

Report of: Democratic Services Manager

Subject: People Services Committee

Decision Required: Yes

Recommendation:

The Authority is recommended to merge the People Services Committee, with the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee.

1. Key Messages

In recent years, the Committee has made few decisions, with reports consisting mainly of updates on the work of the team. This is not necessarily a good use of either Members' or officers' time, and it is therefore proposed to merge the work of the Committee into the existing structure.

2. Background

The Authority has a long-established process for reviewing its work with two review committees:

The Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee oversees audit (both internal and external), finance, health and safety, performance management, communications and general governance.

The Operational Review Committee reviews performance across Nature Recovery, Decarbonisation, Regenerative Tourism and Inclusion and Engagement.

The only exception to this arrangement is People Services, which has its own Committee.

The People Services Committee was formed in May 2024, combining the work of the Human Resources and Member Support and Development Committees. Its terms of reference are appended to this report.

Items a) and b) of the terms of reference are concerned with review, scrutiny and approval of human resources policies. It is sometimes difficult to decide whether a particular policy falls within the category of a human resources policy and it will therefore simplify policy approval if all are presented to the National Park Authority. It is common practice for new policies to be circulated to all Members for consultation prior to approval being sought. Other human resources matters requiring a decision would be brought to the National Park Authority.

Item g) of the terms of reference deals with appointments. Currently recruitment of all staff with the exception of Chief Executive, Director, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer is delegated to the Chief Executive. In practice, reports in respect of recruitment to these posts are provided to the National Park Authority in any event, and an appointments panel can be created to undertake shortlisting and interview,

with a recommendation in respect of appointment being made to the National Park Authority.

Over recent years the scope of the People Services Committee has expanded. Until 2021 the then Personnel Committee only met when policies needed approval or when the Committee was used as a recruitment panel, however, it now meets four times a year and has its own set of reports.

This has created some confusion regarding health and safety, with reports going to both the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee and People Services Committee. Following consideration of this issue by the Authority last May it was agreed that the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee would oversee Health and Safety, while the People Services Committee would oversee the staff well-being element. In reality this has given both Committees a role and duplicates work and responsibility.

While the workload of the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee is considered heavy, it is considered that appropriate management of the committee agenda can ensure that sufficient focus is provided to people services issues. On the rare occasions where this is not possible, items for decision can be included on the National Park Authority agenda.

The Authority remains committed to Member Support and Development and reports such as the Member Development Strategy and Annual Training Plan would in fact benefit from the greater visibility afforded by presentation to all Members at the National Park Authority. Consideration could also be given to holding an annual Member Support Seminar to ensure that the momentum in this area of work is not lost.

3. Consultation

The Head of People Services has been consulted on this report.

4. Strategic Policy Context

The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic policy context.

This report presents an alternative model of reporting, rather than the creation or cessation of any workstream. The People Services function is central to supporting the work of the Authority in achieving its well-being objectives and the policies set out in the National Park Partnership Plan.

The revised reporting mechanism will continue to support the principles set out in the Authority's Code of Corporate Governance.

5. Financial Considerations

The People Services Committee meets online, rather than in person, nevertheless there will be a small cost saving in the officer time needed to service this Committee and in printing and postage of papers.

6. Risk and Compliance Considerations

When creating the Committee last year, it was noted that there was a need to clarify responsibility for Health and Safety as this area of work was being reported to both the Human Resources and Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee. While the terms of reference are clear that Health and Safety sits within the remit of the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee, there is still an element of duplication with regards to reporting. Consolidating this reporting to the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee will reduce the risk of a particular Committee failing to take action, thinking that this would be dealt with at another Committee.

The 2024 report by Audit Wales on Governance in National Parks noted that the Authority has more Committees than both Eryri and Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authorities. Disbanding the People Services Committee will bring the Authority in line with those Authorities, neither of which have a specific Human Resources Committee.

If approved a revised Terms of Reference for the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee is suggested at Appendix 2.

7. Impact on our Public Sector Duties

7.1 Integrated Assessment Completed: No

7.2 Equality, Socio-Economic, Health and Human Rights Impacts

The report proposes a change in reporting mechanism, and this will have no impact on equality, socio-economic outcome, health or human rights.

7.3 Welsh Language Impacts

The proposal will have no impact on the use of Welsh or compliance with Welsh Language Standards.

7.4 Section 6 Biodiversity Duty and Carbon Emission Impacts

The People Services Committee meets online, rather than in person, nevertheless there will be a small reduction in carbon emissions as less paper will be generated and fewer documents stored.

7.5 Well-being Goals for Wales and 5 Ways of Working (Sustainable Development Principles) Impacts

The report proposes a change in reporting mechanism and this will have no impact on the Well-being goals for Wales or the Sustainable Development Principles.

8. Conclusion

It is recommended that the People Services Committee is merged with the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee.

9. List Background Documentation:

Report [17/24 Review of Terms of Reference](#)

(For further information please contact Caroline Llewellyn,
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Terms of Reference of the People Services Committee

The People Services Committee is responsible for all matters appertaining to the employment and deployment of staff by the Authority and also the support and development of Members of the Authority. The terms of reference of the Human Resources Committee are:

- To make recommendations to the Authority as to Human Resource Policies which might be adopted with regard to the employment relationship that exists between PCNPA and its staff.
- To review, scrutinise and approve existing Human Resource policies, where proposals are put forward to change their general aims and objectives.
- To review and approve any National Joint Council (NJC) Terms and Conditions where discretion on its implementation is provided to the Authority and this discretion has a potential impact on financial or other resources.
- To contribute to the formation and implementation of the Human Resources Strategy, be consulted on all new Human Resource policies subject to NPA approval; and have general oversight of HR policies in development and any legislative changes.
- To keep under review the establishment, organisation and remuneration of the Authority's staff and to make recommendations to the Authority from time to time as to any changes which may be desirable.
- To establish arrangements for and to conduct negotiations on behalf of the Authority with Unions representing the interests of its staff via the Employee Forum or any other negotiating arrangements.
- To make appointments including the conduct of recruitment and selection procedures in accordance with the Authority's Human Resources Strategy, and to make any recommendations on the exercise of the appointments' function as may be deemed appropriate and relevant.
- To contribute to the Authority's Health & Safety policies and procedures, such as they extend to staff mental health and general wellbeing.
- To oversee the delivery of support to, and development of, Members of the Authority.
- To oversee the delivery of the Member Development Strategy, including Member induction and the Training Plan.
- To review the support available to Members and to make recommendations to the Authority as necessary.

May 2024

AUDIT AND CORPORATE SERVICES REVIEW COMMITTEE

Role

To exercise the powers and duties of the Authority in relation to the following functions:

1. Audit Activity

- To consider reports from Audit Wales (e.g. the Annual Improvement Report, Annual Audit Letter) and to monitor the Authority's performance thereon
- To consider reports from Internal Audit on the Authority's systems and controls
- To oversee the production of the Annual Governance Statement and to monitor the Authority's performance against actions agreed for Significant Governance Issues identified within the Statement.

2. Finance

- To consider quarterly reports on the Authority's financial performance and budgetary matters including income generation and efficiencies
- To monitor the Authority's performance in relation to its Annual Statement of Accounts

3. Risk and Assurance

- To consider quarterly reports from the performance management system on priority indicators, projects and work programmes and to consider implications that this may have on risks for the Authority.
- To consider quarterly assurance monitoring reports for Compliance, Public Statutory Duties and Corporate Improvement areas including:
 - Governance
 - Finance
 - Sustainability, Section 6 Biodiversity Duty, Net Zero, Socially Responsible Procurement Duty
 - Welsh Language
 - Public Sector Equality and Socio Economic Duties, Child Poverty
 - Safeguarding
 - Information Governance, Data Protection and Cyber Security
 - Workforce, Health and Safety, Social Partnership Duty
 - Statutory Planning function
 - Communications, Marketing and Engagement
- To request and consider supplementary reports in terms of any of the above assurance, performance or corporate improvement areas.
- To monitor the Authority's Risk Management Policy, Risk Appetite and to review the Authority's Risk Register and make any recommendations to the National Park Authority to change levels of risk.

4. Other issues

- [To keep under review the establishment, organisation and remuneration of the Authority's staff and to make recommendations to the Authority from time to time as to any changes which may be desirable.](#)
- [To oversee the delivery of support to, and development of, Members of the Authority.](#)
- To review any issue referred to it by the National Park Authority, any of its Committees, or the Chief Executive Officer

Mode of operation

The Committee will comprise 9 Members of the Authority (6 PCC and 3 WG), to be selected and/or confirmed at the Annual General Meeting each year

The Committee will meet on a quarterly basis and provide reports to the Authority on its performance

Note

The exercise of such powers and duties exclude:

- Matters specifically reserved to be exercised by the National Park Authority
- Matters delegated to another Committee or Sub-Committee
- Matters that the Chief Executive Officer considers should be referred to a meeting of the Authority for determination