Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority **Item 9**

Audit and Review Committee

26 November 2024

Annual Risk Management Review

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with the opportunity to review the effectiveness of the arrangements for risk management, in line with the Authority's Risk Management Policy.

Recommendation

2. That Members agree that the Strategic Risk Register contains all identifiable higher level risks which the Audit & Review Committee requires to be monitored.

Strategic Framework

3. The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and support the strategic planning framework:
   - Corporate Plan Objective 32:

     Operate governance arrangements that are fit for purpose, as reported through the Annual Governance Statement and the Annual Governance Report

Background

4. The Risk Management Policy states that this Committee should receive an annual report on risk management, to enable it to establish that the arrangements for risk management within the organisation remain appropriate and that the main risks facing the organisation are properly controlled. The chief sources of evidence that would assist in reaching such a conclusion are noted below.

5. The External Auditor's Opinion, covering all aspects of the Authority's work on its annual report and accounts (for the auditing cycle examining the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024) will be received late because of national delays to the audit of which Members are aware. The external audit work on these accounts is due to commence in December and must be completed by 28 February 2025 in order to meet the proposed backstop date for publication of final accounts. It is likely to conclude with a disclaimed/qualified opinion due to the opening balances from 2022/23 not being subject to full audit.

6. The summary of the Internal Audits completed in 2023/24 by our internal auditors Veritau was reported to this Committee in April. None of the reports identified significant weaknesses, and the 'level of assurance' over the controls examined was concluded to be 'substantial' (unchanged from the previous year). Whilst these internal audit reports recommended some improvements to the systems operated (which have now been implemented), there were no findings that added to either the Strategic or Operational Risk Registers.

7. The Strategic Risk Register, attached at **Appendix 1** has been reviewed by SMT to ensure that it remains valid. No new strategic risks have been identified in the past year but a suggested rewording of the strategic risks is shown in track changes.

8. The Operational Risk Register, attached at **Appendix 2** was reviewed and updated by SMT in June 2024. The Operational Risk Register has been updated again following its review by SMT in October 2024. Whilst no new classes of risk have been identified, a small number of changes have been made to update progress on risk management actions planned for 2024/25 that are now underway.

Financial Implications

9. None.

Legal Implications

10. None.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

11. None.

Conclusion

12. Risk management processes are continuing to be further embedded within the Authority's work. The Senior Management Team has undertaken their periodic review of the Operational Risk Register (in line with the Risk Management Policy) and scheduled meetings take place with our insurance advisers, to make sure that we identify new risks as they emerge.

Clare Burrows
Director of Corporate Services