

## **6. OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT (2023-24)**

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide assurance that Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) management and performance is satisfactory through 2023-24.

### **2. Context**

**2.1** On 28 April 2023 an organisational change proposal was put to the National Park Authority Members with the aim of creating a new, smaller organisational structure so that we can have an affordable organisation with a full roster of employees paid at the right rate and focusing on our core functions.

**2.2** Over recent years we built up improved in-house resources to effectively manage OSH matters. The potential to remove the cost of employing a specialist, expert OSH Adviser was explored and consulted upon. On 28 July 2023 it was agreed that substantial cost savings could be made while maintaining sufficient resources to ensure OSH management standards are maintained.

**2.3** In October 2023, the OSH Adviser role was disestablished when the existing post holder's employment ended. Future day to day management of OSH matters would be provided by a combination of in-house competence, the retained services of a strategic and expert OSH consultant on a routine basis, and other externally sourced OSH advice, as necessary.

**2.4** In March 2024, after a competitive procurement process, we engaged an OSH consultancy, National Parks Safety Service (NPSS) for a three-year period to provide strategic OSH advice, as necessary, which substantially supports us in complying with our statutory health and safety obligations. The contract commenced on 1 April 2024.

### **3. Proposals**

**3.1** The work summarised in the annual report, to deliver good and continuously improving OSH management here at the Authority throughout 2023-24, is recognised

**3.2** Proposals for specific matters to be addressed, associated with the organisational restructure in respect of OSH management in 2024-25, are noted.

### **4. Recommendations**

1. The Occupational Safety and Health annual report 2023-24 is noted.
2. The Health Safety and Wellbeing objectives for 2024-25 are approved

### **5. Corporate Implications**

#### **a. Legal**

Pursuant to the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the subordinate legislation thereunder, the Authority has a statutory duty to put adequate arrangements in place to control occupational health and safety risks. Inter alia, this includes a written health and safety policy; suitable and sufficient risk assessments; effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventative and protective measures arising from any risk assessment; effective training programmes; and staff engagement. A process of continuous performance monitoring should be undertaken to ensure legal compliance and allow necessary improvements to be made to avoid criminal/civil penalties, insurance losses and/or reputational damage.

**b. Financial**

There are no additional financial implications, as funds are already allocated.

**c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan**

This report demonstrates how we contribute to the Authority Plan Objective C - to have highly engaged, healthy and inclusive staff and volunteers. This objective has a target of a maximum of 9 days per year sickness level per staff member.

**d. Risk Management**

The risks will be managed through the governance arrangements as set out in the Occupational Safety and Health Policy (2024). This policy was approved as Authority Policy at the Programme and Resources Committee on 26 January 2024

**e. Net Zero**

No issues

**f. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

The Authority's policies and procedures must be compliant with the Authority's duties in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, and include the additional protections provided for in health and safety legislation for persons with protected characteristics. All risk assessments must identify and address any specific adverse equality impacts on a case by case basis.

**6. Background papers (not previously published)**

*none.*

**7. Appendices**

*Appendix 1 – the Occupational Safety and Health annual report 2023-24*

*Appendix 2 – Accidents incidents near misses 2023-24*

*Appendix 3 – Health Safety and Wellbeing objectives 2024-25*

**Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date**

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