ITEM 8: HEALTH AND SAFETY and HUMAN RESOURCES HALF YEAR REPORT

1. Purpose of Report

This report provides a half-year performance overview of Health and Safety management and Human Resources for Northumberland National Park Authority.

2. Recommendation

To note the progress in achieving Health and Safety and Human Resources objectives.

3. Implications

a. Financial - None
b. Equalities – None

4. HR Progress

An Organisational Development strategy was developed in 2016 to address how the Authority deploys and develops its staff in order to maximise their potential and contribution to support the achievement of the Authority’s vision and objectives. 94% of the actions identified in the Organisational Development strategy have been; or are in the process of being implemented. In view of this and the changed nature of the Authority, it is planned to prepare a new Organisational Development strategy in 2019/20. Progress this year has included:

a. Recruitment and retention of key expertise

Staffing reviews have led to a significant amount of internal and external recruitment. Two Directors and four Heads of Department have been recruited. Two vacancies for Heads of Department (Head of Sill Operations and Head of Sill Activities and Exhibitions) will be filled soon. This will complete the Leadership Team.

A health cash plan has been launched, which enables staff to claim for various medical costs including dental treatment and prescriptions; and provides a medical advice line. This is at zero cost to the Authority. It has proved popular with staff and is likely to help with recruitment and retention.

Use of a new website for recruitment advertising has resulted in approximately a 100% increase in candidates and a significant reduction in costs per post.

The Organisational Development strategy includes a move towards value based recruitment. This means testing candidates’ values and evaluating whether they are aligned with those of the Authority. By exploring candidates’ values, behaviours and attitudes, evidence shows that better recruitment decisions are made, selecting people who are a good fit for the organisation, to deliver value for the Authority, local communities and our customers, and crucially are more likely to stay.

b. Supporting and developing expertise as a learning organisation

In November 2018, a new online learning system was launched. This is a joint venture with 11 other National Parks and will make training staff and members easier. It will also generate a significant cost reduction and provide much greater opportunity for employees to access personal development and management training.

A successful pilot of 360 degree feedback for members took place and this system has now been rolled out to all members.

The Standards and Appeals Committee met in November 2018 and as a result, the Committee are proposing that its role should involve a more proactive programme...
of promoting and supporting positive standards among Authority members. Members will receive details of this in the near future.

c. **A safe, supported and fully engaged workforce**

An All staff/member/volunteer day took place at The Sill on 1 October 2018. This provided various activities for attendees to choose from including e-bike rides, mindfulness, craft and walks. 100% positive feedback was received.

100% of Health and Safety training has been booked or completed. In future, the online learning system will be used for this type of training and will make record keeping easier and streamline the process for organising courses.

Practical days for staff were introduced to enable all staff to spend time completing tasks outside in the National Park. Three of these took place and proved very popular, with over 20 staff choosing to attend.

d. **A healthy workforce (including mental health).**

Sickness levels remain extremely low with a predicted level of 1.1 days per employee for 2018/19 (see Annex 1 for details)

The Authority won the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development North East award for ‘Excellence in Health & Wellness’ with extremely positive feedback from the judges. This award was in recognition of the Authority’s wide ranging mental health programme.

To maintain momentum in the area of mental health, regular newsletters are issued to all staff, which includes an employee’s mental health story and signposting to the relevant support. Seven employees were trained as wellbeing advocates in 2017 to enable staff to access support in an informal way. They are regularly being used and have received positive feedback.

e. **Advising and supporting the Authority to achieve its goals**

Members agreed a Health at Work Strategy in December 2017. This is now 72% complete and includes embedding the new culture and values, maintaining a 100% record for Health and Safety training and introducing practical days for office-based staff to help out in the Park.

A comprehensive review of staffing at The Sill was undertaken, the results of which are contained in Item 1 on this Agenda.

A Leadership Team review has been conducted, which led to 2 new Director roles and 6 new Heads of Department roles. The Heads of Department roles incorporate the previous substantive roles as well as new responsibilities for leading the Department.

5. **Health and Safety Update**

a. From April to the end of October there have been a total of 11 accident forms completed relating to 2 near misses and 9 incidents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Outstanding Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RIDDOR</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accidents</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7 at The Sill - all slips, trips and falls, 6 involving children and 1 an elderly person who misjudged a step.</td>
<td>Appropriate first aid provided. Elderly person advised to go to A&amp;E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b. With the exception of the elderly person who received treatment at A&E, the accidents reported have been minor, the majority being children tripping at The Sill.

c. A planning application was submitted in October 2018 to improve external lighting at The Sill.

d. Three meetings of the Health & Safety Working Group have been held with actions agreed and progressed.

e. The Health & Safety Plan for 2017/18 was deferred until the appointment of the Director of Park Management.

f. The Director of Park Management and the Health & Safety Advisor are meeting in December.

To date the following planned Health & Safety training has been received.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Number of attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Awareness</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Safeguarding Officer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safeguarding training</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency First Aid at Work</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Warden Training</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Conclusions

The Authority has successfully delivered its Organisational Development Strategy, with increased staff engagement, extremely low sickness, many more internal development opportunities and an award winning mental health awareness programme. A need for more proactive support to members on standards has been identified and actions are being planned. The Organisational Development Strategy will be revised in the coming year to cover the next three years to ensure it keeps pace with the Authority’s future challenges.

Contact Officer: For further information contact Mary Wallace, HR Officer on 01434 611576 or e-mail: mary.wallace@nnpa.org.uk for HR information or Sharon Robson, Corporate Support Manager (Sharon.robson@nnpa.org.uk) for Health and Safety information.

Background papers: Member Code of Conduct (2012) and Member/Officer Protocol (2018)
**Item 8: Health and Safety and HR Half Year Report**

### Relative Employee Costs

Figures indicate total staff costs including those funded by projects.

Income includes Sill figures (revenue only)

Please note all Sill staff are included in the figures, which is affecting the percentage of staff costs funded by the DEFRA grant. However, these staff are not funded by the DEFRA grant.

### Employee Numbers

Increase in staff numbers due to recruitment of The Sill team and additional Leadership team posts

### Days Sickness Per Employee

**Last 5 years**

44% reduction in short-term sickness

Average of 1.3 days short-term sickness per employee per year

Benchmarking average days per year
- Private sector: 3.8
- Public sector: 5.8