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.

Agreed, Northumberland National Park Authority: 11 July 2018
Updated, Northumberland National Park Authority: 10 July 2019
Background

The Strategic Risk Register (SRR) 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. This SRR was comprehensively reviewed in 2018 after the first years of implementation of the 2017-2022 Business Plan. A wider array of risks have now been identified and risks are updated annually as additional experience and knowledge is applied. Looking forward, this revised 2018-21 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 Business Plan and Annual 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.

Both these elements have been updated for 2019/20.

Content and key changes to Identified Risks since 2016/17

- Article 50 was triggered in March 2017, confirming the start of UK’s exit from the EU. This has potential to create a range of risks moving forward. 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 representing a key risk to the National Park.

- The government published an 8 point Plan for England’s National Parks in March 2016, setting objectives for the National Park and in January 2018 government published its 25 Year Plan for the Environment. Taken together these represent a key framework for delivery to government priorities and this is a risk to the Authority if it is unable to contribute to these.

- The Sill: National Landscape Discovery Centre opened in July 2017. The Sill is a key vehicle for delivery of the Business Plan but also remains a financial risk to the
Authority that will need to be managed from both a project funding and ongoing revenue perspective.

- In May government launched a Hobhouse Review for the 21st Century of designated landscapes. The review has been chaired by Julian Glover and is due to be presented during Autumn 2019. This has the potential to provide significant opportunities to enhance the operation of National Parks.

- 2016 was the warmest year since records began with 2017, 2015 and 2018 second, third and fourth warmest. The last 4 years have been the warmest recorded and 18 of the 19 warmest years have been recorded since the year 2000. The summer of 2018 provided conditions for a series of global heatwaves. Wild fires were prevalent during the year from within the Arctic Circle to the tropics. Climate change has been with us for some time and is now beginning to affect the severity of annual weather patterns.

- The guaranteed Defra fund settlement for national park authorities ends in the current financial year (2019/20) with a corresponding risk to the Authority Core Grant. This year Defra has also initiated a refresh of the Financial Grant Memorandum which frames the context with which Core Grant is provided and its use.

- The North of Tyne combined Authority is now established. Additional investment for the region of has been approved consisting of £20m per year for 30 years. The application of these growth deals in rural areas, such as the National Park, can represent both a risk and a significant opportunity.

- The Borderlands Growth Deal has been approved by governments on both sides of the Scottish Border. Additional funding for projects within the five cross border authorities is confirmed at £345m.

- The North East Local Enterprise Partnership has in the past year started work on the Local Industrial Strategy and this represents another opportunity for the Park and other rural areas and their communities.

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

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 are as follows:

1. The National Park Authority is unable to adapt to Local / National Government changes.
2. The National Park Authority is unable to become an Organisation Fit for the Future.
3. The National Park Authority is 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 key 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. This was anticipated to be following the Brexit transition period. Through the Environment Bill, Government is in the process of putting in place new legislation to establish environmental principles, establish an independent body for environmental protection and to place the 25 Year Environment Plan (YEP) on a satisfactory footing. Broadly, the Government is committed to National Parks as highlighted in the 25 Year Plan and there are opportunities for positive changes. The Glover Review presents both risks and opportunities and ongoing influence and input to the Review and preparation for any likely Government response is very important.

Land Management and Rural Development

Brexit offers the potential for sweeping changes to the current land management system and agri-environmental schemes. The government 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. This could see land management practices change significantly reversing many positive changes. Upland farms may become unviable and targets established for tree planting could marginalise upland farming in favour of forestry. 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.

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. Structural changes to Authorities statutory requirements have caused significant challenges for Policy development. 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 extended role and additional work is not appropriately reflected in core grant funding. The Authority is forced to reign in current Business Plan objectives.
- As Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS) are introduced after Brexit, land managers will adopt or abandon the new system to take advantage of alternative income streams.
- Potential beneficial changes in ELMS improve stewardship of the land in the National Park.
- Increased inappropriate 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.
- The Local Plan is found to be ‘Not Sound’ or substantially amended at examination.
- Lack of co-ordination between Key Partners due to resource constraints leads to conflicting objectives.
- Business Plan Aims are abandoned because of a drop in resources and a change in Government Priorities.

Current Status

- The government’s 25 YEP 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 and partnership working.
- Changes to national planning policy/guidance have made it more difficult to provide affordable housing in the National Park.
- Through National Parks England (NPE) the Authority is working with the Glover Review to inform its conclusions. The Authority is also working through NPE to inform the future of ELMS and Rural Development at a national level.
- The Authority is working with Defra to Test and Trial new approaches to ELMS to help inform future delivery.
- The Authority is working with North of Tyne Combined Authority, Borderlands and NELEP to help ensure growth deals and Local Industrial Strategy work for the Park.
- 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’.
- Northumberland County Council and Northumberland National Park Authority have a positive working relationship with many shared programmes and objectives.
- The Authority is working with other key environmental leaders in the North East to help deliver a vision and programme for taking forward the 25 YEP in the North East.

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.
o 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 YEP and the 8 Point Plan.

o Fully Engage with the 2018/19 Julian Glover led review of protected areas to achieve a positive and deliverable outcome for NNPA.

o 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.

o 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.

o Continue to offer to pilot new approaches in Northumberland National Park.

o 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.

o Work with National Parks England through Heads of Planning group and National Parks Policy Officers group to influence national policy and good practice.

o Work with inspector to Review Local Plan policies / evidence to determine areas which are found to be 'unsound', ensure this process takes place during examination to prevent delay of publication.

o Continue efforts to refresh the partnership approach to planning and develop the National Park Management Plan

o Staff and Members continue to network across partner organisations to develop a co-ordinated response to legislative changes and take advantage of emerging opportunities.

o Continue to work with Defra bodies for the North East, local government and wider stakeholders to build a response to the 25 YEP.

**Risk Rating**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inherent Risk</th>
<th>Residual Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary</strong></td>
<td><strong>Contingency</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Score 4  Probability Score 4</td>
<td>Impact Score 4  Probability Score 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk Owner</strong></td>
<td>Chief Executive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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. Defra expects the National Park Authorities to contribute positively to the delivery of the 25 YEP and 8 Point Plan for National Parks.

**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.

2. **There is a risk that the Authority is unable to implement the change needed to emerge as an organisation fit for the future. (Change Management)**

**Root Causes**

**Over Cautious Leadership and Governance**

Senior Leadership remains committed to ongoing improvements in the Authority and taking advantage of ‘General Power of Competence’ but overbearing governance and management stifle change.

Members have supported change but there is a nervousness that the Authority will not succeed in operational changes. This results in reluctance for the Authority to evolve its governance model to support a more enterprising approach and ‘fleet of foot’ way of working.

**Lack of Resources Stifle Change**

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 new ways of working prevent their implementation. The Authority is unable to benefit from emerging growth deals and other new initiatives in order to evolve its operations.

**Ineffective Change Management**

The Authority fails to establish and communicate an effective change management process to help deliver the vision for an organisation fit for the future.

**Skills Shortage**

With the changing operational model 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 information and communications systems constantly require. 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.

**Impacts**

- Current control hierarchy ensures a consistent and considered approach, but at the expense of the dynamism of the organisation.
- 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 and 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 key staff and institutional memory and begins to repeat past mistakes.
- The Authority fails to adapt its information and technological systems to support its ways of working.

**Current Status**

- The Authority has set a clear vision to be an organisation fit for the future. It has this year completed its latest Organisational Development Plan and is currently developing the next version of this plan.
- Authority reorganisation seeks to enhance the team with both internal and external candidates to ensure a mix of retained knowledge and outside experience.
- The Authority has successfully diversified its income and has met its commercial income targets.
- The Sill contributes to the diversification of income and acts as a new platform for operational as well as partner and public engagement.
- New management systems and technological changes are ongoing.
- The Authority is a small organisation and development of further systems represents a burden on resources.
- A review of governance took place during the year.
Actions to Treat this Risk

- Continue to implement change plan and Organisational Development Plan, including recruitment of necessary skills.
- Implement values based recruitment policy ensuring new staff are able to adapt to change.
- Ensure that key staff attend relevant and up to date training for their position.
- 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.
- Implement the findings of the governance review to establish improvements to control oversight and assurance systems.
- 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.

Risk Rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inherent Risk</th>
<th>Residual Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contingency</td>
<td>House Keeping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Score 4</td>
<td>Impact Score 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probability Score 3</td>
<td>Probability Score 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Owner</td>
<td>Chief Executive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 increasingly embracing new ways of working and an enterprising approach. Staff expect fair terms and conditions and equipment to be maintained and updated to improve their capacity. Staff seek opportunities for personal development, advancement and recognition.

Members – wish the Authority to be ambitious, enterprising and at the leading edge of change and 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 to their needs and to understand and contribute to their corporate objectives.

3. There is a risk the Authority will be unable to manage our financial position

Root Causes

Cost Inflation

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 (Higher for lower pay grades).

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.

Core Grant

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.

Business Rates

The approach of VOA to reviewing national park exemptions represents a significant risk through increased liability for Authority estate.

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 first full year since opening was 145% 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 from the need to manage complex income streams or carefully plan activities to avoid HMRC exposure.

Sill Activity Plan

The original activity plan assumed considerable more income and expenditure on events than has been realised. The NLHF have agreed to re-profile the targets to enable the Authority to work towards a sustainable activity programme. There remains 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 Authority also has increasing targets for commercial income generation. 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 fails to achieve the anticipated commercial return.

The North of Tyne and Borderlands deals and the North East LIS 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.
- Rise in business rates or other unplanned costs impacts authority reserves. Further efficiency savings are required in other areas.
- Defra begin to ring fence the core grant funding for specific purposes, removing the flexibility to allocate funds where required.
- 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.
- The Sill NLHF project budget is not balanced leading to call on Authority’s resources.
- Commercial income generation targets are missed and the park is forced meet financial obligations through increased efficiencies.
- 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 is no longer committed to eliminating the budget deficit by 2022, but has warned there is unlikely to be any “real terms” increase in public spending apart from the NHS.
- The Sill Business Plan has been re-reviewed in light of first full year of opening. 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.
VOA have already concluded a review of the rating of Northumberland National Park Authority car parks and The Sill, resulting in increased rates liability.

**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.
- Work with Defra to review financial grant memorandum (see Risk 4. Competing Demands).
- Develop an agreed fundraising plan and establish early programme of activity to achieve key fundraising targets.
- React in a timely manner to evidence from performance management information to ensure negative financial trends are addressed.
- Employ expert to appeal rate rise. Plan for long term financial impact while using available surplus to cover immediate shortfall.
- Regularly monitor and update The Sill Business Plan.
- Continue to explore the use volunteers to run activities and events.
- Continue to monitor sustainable income level of income with NLHF and adjust accordingly.
- Review commercial income generation and fundraising plan annually.
- Increase reporting of budget vs actual with the Finance and Audit Group.
- Ensure strong governance is in place to monitor KPIs and ensure delivery of NLHF agreed targets.
- Establish likely shortfalls in funding to scope alternative options for funding projects.
- Use Service Reviews as opportunities arise, to ensure most efficient use of resources.
- Ensure the quality of the service supports the costs charged.

**Risk Rating**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inherent Risk</th>
<th>Residual Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contingency</strong></td>
<td><strong>House Keeping</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Score 4  Probability Score 3</td>
<td>Impact Score 3  Probability Score 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk Owner</strong></td>
<td>Chief Executive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stakeholders and their Expectations**

- **NLHF** – expects national park to deliver on approved purposes.
- **YHA & Fresh Element** – 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. Require a Financial
Grant Memorandum which demonstrates efficient and effective use of public finances.

**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. National pay awards must be met.

**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**

**High Expectations**

The staff and members of the Authority retain high expectations of what the Authority can and should 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.

**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.
Volunteer Capacity

The use of volunteers to free up staff time is potentially 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 take on additional work while struggling to maintain focus on current objectives. Additional targets and objectives make it difficult to achieve current income / operational targets.

Defra begin to ring fence the core grant funding for specific purposes, removing the flexibility to allocate funds where required.

Impacts

- The Authority sets over ambitious Operational Plans each year and fails to consistently deliver on them.
- With capacity limitations affecting all staff at all levels, every Business Plan Aim is at risk, the severity of the risk fluctuates.
- Unanticipated challenges and opportunities cannot be responded to even when they would deliver the strategic aims of the National Park Management Plan.
- New demands from the core grant impact the ability of the Authority to manage budget variances.
- 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.
- The Authority is unable to meet Business Plan objectives without skilled voluntary contributions.
- 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.
- Partner actions are not monitored 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 or cannot be realised.
Current Status

- The Authority is currently focussing on a number of key priorities, The Sill, land management and change management which are critical to the future but not without significant challenges.
- New challenging areas of work outside the current Business Plan have been requested.
- There is support for interim staffing solutions but budgets are limited.
- Reporting and performance monitoring continues to take up a significant portion of time.
- New Leadership roles are still bedding in and opportunities for new roles remain limited by resources.
- A new Strategic Plan is being produced which will assist in the preparation of future Operational Plans and matching this to capacity.

Actions to Treat this Risk

- Ensure a robust process is in place for preparing the annual operational plan, in order to effectively map business as usual, new or expanding work and to match the work programme realistically to staff and volunteer capacity.
- Make greater use of external providers or shared resources with key partners and the private sector.
- Use cloud based volunteer management and media storage systems to reduce the need for continuous contact with volunteers.
- Maximise use of 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.
- Fully understand staff capacity challenges, refocus efforts and job descriptions where appropriate.
- Provide staff development opportunities and remuneration review where levels of responsibility have changed.
- Consistently use appraisals and wellbeing meetings as part of the work planning process.
- Organise work streams through an intelligence lead prioritisation process.
- 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.
- Determine, on a case by case basis, the use of 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 and find smarter ways of providing key services.
- 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.
- Engage with Defra on future financial grant memorandum.
- Review staff reporting and governance requirements in order to free up staff capacity.

**Risk Rating**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inherent Risk</th>
<th>Residual Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary</strong></td>
<td><strong>Primary</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Score 4</td>
<td>Probability Score 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Score 4</td>
<td>Probability Score 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Risk Owner | Chief Executive |

**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 its Authority.

**The National Park Authority** – is ambitious and is uncomfortable at letting good opportunities pass by or leaving serious challenges remain unaddressed. The Authority actively monitors and supports staff well-being against the backdrop of a challenging work programme.

**Staff** – are committed and are keen to retain a wide portfolio of work as an Authority. Staff will often work beyond resources to achieve for the Park.

**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 the park being less value by the public and key policy decision makers**

**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 is inward looking with little understanding of the needs of the current generation.

**Connectivity and 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 Needs**

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 different and varied visitors, leading to a drop in visitor and other economic activity.

- 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.

**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, a new annual target of 145k has now been set.
- Visit Britain and Visit England positively embracing National Parks as part of their marketing campaigns (English National Park Experiences Collection).
- 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.
- Successful media campaigns have contributed to Northumberland winning the Best National Park twice in three years.
- The Authority is a key partner in Northumberland Tourism, DMO. In 2018 Northumberland was voted Tourism Destination of the Year in the UK.
- The Authority and National Park as key partners in the Northumberland County Council’s “Discover Our Land” initiative which promotes the Park and the County as a place to live, work and visit.
- The UK’s 15 National Parks have been working together to develop a new set of national/international brand guidelines for UK National Parks.
- The 70th Anniversary of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act provides an opportunity to celebrate the importance and success of our National Parks.
- The 15 UK National Parks are in the process of establishing a joint communications unit which will focus on public engagement communications.
- National Parks England (NPE) have produced a Road Map to help inform the Glover Review which contains key actions to enhance the standing of, and public engagement with, national parks.

**Actions to Treat this Risk**
- Work with other National Park Authorities to promote greater public awareness and understanding of the UK National Parks through establishing joint branding and communications.
- Work with partners to create opportunities for young people to experience national parks.
o 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 Support 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 national agencies/bodies to ensure effective infrastructure and connectivity is maintained within the Park.

o Work with external agencies, including Northumberland Tourism and Northumberland County Council (Discover Our Land) to increase visitor numbers and enhance the visitor experience in Northumberland and the National Park.

o Continue to engage with the Glover (Designated Landscapes) Review to identify opportunities to enhance national parks and their standing with the public.

---

### Risk Rating

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

### Stakeholders and their Expectations

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

**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.
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 seen 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 property, 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:

---

**NLHF, YHA, 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.

Partners expect the National Park to play a key role in the marketing and branding of Northumberland.
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, and the operations of visitor facilities such as The Sill.
- 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. 2018 saw a number of significant fires on the Otterburn Training Area.
- 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><strong>Primary</strong></td>
<td><strong>Contingency</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Score 4 Probability Score 4</td>
<td>Impact Score 3 Probability Score 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Risk Owner**

Director of Park Management

### 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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Slight</td>
<td>1. Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Minor</td>
<td>2. Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>3. Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major</td>
<td>4. Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Catastrophic</td>
<td>5. Almost Certain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Slight</td>
<td>1. Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Minor</td>
<td>2. Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>3. Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major</td>
<td>4. Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Catastrophic</td>
<td>5. Almost Certain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Slight</td>
<td>1. Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Minor</td>
<td>2. Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>3. Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major</td>
<td>4. Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Catastrophic</td>
<td>5. Almost Certain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Slight</td>
<td>1. Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Minor</td>
<td>2. Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>3. Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major</td>
<td>4. Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Catastrophic</td>
<td>5. Almost Certain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Slight</td>
<td>1. Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Minor</td>
<td>2. Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>3. Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major</td>
<td>4. Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Catastrophic</td>
<td>5. Almost Certain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Slight</td>
<td>1. Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Minor</td>
<td>2. Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>3. Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major</td>
<td>4. Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Catastrophic</td>
<td>5. Almost Certain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Slight</td>
<td>1. Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Minor</td>
<td>2. Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Moderate</td>
<td>3. Possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major</td>
<td>4. Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Catastrophic</td>
<td>5. Almost Certain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Probability Matrix (Probability Score)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probability</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score</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>
</tbody>
</table>
# Impact Matrix (Impact Score)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Service Quality/Objective</th>
<th>Finance</th>
<th>Legal/regulatory</th>
<th>Reputation</th>
<th>Health &amp; Safety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| (5) Catastrophic | Complete failure of services.  
                     | Unable to meet business objectives in many areas                                      | £500k plus  | Termination of the funding or criminal / civil prosecution                      | Reputational Damage is irrecoverable i.e. Government intervention             | Fatality (Staff, members and visitors etc....)                                   |
| (4) Major    | Significant reduction in service quality expected. Re- prioritisation of business objectives | £100K to £500K | Defra step in or legal case leading to major investigation or overhaul of procedures. | Reputation damage occurs with the Key Strategic Partners Regional media coverage | Serious injury occurring - many months off work / reportable to Health and Safety Exec |
| (3) Moderate | Service quality impaired  
                     | Achievement of business objectives delayed by over 1 year                           | £30K to £100K | Legal action or regulatory penalty including Ombudsman                        | Localised reputational damage with local partners and local press             | Minor injury - up to a week off work                                              |
| (2) Minor    | Service marginally impaired  
                     | Some impact on business objectives but recoverable                                  | £10k to £30K | Minor breach with no penalty but key learning lessons which can be implemented virtually immediately | Temporary reputational damage.  
                                | Partner expectations are not met.                                                  | Very minor injury                                                             |
| (1) Almost None | Negligible Effects on service quality or business objectives  | £0 - £10K   | Negligible                                                                       | No Effects on reputation                                                  | No injury                                                                     |