equality group. Best company survey results.	3

Owner	Risk	Impact	L	I	Prevent	ML	Remedial	MI
					CNPA provide equipment for home workstation.			
	New staff take longer to integrate into teams and role	Reduced effectiveness, greater time spent on orientating staff. Staff take longer to fully perform in role.	4	3	Induction processes have been adapted to remote working. All managers have received training on managing remotely. Chief Exec runs regular welcome to new staff sessions (virtual)	3	Review through SCF and staff reps. Feedback and evaluation of staff induction.	3

Appendix 1

We conducted a staff survey in June 2021 to identify staff preferences, on the caveat that these could not be guaranteed. The results were as follows: -

Total Organisation: - 68 Responses			
Permanent Office Based	Permanent Home Based	Blended	
7 (10%)	**4 (6%)**	**57 (84%)**	
		20% home/80% Office	8 (12%)
		40% home/60% Office	13 (19%)
		50% home/50% Office	12 (18%)
		60% home/40% Office	14 (20%)
		20% home/80% Office	10 (15%)

Of those who would like a blended approach, 33 (49% total staff, 58% of those seeking a blended approach) would be willing to be in the office up to 50% of their contractual hours; 24 Staff (35% of total staff, 42% of those seeking a blended approach) have a preference for being based at home 60% or more of their contractual hours. The majority of those seeking a blended approach would prefer to be in the office 50% or more of their contractual hours.

The majority of those who live locally (18 out of 30, or 60% of those living locally) would prefer to be in the office more than 60%, whereas the majority of those who live outwith the area (28 out of 38, or 74% of those living outwith) would prefer to work from home 50% or more. It is clear therefore that commuting time and costs as well as carbon emissions does play a role in informing people's preferences.

Focussing now on gender differences to the responses, of the 28 males respondents, 53% would prefer to be office based 60% or more, compared to 46% who would prefer to work from home 50% or more. Of the 40 female respondents, 65% would prefer to work from home 50% or more compared to 35% who would prefer to be mostly office based. So, the majority of women would prefer to be more home based, whereas the majority of men would like to be more office based. This is an important point that should inform our considerations going forward – an employer's Policy about hybrid working patterns must avoid being indirectly discriminatory on the grounds of sex because of the fact that more women than men have the primary responsibility for childcare.

Appendix 2

Following the completion of team survey (which was completed by line managers, and informed by the staff preferences survey) the following pattern of office and homeworking has emerged.

Working Type	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Working in GOS (max)	26	25	55	56	49	49	48	46	18	17
Working in GOS (min)	23	22	51	52	45	46	45	44	12	12
Working in Ballater	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	0	0
Working at Home (min)	60	47	18	18	26	27	23	24	42	43
Working at Home (max)	63	50	21	20	30	31	25	26	47	48
Field work (max)	0	14	24	23	20	20	13	13	15	14
Field Work (Min)	0	14	21	21	19	19	11	12	15	14
NWD	11	11	2	1	3	1	13	13	22	23
Blanks	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11

Tuesdays are the most popular days for office access with Wednesday and Thursday suggesting similar numbers. The majority of homeworking days are Monday and Friday. There are 11 unknown working patterns due to either vacancies or staff being unable to confirm. The max and min levels represent where staff have indicated they will be doing either/or on any given day.