Appendix 3(a)

Strategic Risk Register

2018 - 2021

The Strategic Risk Register provides a framework to enable the Authority to set its risk appetite and identifies and defines key risks to completing Authority’s five-year Business Plan together with the levels of a risk and the likelihood of it occurring.

The Strategic Risk Register sets actions to reduce the likelihood of the risk happening and / or actions to mitigate the impact should the risk occur.

Northumberland National Park Authority: 11 July 2018
Background

The Strategic Risk Register identifies the key barriers to completing the prioritised actions detailed in the five-year Business Plan and the supporting Medium-Term Financial Plan. The document does not consider physical threats or emergencies which impact the operations of the Authority. Please refer to the Authority’s Business Continuity Plan (BCP) for these contingencies. Financial year 2018/19 is an appropriate time to revisit the SRR as the current Business Plan is moving into its second year. The initial risks associated with both implementation of the new plan and the risks around the construction of The Sill: National Landscape Discovery Centre are no longer anticipated. Similarly, a wider array of risks have now been identified. Looking forward, the 2018/19 Strategic Risk Register looks at the high level risks over the next three years of the current Business Plan and sets actions to reduce the likelihood of the risk happening and/or the actions to reduce the impact should the risk actually occur.

A two-fold model is used to assess the Strategic Risks in relation to achieving the 6 key aims in the Business Plan:

Firstly, external changes are identified by reviewing the wider operating environment over the next three years. These are considered under – Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legislative and Environmental areas (PESTLE analysis). The key opportunities (upside risks) and threats (downside risks) are identified from assessing a wide range of possible changes; and

Secondly, the internal environment is assessed by examining the Authority’s Strengths and Weaknesses and these are mapped against the key external opportunities and threats identified through the PESTLE analysis. By mapping these elements any significant opportunities are identified which can help inform the Authority’s Five-Year Business Plan and Operational Plan. In addition, this joint analysis helps identify key risks. The risks identified in this way are presented in the form of the Strategic Risk Register.

Content and key changes to Identified Risks since 2016/17

- Article 50 triggered in March 2017, confirming the UK’s exit from the EU. This has potential to create a range of risks moving forward into the UK transition period and on the final exit date. Whilst the Authority does not currently benefit from direct EU funding, the support mechanisms for land management and rural development heavily rely on EU funding.

- The government published an 8 point Plan for England’s National Parks in March 2016, detailing the vision and objectives for the National Park.


- The number of ‘Staycations’ continues to increase year on year in the UK, escapism and time with family are listed as important motivators.

- 2016 was the warmest year since records began with 2017 and 2015 second and third warmest. The last 3 years have been the warmest recorded and 17 of the 18
The warmest years have been recorded since the year 2000. Climate change is now beginning to affect the severity of annual weather patterns.

- The government published a 25 year environment plan in January 2018 with the strategic vision of conserving and enhancing the environment and expanding forest cover. Included in the report was a Hobhouse Review for the 21st Century. This embeds the 8 point plan.
- The guaranteed Defra fund settlement for national park authorities ends in 2019/20 with a corresponding risk to the Authority Core Grant.
- The North of Tyne combined Authority has received approval through a ‘minded to’ deal with additional investment anticipated from central government.
- Discussions are gathering pace around a potential Borderlands deal.

**Business Plan Aims (2017-2021):**

Aim 1: A Welcoming Park – Sill, Social Media, Activities

Aim 2: A Distinctive Place – SSSI Condition, Species, Land Management, Redesdale

Aim 3: A working Landscape – Agri-Schemes, RBAPS, Woodland

Aim 4: Thriving Communities – Businesses, Planning, Local Plan, Training Programmes, Community Enterprise

Aim 5: A Valued Asset – Management Plan, Events, Marketing, Innovation

Aim 6: An Organisation for the Future – Evolve, Diversify, Ambition, Intelligence, Performance
The key risks identified by the Leadership Team are as follows:

1. The National Park Authority is unable to adapt to Local / National Government changes
2. Unable to become an Organisation Fit for the Future
3. Unable to Manage our Financial Position
4. The National Park Authority lacks the capacity to complete major parts of the Business Plan
5. National Parks become less relevant to society and as a result less valued by the public and national policy decision makers.
6. The effects of climate change damage the environment and reduce the resilience of National Park businesses and communities.
1. There is a risk that The National Park Authority is unable to adapt to changes adopted by National / Local Government

Root Causes

Legislative Changes

The European legislative framework for protecting the environment is to come to an end following the Brexit transition period. Broadly, the Government is committed to National Parks as highlighted in the 25 year plan and some of these changes could be positive. The 21st Century Hobhouse Review will begin in 2018 and be reported in 2019, whilst it could lead to the expansion of the National Parks or their powers; this is unlikely to come with significant additional funding.

Land Management and Rural Development

Brexit offers the potential for sweeping changes to the current land management system and agri-environmental schemes. The government has recently consulted on such a scheme through its “Health and Harmony” review. The changes have the potential to improve the results based environmental payments and the opportunity to target the scheme to local need. Conversely, if the revised scheme does not work for upland areas we are likely to experience significant changes in land management in the park. Targets established for tree planting could marginalise upland farming in favour of plantations. In haste to encourage forestry, there is a risk that other partners and other government departments fail to pay due regard to the national park designation. The loss of current subsidies to landowners may encourage them to turn to forestry as a low input, extensive method of generating a return from their land.

Current government proposals say little about the future of rural development programmes. The loss of “bottom up” style support for rural businesses and community development represents a further risk.

Planning

The Localism Act was introduced in 2011 with the aim of devolving more power to local communities including giving them the ability to produce their own neighbourhood plans. The Act also introduced a ‘duty-to-cooperate’ which obliges local planning authorities to cooperate on cross-boundary strategic planning issues such as housing. While Development Managers have now embraced this change, the structural changes to Authorities statutory requirements have caused significant headaches for Policy development. During the restructure of the planning system around 1,000 pages of Planning Policy Guidance was reduced to around 50 pages. This was found to lead to some ambiguity in interpreting and practical application of certain elements of the framework with clarification often being sought through the courts. A further seven policy guidance documents have been produced between 2014 and 2018 in an attempt to provide the necessary guidance to authorities which was initially removed. The ever changing national policy environment is not conducive to the formulation of robust planning policies at the local level. This introduces risk and uncertainty in the Authority’s current review of its Local Plan.
Local Government / Partners

As a Special Purpose Authority, the National Park Authority does not have control of infrastructure within its boundaries. As a consequence, Northumberland County Council has the ability to positively or negatively influence Business Plan objectives. The Authority must be prepared to influence and adapt to changes externally for a variety of social, political or financial reasons.

Impacts

- National Park extension and additional work is not appropriately reflected in core grant funding. The Authority is forced to reign in current Business Plan objectives.
- As countryside stewardship evolves after Brexit, land managers will adopt or abandon the new system to take advantage of alternative income streams.
- Potential beneficial changes in Agri-Environmental schemes improve stewardship of the land in the National Park.
- Increased forest cover causes a decline in the biodiversity of the national park and damage to the landscape, with limited scope for meeting wider national park authority objectives.
- Changes in National Policy Guidance cause delays in the preparation of statutory documents with knock on consequences for updated needs based planning policy.
- Lack of co-ordination between Key Partners due to resource constraints leads to conflicting objectives. Evidence gathering and scientific studies are postponed while the growth agenda is being pursued. Partners begin to undermine each other’s progress.
- Business Plan Aims are abandoned because of a drop in resources and a change in Government Priorities, specifically:
  - Aim 2: Contributing to a Distinctive Place, and
  - Aim 3: Contributing to a Living Working Landscape

Current Status

- The government’s 25 year environmental plan and the 8 point plan for national parks retain broadly the same themes as the current National Park objectives. Current government policy seems supportive of National Parks.
- Authority restructuring will provide some resilience at the management level with greater capacity for management oversight.
- Changes to national planning policy/guidance have made it more difficult to provide affordable housing in the National Park.
- The Authority retains the ability to refuse planning permission within the National Park to ensure building and landscape changes are in line with current policy. Current policy is guided by the National Planning Policy Framework and permitted development criteria are determined at the national level.
- The Authority is responsible for working with the Forestry Commission to mitigate any potential impacts from centralised decision making. All sizes of forestry proposals are balanced by landscape scale considerations.
- The Authority is working with the Forestry Commission and partners on opportunity mapping to encourage planting in areas of low landscape/biodiversity significance i.e. the principle of ‘the right tree in the right place’.
The Border Uplands Demonstrator Initiative has launched as a pilot project to establish new ways of running land management.

Northumberland County Council and Northumberland National Park Authority have a positive working relationship with many shared programmes and objectives.

**Actions to Treat this Risk**

- Take account of changes to government legislation and guidance when undergoing next review of Business and Management Plans due to be completed in 2021.
- Conduct reviews of ongoing projects to ensure outcomes are in line with any changes in the Business and Management Plans, and to assess how they deliver towards the 25 Year Plan for the Environment and the 8 Point Plan.
- Fully Engage with the 2018/19 Julian Glover led review of protected areas to achieve a positive and deliverable outcome for NNPA.
- Work with National Parks England to provide robust responses and evidence to Government consultations, clearly articulating likelihood and impact of negative consequences or positive opportunities.
- Work with partners including Natural England and Forestry Commission to demonstrate how local and specialist advice adds value to decision making processes on forestry development and restructuring.
- Offer to pilot new approaches in Northumberland National Park.
- Work with the private sector forestry industry and local landowners to strategically plan the optimum scale and locations for commercial forestry of non-native trees in the national park and surrounding areas.
- Work with National Parks England through Heads of Planning group and National Parks Policy Officers group.
- Early incorporation to Local Plan policies.
- Continue efforts to refresh the partnership approach to planning and develop the National Park Management Plan.
- Staff and Members continue to network across partner organisations to develop a co-ordinated response to legislative changes and take advantage of emerging opportunities.
- Work with Defra bodies, local government and wider stakeholders to build a response to the 25 year Plan for the Environment.
### Risk Rating

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<td><strong>Risk Owner</strong></td>
<td>Chief Executive</td>
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### Stakeholders and their Expectations

**Communities** - expect national park purposes to be upheld and impacts of development to be managed through the planning system. They expect reasonable levels of new housing in appropriate locations. They expect large-scale forestry planting, extraction and transportation to be well managed and subject to genuine consultation.

**Government** – expects local authorities, including national park authorities, to be positive and pro-active and to support the growth agenda whilst not damaging the long-term environment qualities of protected areas especially national parks. The guaranteed baseline resources and the new power of competency have supported National Park Authorities and aim to develop resilience to future changes.

**Businesses** – farming businesses and large estates expect support for a balanced approach to land uses. Forestry businesses require long-term access to a reliable supply of wood without investing in risk hedging.

**Landowners** – expect to be able to make reasonable use of their land and buildings to support farm diversification, housing delivery and other sustainable development.

**Forestry Commission** – expect to see large scale mixed use forestation across Northern England to provide large-scale low-cost wood supplies into the foreseeable future with the public purse managing the risk of future demand.
2. **There is a risk that the Authority is unable to emerge as an organisation fit for the future.**

**Root Causes**

**Lack of Resources**

The Authority’s operational capacity is stretched. There is a risk that the costs for the Authority, in monetary terms, time and staffing, of developing improvement measures, prevent their implementation. The Authority is unable to benefit from emerging growth deals and other new initiatives.

**Skills Shortage**

With the new business modus operandi of the Authority, Staff and volunteers are unable to embrace change to their working practices. A lack of enterprise and nervousness amongst existing authority staff at not succeeding first time results in a failure to implement any effective or sustainable changes. Additionally, new hires with a commercial focus are unable to adapt to Authority systems and bureaucracy.

Compounding the risk is the availability of skilled labour. Over the last 10 years growth in employment and wages has been driven in the UK by London, South East and South West. This has resulted in a decade long ‘brain-drain’ from the North to the South with large numbers of graduates moving for employment opportunities. The loss of skilled labour from Northern England makes it increasingly difficult for the authority to fill specialist and senior positions. The improvement in work opportunities and wages in the private sector, relative to the public sector, encourages existing staff to explore alternative opportunities for employment elsewhere. This is also a factor given the more competitive wages in other parts of the public sector for some areas of the Authority’s work. The failure to attract and retain staff with the necessary governance or technical skills to drive the Authority results in stagnation of current business processes.

**Outdated Systems**

Current internal communications systems remain paper based and governance systems have not reduced in proportion to the size of the organisation. Digital hardware is not supportive of staff ambition and a desire to work across multiple projects with multiple teams. Technological and performance changes are not adopted because of cost, complexity and/or limited support.

**Over Cautious Leadership and Governance**

Senior Leadership remains committed to ongoing improvements in the Authority and taking advantage of ‘General Power of Competence’ but are restricted by budgets and operational capacity.

Members are risk averse with nervousness that the Authority will not succeed in operational changes. This results in reluctance for the Authority to evolve its operational model with a failure to implement any effective or sustainable changes.
Impacts

- Efficiencies which would reduce operational costs are missed and the park is subject to increasing financial pressure and a loss of ambition.
- The authority lacks the skills knowledge to take forward all areas of the Business Plan.
- Knowledge of programmes and specialist skills are maintained by fewer personnel, they in turn have less time to train new staff. The Authority loses institutional memory and begins to repeat past mistakes.
- The retirement / loss of experienced staff and members prevent the Park authority ensuring effective governance.
- The authority fails to adapt to technological and social changes in the wider world. Engagement with the public falls as a result and its wider relevance is questioned.
- Current control hierarchy ensures a consistent and considered approach, but at the expense of the dynamism of the organisation.
- A number of business plan objectives are not achieved, in particular Aim 6: Maintaining an Excellent Organisation that is Fit for the Future.

Current Status

- Authority reorganisation seeks to enhance the team with both internal and external candidates to ensure a mix of retained knowledge and outside experience.
- The Sill in contributes to the diversification of income and acts as a new platform for public engagements.
- New management systems and technological changes are ongoing.
- The authority is a small organisation and development of further systems could be considered a burden on resources.

Actions to Treat this Risk

- Produce a 3 year efficiency plan for the Authority by the end of June 2018.
- Achieve 1% (2018/19), 2% (2019/20) and 3% (2020/21) efficiency of staff and operational costs.
- Build skills and new roles with existing staff teams or collaborate with other national park authorities and partner organisations in combining staff roles where shared objectives are permissive.
- Ensure that key staff attend relevant and up to date training for their position.
- Implement values based recruitment policy ensuring new staff are able to adapt to change.
- Build an ongoing succession plan for senior staff to ensure knowledge is not lost.
- Ensure remuneration levels are attractive for new and existing staff.
- Ongoing programme to update IT systems to be able to cope with changes in technology.
- Collaborate with other national park authorities and partner organisations in adopting new technologies.
- Develop working groups internally, with other authorities and external organisations to establish a best practice methodology where common approaches are used.
o Allow managers to have delegated responsibility and streamline governance and decision making processes. Allow managers to have more control and be more accountable for their decisions.

o Implement a governance review to establish improvements to control hierarchy.

**Risk Rating**

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**Stakeholders and their Expectations**

**The National Park Authority** – is ambitious and is uncomfortable at letting good opportunities pass by or leaving serious challenges remain unaddressed. The Authority is committed to securing the best people and technological improvements but this must be at a realistic cost vs benefit.

**Staff** – are committed and are keen to retain a wide portfolio of work as an Authority. Staff expect equipment to be maintained and updated to improve their capacity.

**Members** – expect the Authority to adopt a considered approach to change without undue risk to current objectives or budgets.

**Key Partners** – expect the Authority to promote and support all of the Business Plan objectives and to assist them in meeting their targets where there is overlap. Some are keen and able to sell additional services to the Authority and a number of private sector partners are able to provide best value services. Key Partners expect the authority to be able to respond to change quickly and effectively.
3. **There is a risk the Authority will be unable to manage our financial position**

**Root Causes**

**Cost Inflation**

High inflation continues to drive capital costs higher aided by both high employment and the fall in the value of the Pound following the Brexit referendum. Further inflationary pressure is exerted on the authority from a mandatory pay rise for staff, as agreed by local government employers. This broadly equates to a 2% pay increase.

Rising interest rates in the UK have a knock on effect for NNPA refinancing existing debt. This will require all borrowers to spend more on their long term funding commitments.

There is a risk that although the core national park funding has been stable in real terms since 2014, it remains under scrutiny and will expire in 2019/20. If core funding is reduced further, NNPA will require a greater proportion of income to be self-funded. The increased inflationary pressure from long term debt and staff costs will put further strain on the authority’s accounts.

**Sill Business Plan**

The opening of The Sill in July 2017 has been pivotal in enabling NNPA to diversify its revenue streams and visitor numbers for the 6 months since opening have been 122% of target. Media and marketing budgets are scheduled to reduce over the length of the project and there is a risk the current public events are not enough to draw in visitors.

The completion of the Sill has also enabled the authority to diversify its tax bandings and some elements of Authority work are now VAT exempt. There is a risk that mismanagement of complex income streams or negligent activity planning results in accrual errors and HMRC deducting a substantial proportion of income as tax.

**Sill Activity Plan**

The original activity plan assumed considerable more income and expenditure on events than has been realised. There is a risk that the income targets are not achievable.

**Income Generation and Fundraising**

The Authority anticipates an increasing amount of revenue to be derived from targeted fundraising and sponsorship for events or activities. There is a risk that the Authority’s new fundraising strategy fails to deliver.

The demand for rural growth hubs does not meet expectation due to the changing demographics in rural Northumberland. There is a risk that the Authority invests a significant sum in key locations and receives no return.

The emerging North of Tyne and Borderlands deals do not recognise the importance or the economic potential of the National Park resulting in the Authority failing to secure much needed investment for the area.
Impacts

- Financial shortfalls mean investment in new areas of work, systems or equipment is postponed or cancelled.
- The Sill fails to meet Business Plan income targets and therefore requires more support from core funding.
- Grants provided for the completion of the Sill are clawed back by funders as activity programmes do not meet objectives.
- Sill HLF project budget is not balanced leading to call on authority's resources.
- Wider investment through the Authority to the national park fails to materialise.
- With increasing costs and fewer staff the Authority is unable to meet the targets of the current Business Plan. In particular, those aims that require a higher amount of capital investment for events, facilities and estate improvements:
  - Aim 1: Contributing to a Welcoming Park,
  - Aim 5: A Contributing to a Valued Asset
  - Aim 6: Maintaining an Excellent Organisation that is Fit for the Future.

Current Status

- Local government offer of a 2% pay rise for staff increases inflationary pressure on budgets. Some staff on the lowest pay bands receive pay increases of up to 9.9%.
- Central government remains committed to eliminating the budget deficit by 2022, this will require £15bn of cuts or tax rises according to the IFS.
- The Sill Business Plan has been reviewed in light of first 6 months of opening and a prudent approach taken which still requires year on year income growth.
- Core funding is secure until 2019/20 but Defra have indicated that budgets will be subject to ongoing pressures.

Actions to Treat this Risk

- Evaluate areas of work across the three-year budget plan to provide efficiencies of 1% to 3% over the medium term to create headroom in the ongoing budget and have a plan in place by June 2018.
- Closely monitor performance information around key financial risks against 3-year financial plan
- React in a timely manner to evidence from performance management information to ensure negative financial trends are addressed.
- Regularly monitor and update the Sill Business Plan.
- Continue to explore the use volunteers to run activities and events.
- Review sustainable income level of income with HLF and adjust accordingly.
- Review commercial income generation and fundraising plan annually.
- Ensure strong governance is in place to monitor KPIs and ensure the correct direction of travel.
- Establish likely shortfalls in funding to scope alternative options for funding projects.
- Ensure the visitor offer is clearly communicated and that the quality of the service supports the costs charged.
- Actively participate in the Rural Growth Network to maintain early momentum at Eastburn, Hexham and Rothbury.
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**Risk Owner**

Chief Executive

### Stakeholders and their Expectations

- **HLF** – expects national park to deliver on approved purposes.

- **YHA & FE** – Expect the National Park to provide a stable platform from which to operate their business.

- **Defra** – expects National Park Authorities to produce more from guaranteed baseline resources and the new power of competency and to balance its budget.

- **Staff** – are committed and are keen to retain a wide portfolio of work as an Authority. Staff expect financial and non-financial rewards in return for additional and outstanding results.

- **Members** – expect the Authority to deliver its ambitious Business Plan and to balance its budget.

- **Visitors** - expect to pay a reasonable price for a reasonable service.

- **Businesses (private and voluntary sector)** – expect the Authority to provide expert services and gain access to finances but would prefer to receive these services free and be given non-returnable. Most enterprises would not naturally think of the authority as a potential business partner.

- **Tourism Providers** – expect that the Authority would not charge too high a price which could deter many visitors away from the National Park but that the Authority would not price too low as to undercut their own business.

- **Education Providers** – Expect up to date and relevant activities that contribute to the curriculum of their students at a reasonable price.

- **Trade Unions** - will resist out-sourcing partnerships but have supported income generation per se as a means of safeguarding services and staff jobs in particular.

- **Public Sector Partners** – most are under-staffed and understand the need for full cost recovery for the Authority’s contribution to their initiatives. Some public sector partners are very keen to share costs and work on joint initiatives whilst some remain in a more competitive mode.
4. **The National Park Authority lacks the capacity to complete or meet the ambition of major parts of the Business Plan.**

**Root Causes**

**Staff Capacity**

Limited resources mean the Authority is usually reliant on one member of staff for a number of professional areas and thus has a limited capacity and flexibility to address emerging events.

The staff and members of the Authority retain high expectations of what the Authority can achieve which is often unrealistic in the context of available resources. Members concern leads to more, not less, unproductive working as limited staff time is spent reviewing and discussing issues rather than delegating responsibility for action and accountability.

**Volunteer Capacity**

The use of volunteers to free up staff time is subject to the law of diminishing returns. In order to 'greatly expand' the numbers of volunteers whilst effectively managing and engaging with them additional staff time and resources will be required.

Volunteers are able to accept work or opt out if they feel more rewarded elsewhere. There is a risk that the Authority becomes over reliant on volunteers to meet the objectives of the Business Plan.

**Partner Capacity**

Staff and Members work to ensure the highest achievement from the Management Plan and Business Plan despite a number of objectives being led by Partner organisations. Partners commonly state that capacity is a primary reason for being unable to contribute to monitoring updates and the Authority is unable to achieve partner led objectives.

**Competing Demands**

Staff are encouraged to uptake additional work while struggling to maintain focus on current objectives. Additional targets and objectives make it difficult to achieve current income / operational targets.

**Impacts**

- Unanticipated challenges and opportunities cannot be responded to even when they would deliver the strategic aims of the National Park Management Plan.
- Staff are unable to take leave / flexi time due to their ongoing commitments. Leave in lieu has implications for the Authority both in financial terms and consequences for the health of staff.
- Volunteering targets cannot be met with current resourcing.
- Volunteers are forced to operate with increasing autonomy with little direction from the Authority. Training schedules are not maintained and safety is compromised.
- Volunteers leave at short notice due to significant increase in unpaid responsibilities. The Authority is unable to meet Business Plan objectives without skilled voluntary contributions.
- Partner actions are not monitored or abandoned completely resulting in significant gaps in the delivery of the Business Plan and Management Plan.
- Existing achievements put at risk by demands to move on to new / additional work areas.
- New programmes and projects take longer to progress.
- Satellite sites are earmarked but are not developed.
- With capacity limitations affecting all staff at all levels, every Business Plan Aim is at risk, the severity of the risk fluctuates.

Current Status
- New challenging areas of work outside the current Business Plan have been requested.
- There is support for interim staffing solutions but budgets are limited.
- There is an unallocated projects fund which can be utilised.
- We do not always invest fully (i.e. same as other partners) in committed low value national initiatives with the potential to need high staff investment.
- Organisational restructure has resulted in staff promotions and movements into other departments; this has resulted in gaps in staffing and delays in upcoming operational targets.
- Staff flexi time is generating good will with staff but there is little opportunity to take this. Current commitments are causing a significant amount of banked time to be lost.
- Staff reporting requirements are not part of Operational Plan or Business Plan objectives despite taking up a significant proportion of their time.

Actions to Treat this Risk
- Make greater use of external providers or shared resources with key partners, the private sector and national park volunteers to complement staff resources.
- Understand how non-business plan work impacts on staff resources. NB: to implement this will in its-self require a significant amount of scant resources.
- Develop succession plan for key staff for review by Leadership Team, in the event of unanticipated absence.
- Provide staff development opportunities and remuneration review where levels of responsibility have changed.
- Fully understand staff capacity challenges, refocus efforts and job descriptions where appropriate.
- Consistently use appraisals and wellbeing meetings as part of the work planning process.
- Organise work streams through an intelligence lead prioritisation process.
- Use cloud based volunteer management and media storage systems to reduce the need for continuous contact with volunteers.
- Use agreed frameworks for autonomous working with Authority oversight.
- Continue to host volunteering awards and appreciation events, thank volunteers for their contribution to the wider Authority, to aid with recruitment and retention.
- Streamline reporting requirements for partners to encourage them to contribute to monitoring updates.
- Work with partners where possible to help contribute to shared management plan objectives.
- Take time to celebrate success to consolidate and learn from existing work.
- Use one-off reserves to enable opportunities to be realised and challenges addressed including back-filling staff, hiring in specialists and coaches / mentors.
- Complete service reviews, including a senior management review, and find smarter ways of providing key services.

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### Stakeholders and their Expectations

**Defra** – expects National Park Authorities to produce more from guaranteed baseline resources and the new power of competency. Defra has yet to define performance standards / measures for each National Park and from its Authority.

**The National Park Authority** – is ambitious and is uncomfortable at letting good opportunities pass by or leaving serious challenges remain unaddressed.

**Staff** – are committed and are keen to retain a wide portfolio of work as an Authority. Staff expect financial and non-financial rewards in return for additional and outstanding results.

**Members** – expect the Authority to continue to pursue opportunities whilst retaining control of ongoing projects.

**Key Partners** – some are keen and able to sell additional services to the Authority and a number of private sector partners are able to provide best value services. Key partners are reducing or ceasing services which can lead to additional expectations from the National Park Authority. Amongst most partners there is a much greater willingness to dispense with ownership / control issues in order to provide an effective partnership solution.
5. **There is a risk that national parks become less relevant to society leading to a long-term decline in visitors and changes to authority objectives.**

**Root Causes**

**Lack of Awareness**

Increasing urbanisation of populations and related leisure activities is leading to less awareness locally, regionally and nationally of what Northumberland National Park can offer. People, especially young people who have grown up in the city, are becoming less aware of UK National Parks due to increasing apathy to the natural environment. Northumberland National Park in particular is recognised by only 2% of people nationally. The failure to communicate the wider appeal of the National Park is limiting its enjoyment to those who live, work and study here.

**Loss of Special Qualities**

The National Parks in the UK are managed landscapes and many of the reasons that people currently enjoy National Parks are because of their enduring continuity. The threat of an increasing pace of change brought about by changes to land management and stewardship schemes impacts public perception of the parks. Changes to public attitude are slow to be addressed as key governmental partner organisations primarily reside within Defra. The management of the Park continues to be inward looking with little understanding of the needs of the current generation.

**Connectivity Infrastructure**

Those that do visit the park find the lack of effective mobile broadband restricts their ability to communicate via social media or check the availability of facilities. Many people will not have done any forward planning as there is an assumption that information is available anytime, anywhere.

**Perceived Risk of Visit**

In conjunction with the lack of available information, a risk-averse culture has developed regarding connecting children and young people with the natural environment, challenging outdoor activity and adventure. Schools are beginning to address this issue and recognise the opportunity to support the curriculum by visiting National Parks. Despite this there is a drift towards increasingly unhealthy lifestyles resulting in fewer visitors to the National Park pursuing active recreational activities.

**Community Need**

Communities within the National Park become increasingly elderly as permanent residents age and young people leave seeking employment. This leads to a fall of the working age population, erosion of public services and a drop in all economic activity within the national park.
Currently, low levels of local needs (elderly, family and affordable) housing are provided within the National Park, due to a combination of a government policy changes, a lack of suitable, deliverable sites and low levels of potential public subsidy that would be required to deliver this type of housing on small sites in remote rural locations.

**Impacts**

- The Authority and the National Park become less visible to future audiences.
- The National Park is seen as less important as a natural and cultural asset of the nation leading to less emphasis being placed on people’s understanding, appreciation and, more importantly, future political support for the National Park.
- The infrastructure provision in the National Park does not allow for the maintenance of a diversified rural economy or meet the needs of visitors, leading to a drop in economic activity rate.
- Targets for visitor numbers and diversity are negatively impacted.
- Loss of community facilities lead to less community cohesion and greater isolation in the rural community.
- Businesses are no longer viable within the park due to the loss of labour and travel required for office support functions.
- The loss of activities to support tourism within the park contributes to the long term decline in visitors to the National Park and a loss of social and economic support.
- The future of the National Park designation is questioned, resulting directly to the failure of:
  - Aim 5: A valued Asset

**Current Status**

- The Sill National Landscape Discovery Centre has gained widespread support and financial backing to specifically encourage young people to visit and explore national parks and other countryside areas.
- Visitor numbers at The Sill have exceeded the target of 100k visitors for the first year after only operating for 8 months.
- Visit Britain and Visit England positively embracing National Parks as part of their marketing campaigns.
- Northumberland National Park Authority’s activities are engaging young people demonstrating some good practice and positive levels of engagement.
- Schools are taking note of the ability of National Parks to improve the delivery of the curriculum. There is an opportunity for the Sill to act as a demonstration vehicle.
- Successful media campaigns have contributed to Northumberland winning the Best National Park twice in three years.

**Actions to Treat this Risk**

- Work with other National Park Authorities to promote greater public awareness and understanding of the UK National Parks.
- Work with partners to create opportunities for young people to experience national parks.
- Work through National Parks England to capture the value of National Parks and the economic and environmental contribution of land managers, rural communities and visitor sectors to National Parks.
o Work with partners to develop a co-ordinated response to changing agri-environmental schemes to ensure they do not inadvertently impact on the landscape of the National Park.

o At key locations invest to maintain and improve the quality and integration of critical visitor information provision including marketing, the website and wi-fi and broadband provision.

o Continue to develop and monitor an evolving activity programme to engage many more people with the National Park.

o Co-ordinate with schools to ensure educational activities meet the needs of the curriculum and are well attended.

o Engage new audiences and young people by embedding and expanding the existing programmes of education, youth initiatives, volunteering and career pathways.

o Develop programmes aimed at improving the diversity of visitors to the Park. Approach community centres and engage with urban populations.

o Use the ‘duty to co-operate’ with partner organisations to co-ordinate and promote the retention of community facilities.

o Work with partner organisations to assess local housing need and continue the development of the new Local Plan for Northumberland National Park.

o Continue to work with Partners to encourage more visitors to National Parks with initiatives such as Hadrian's Wall Bus.

o Work with external agencies, including Northumberland Tourism, to increase visitor numbers and enhance the visitor experience in Northumberland and the National Park.

**Risk Rating**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inherent Risk</th>
<th>Residual Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House Keeping</td>
<td>House Keeping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Score 4  Probability Score 2</td>
<td>Impact Score 3  Probability Score 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Owner</td>
<td>Director of Business Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stakeholders and their Expectations**

**Rural Communities** – expect support from visitors, the public and Government in maintaining vibrant rural communities which help conserve and enhance the natural and cultural qualities of the National Park.

**Visitors** – expect to have an exceptional experience in visiting the National Park, to be well informed through quality critical visitor information provision and infrastructure.

**Heritage Lottery, Youth Hostel Association, visitors, communities and businesses in and around the National Park** – expect to see the Sill fulfil its agreed targets and objectives.

**Education Providers** – Expect up to date and relevant activities that contribute to the curriculum of their students

**Young People** – expect to have a diverse range of learning, volunteering and career opportunities and for their voice to be heard by decision makers.
6. **There is a risk that climate change, including extreme weather events and wild fires, damage the environment and reduce the resilience of rural communities and businesses in the national park**

**Root Causes**

**Severe Weather Events**

Over the longer term, the climate is changing with evidence both nationally and locally showing more frequent extreme weather events. 2018 has experienced the second coldest March in 100 years followed by the hottest April day in 70 years. Annual weather is becoming more unpredictable as the climate warms with knock on effects for all land users. Sustained cold snaps, rainfall and flash flooding create difficult conditions for farmers, a less attractive environment for visitors and threaten the homes of local communities. Conversely periods of warmer weather, especially in the spring creates drought conditions which impact negatively upon the most important wildlife habitats such as blanket bog.

**Impacts**

- Waterlogged ground and flash floods can impact adversely on natural habitats and human infrastructure causing erosion of peatlands and rivers, landslips and the destruction of roads and bridges.
- Inability to get to work and financial implications to the Authority from closed centres.
- The physical damage left after severe floods can have a secondary effect of curtailing the rural tourism economy for several months.
- In severely dry conditions internationally important heathland habitats are at risk from wildfire.
- Flooding washes away economically important upland inbye farmland and puts at risk communities downstream.
- Landowners who rely on these areas for farming or game management are likely to close open access land to visitors which then impacts negatively on the tourism industry.
- The impacts of climate change will affect many aspects of the park but will most heavily impact the sustainability of current land management practices and communities:
  - Aim 3: A Working Landscape
  - Aim 4: Thriving Communities

**Current Status**

- Recent past floods in the south of England and North West of England have refreshed interest in the effects of climate change and the needs of a whole system approach to water management.
- BCP is regularly updated to reflect the Authorities response to emerging threats to the organisation.
- The ‘beast from the east’ and subsequent mini easterlies caused a sustained temperature drop in March 2018 which was the second coldest since records began 100
years ago. This has had knock on effects for farmers during Lambing and remote communities.

- The hottest April day for 70 years was recorded in London in 2018 at 29.4°C. Temperatures were less extreme in Northumberland but still hit 10°C above the average for the month.
- Fire authorities are keen to innovative and find cost effective solutions to potentially damaging wildfires.
- The Authority works closely with the local resilience forum to ensure business continuity in event of extreme events.
- The Authority retains close links with the Met Office to ensure the timely distribution of forecasts when necessary.
- The Authority is beginning a multiagency approach to climate impact mitigation.
- The Authority continues to work with partners to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels where practical, by co-ordinating travel Plans, installing electric vehicle power points, supporting green tourism and promoting the use of public transport.

**Actions to Treat this Risk**

- Use the Authority’s published Climate Adaptation Plan submitted to Defra and to the Defra Adaptation Plan to guide future work on climate change.
- Work with partners in the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum, Met Office, Environment Agency and Regional Universities to access the most up to date data and modelling on climate change.
- Build on successful partnerships such as the Northumbria Community Flooding Partnership and Northumberland Wildfire Group to develop techniques to counter extreme weather.
- Provide advice through the Local Resilience Forum to communities and businesses on Business Continuity Planning and preparedness.
- Develop Farm Resilience Plans and encourage Defra to include these top of the valley investments to be prioritised in future agri-environmental schemes.
- Ensure the National Park Authority’s Business Continuity Plan is reviewed and tested regularly.
- Utilise the Authority’s website and social media to better inform and update businesses and communities in the park and visitors on the impacts of climate and extreme weather, both for preparedness and during weather events.
- Embrace technological advances to work collaboratively across partner organisations and to enable live monitoring of emergencies.
- Deal with climate change as part of our programmes and develop actions in line with the Business Plan that responds to this challenge.
- Climate proof Authority developments and visitor facilities.
### Risk Rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inherent Risk</th>
<th>Residual Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contingency</td>
<td>Contingency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Score 3 Probability Score 4</td>
<td>Impact Score 3 Probability Score 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Owner</td>
<td>Director of Park Management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Stakeholders and their Expectations

**Defra** – expects National Park Authorities to play a role in countering the impacts of climate change without incurring significant costs.

**Northumbria Local Resilience Forum** – co-ordinates actions to prepare for and manage extreme weather events and expects the National Park Authority to be an active partner in its work.

**Landowners** – look to Northumberland National Park Authority to facilitate improved relationships between them and the statutory agencies, e.g. Environment Agency and Natural England and wider Defra.

**Businesses and communities** – expect to receive good advice and guidance on business resilience and access to advice and assistance in preparing for and coping with the impacts of climate change and extreme weather.

**The Public** – expect to be able to visit the National Park and have infrastructure in place to facilitate their visits for all times except the most extreme weather situations.

**The Academic Community** – expect the National Park Authority to be supportive of studies and to provide assistance where ever necessary in the pursuit of understanding the impacts of climate change.
### Key

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Issues for Board Members. Where risk management should focus most time.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contingency</td>
<td>Issues for Leadership Team Where contingency plans should be in place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Keeping</td>
<td>Issues for All Managers and Lead Staff Where basic mechanisms should be in place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Risk is so minimal that it does not require specific action.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Strategic Risk Matrix 2018-2021 (Inherent)

|--------------|----------------|----------|-------------|----------|-----------|
### Strategic Risk Matrix 2018-2021 (Residual)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Catastrophic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>2,5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Minor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Slight</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### Probability Matrix (Probability Score)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probability</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(5) Almost Certain</td>
<td>Very likely to happen within the next three years, or could occur within the next year</td>
<td>90 – 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Likely</td>
<td>Likely to happen within the next three years, or could occur within the next 18 months</td>
<td>65 – 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Possible</td>
<td>Might happen within the next three years, or could occur within the next 2-3 years</td>
<td>40 – 65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Unlikely</td>
<td>Unlikely to happen within the next three years, but could occur within the next 5 years</td>
<td>10- 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Rare</td>
<td>Unlikely to occur within the next five years</td>
<td>0 – 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Service Quality/Objective</td>
<td>Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Catastrophic</td>
<td>Complete failure of services. Unable to meet business objectives in many areas</td>
<td>£500k plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Major</td>
<td>Significant reduction in service quality expected. Re-prioritisation of business objectives</td>
<td>£100K to £500K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Moderate</td>
<td>Service quality impaired. Achievement of business objectives delayed by over 1 year</td>
<td>£30K to £100K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Minor</td>
<td>Service marginally impaired. Some impact on business objectives but recoverable</td>
<td>£10K to £30K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Almost None</td>
<td>Negligible Effects on service quality or business objectives</td>
<td>£0 - £10K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>