

Bannisdale Consulting working in partnership with The Lake District National Park Authority

The Background

The LDNPA as part of its overall improvement programme recognised that risk management was an area that required development. It was accepted that the Authority required support in this area, to supplement their own expertise and knowledge, and found that support through Pam Duke of Bannisdale Consulting.

Providing Support

Pam Duke has been working with the LDNPA for over six months to develop sound risk management arrangements across the Authority. This has taken many shapes and formats but essentially has enabled the Authority to vastly improve its risk management arrangements and have confidence that across all activities risk management is now being managed.

Through a partnership approach Pam has worked with the authority to introduce a risk management methodology that is practical yet effective.

Risk management can become a science but to ensure that it is understood and used by all staff and members it was essential that the approach was practical and user friendly and that it did what was needed without too many frills.

Once developed the methodology has had to be implemented and embedded into existing working practices within the Authority.

By embedded we mean that risk management becomes part of the day job and not undertaken because it's November or because the inspectors are on their way!

Part of the approach was to raise awareness generally of risk management and explore with both officers and members how it can be used as a useful management tool.

Staff and members needed to see that by undertaking a risk assessment it would help them in trying to deliver on their objectives and it would support them in managing their services. It is no good if it becomes just a paper exercise.

By facilitating a corporate and strategic risk assessment at corporate level, jointly with members and the senior management team, she helped the Authority identify its corporate and strategic risks. These were then prioritised to allow the key risks facing the Authority to be actively managed. Pam was also involved at management level assisting with the risk assessments of Service Plans.

Risk management now forms part of the overall business planning and performance management approach for the Authority.

It is essential that any new business process is aligned with existing or other developing processes. In the case of the LDNPA the risk approach has been built into business planning, performance management and project management.

Lake District National Park Partnership

It was agreed that a thorough risk assessment of the Lake District National Park Partnership should be undertaken.

The partnership is relatively new and risk management was seen as useful tool through which to establish any issues that remained to be dealt with in terms of the Partnership gearing up to deliver it's newly established vision.

Pam worked with a variety of senior officers, from key partner organisations operating within the Lake District National Park, to facilitate their risk assessment. Some partners found the exercise therapeutic! And overall it was very well received.

"The new Lake District National Park Partnership is crucial to realising a Vision for the National Park. And we wanted to put the right resources into making it fit for purpose and a strategic risk assessment is one of the essential tasks. Because of a history of poor relationships between the partners involved, it was essential to have an experienced facilitator to encourage constructive and challenging solutions. Pam was perfect in this role and was able to ensure shared ownership of the risks with ease. Something we, as partners, may not have been able to do ourselves."

Bob Sutcliffe,
Community Development Manager, LDNPA



Skills Transfer

As part of the overall programme various skills development activities have taken place ranging from a two day intensive risk management practical session for the Authorities risk champions through to one to one coaching for specific specialist staff. The training has provided staff and members with both the knowledge and understanding of the process alongside the skills to be able to facilitate and manage their own risk assessments.

It is important that it is not just knowledge that is transferred but the skills to be able to act upon that knowledge. This is one of Bannisdale's key approaches – ensuring that both skills and knowledge are developed so that organisations become truly self sufficient.

“The LDNPA has 14 teams that all have varying roles and responsibilities, and personalities! As the officer responsible for co-ordinating and running risk workshops on team's service plans, one of the main benefits of Bannisdale's approach is that the methodology must fit with the team's needs and not the other way round. We have been able to tailor our approach to risk management to fit in with our needs and our culture”

Lucy McQuillan
Improvement Officer, LDNPA

Delivering Valuable Benefits

- 6 LDNPA have achieved a number of valuable benefits from improving its approach to risk management:
- 6 Identifying and dealing with the key risks facing both the Authority and the Partnership
- 6 A greater understanding of the risks that the Authority faces across the organisation through increased communication
- 6 Staff feeling that they now have a mechanism through which they can raise concerns and have them managed as appropriate
- 6 Improved governance arrangements both for the Authority and the partnership
- 6 Recognition of improved business processes from the recent NPAPA review which described the Authority as achieving one of the fastest organisational turn-a-rounds that had been seen.

It is important to us in LDNPA that we work with consultants who understand the nature of our business. One size does not fit all. We needed an approach to risk management that was appropriate in scale to our organisation. Pam worked with us to develop a bespoke system that suited our needs whilst also embodying the principles of best practice. The systems we have in place are excellent and are making clear difference to the way we work. As we continue to embed and improve our approach to risk management, with Pam's support, the benefits will translate to our customers through improved service delivery.

Debbie Moore
Strategy and Improvement Manager, LDNPA

The Future

Bannisdale consulting will continue its' positive relationship with the LDNPA and will provide support as appropriate. We have been asked to act as the external advisor for the newly formed risk management group and we look forward to supporting further developments and improvements in the future.

The Approach

Staff from the Authority have described the support provided by Bannisdale Consulting as a professional and expert service provided in a very supportive manner. The support in providing advice, training and in facilitating workshops has been excellent and well received by Members, Senior Managers and more junior staff alike.

Bannisdale's aim is to deliver down to earth support to organisations enabling business processes such as risk management to come to life and be used practically by managers. It may put a tick in the right box but that is just a bi- product.

