

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION

1. Title

Extension of the Community Development Officer Project (Hosted by Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey (VABS) 2012-2014).

2. Expenditure Category

Operational Plan goal		Code	70851	Project	
				Grant	✓
Project spend		Code		Consultancy	

Is this spend to be funded from an existing budget line, existing line with additional funds or is it a totally new spend?	£12,500 Annual cost for two years 2012/14	Existing budget	
	£	Additional budget	
	£	New budget	

delete as appropriate

3. Description

- Brief overview of project/activity
- Specific elements for which support is sought (if not whole project/activity)

Background:

The Community Development Project in Badenoch and Strathspey (Our Community a Way Forward 2009-2012) led by Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey has been very successful in identifying community need through Community Action Planning process. The project has also been able to offer support for communities to develop their own projects and to help to make their communities more vibrant and sustainable. It has:

Worked with over 100 community groups

Drawn down approx 800K of match funding into the area

Helped disparate community groups to work more closely and effectively with each other.

The extension to the Community Development Project that came to an end beginning of April 2012, will ensure that communities continue to have support resourcing their projects as well as take on a new focus that supports young people in the area.

Project aims:

The overall aim of this project is to build on the process and outcomes of community action planning in Badenoch and Strathspey, and the consultation process of the National Park Partnership Plan/Local Development Plan with a particular focus on young people.

It will achieve this aim through employing a part time community development officer (approx 30 hours) who will co-ordinate the delivery of the activities below:

Project activities:

- Supporting communities in Badenoch and Strathspey to deliver the outcomes of community action planning (Our Community a Way Forward, National Park Plan/Local Development Plan consultation. Especially communities that went through the community action planning process (2007) where action plans may need to be revisited.
- Assisting community groups in sustainable implementation and development of activities/projects.
- Advising on a wide range of funding sources
- Co-ordinate specialist involvement as needed by a range of partners including; CNPA, Highland Council, other community planning partners and other agencies as appropriate to develop projects/and activities

New direction for the post would be to have an enhanced focus on young people:

- Supporting community projects that are being developed by young people or where young people are the beneficiaries.
- Working with the CNPA and partners to improve employment opportunities for young people in the Park.

The work of the part time Development Officer that will be the main output of this project will include;

- To coordinate and facilitate the design and management for the development and delivery of projects identified in the Badenoch and Strathspey Action Plans, some of which will be revenue earning to ensure their sustainability.
- To support and facilitate the development of projects generated by individual communities within Badenoch and Strathspey, and potentially aggregated projects for the area as a whole, to respond to individual, and groups of communities, to enable and contribute to their sustainable development
- To liaise and collaborate with community development initiatives across the National Park and further afield to add value and provide benefit to this project.

4. Rationale and Strategic Fit

- Objectives/intended beneficiaries
- Evidence of need and demand
- Fit with National Park Plan/Corporate Plan/other relevant strategies
- Linkages to other activities/projects

The community action plans provide a clear local framework for progressing projects that contribute towards delivering Park Partnership Plan and the Highland Single Outcome Agreement.

Evidence for this project has been highlighted through feedback from communities on the National Park Partnership Plan and the Local Development Plan (MIR) and will benefit both local residents (in particular young people) and visitors to the Park. Intended beneficiaries are the local communities (young people) and local agencies.

The project will be reported back to and monitored through the B&S Community Action Planning Strategy Group, which embeds it directly into the Community Planning process.

Policy context

- I. The Scottish Government National Performance Framework underlines that effective approaches to community engagement and support will contribute to the 'Communities' National Outcome:

“We will have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others”

Of the three related indicators, the following is the most relevant:

“Increase the percentage of adults who rate their neighbourhood as a good place to live”

- a) against the Park plan and opportunities to get involved;
- b) Developing mechanisms which allow local communities and communities of interest to influence and engage in the decision making process and management of the Park;
- c) Working with young people, people disabilities and those on low incomes. to engage them in shaping the future of the Park;
- d) Supporting local communities to encourage their active involvement in the management of the Park.

National Park Partnership Plan

In the draft Park Partnership Plan one of the key long term outcomes is to:

Support and build the capacity of communities to deliver their aspirations, with a particular focus on:

- a) implement projects, engage the support of partners and share good practice*
- b) Supporting innovative approaches to providing affordable housing to meet local needs*
- c) Aligning community planning processes to simplify support to communities*
- d) Engaging communities effectively in the long-term management of the National Park and in projects or programmes that affect them.*

The plan also highlights the importance of supporting young people particularly through skills development and training:

Many different organisations provide training, support and advice for business in and around the Park. This work package is about helping make sure that training, support and advice is tailored to the needs of businesses in the Park wherever possible, and particularly to provide focus on youth training and development through rural and wider business skills apprenticeships leading to employment within the Park

5. Option Analysis

- Are there other ways in which the above objectives could be achieved?
- If so, why is this the preferred option?

There were several options considered for delivering this work:

- 1) The communities could be supported/trained to deliver this project themselves;
- 2) The CNPA could undertake the work;
- 3) The work could be tendered;

The first option was ruled out as although the CNPA are supporting the “Strengthening Communities “ project (also led by VABS) to build capacity in communities to deliver more themselves there is still a need for more direct support (particularly when working with young people)

The second option was ruled out as it did not fit with our preferred enabling approach and we do not have sufficient staff resources to lead such work.

The fourth option was preferable to the third in that the work has a strong fit with their existing role.

6. Risk Assessment

- Are there risks to the CNPA in funding this project/activity?
- Are there risks in the project/activity not being delivered to required timescale/quality?
- Comment on the likelihood of such risks occurring, their potential impact, and (where appropriate) any action that would be taken to mitigate the risks.

The main risk is that the Community Development Officer does not deliver to the required quality or timescales, or that the officer in post leaves the project prematurely. VABS will oversee the post to manage these risks and ensure delivery across the organisation. The Community Development officer will be line managed by the VABS Manager. Meetings of the Community Action Planning Strategy Group (that will oversee the projects activity) will be held bi-monthly at a minimum.

7. Costs and Funding

- Detail the financial costs of the project/activity
- Detail the sources of funding

Funding Partners	Year One 2012/2013	Year Two 2013/2014	Total
CNPA	£12,500	£12,500	£25,000
Leader	£11,785	£11,785	£32,751
VABS	£2,500	£2,500	£5,000
TOTAL	£26,785	£26,785	£53,570

- Detail any non-monetary costs to the CNPA (such as Member or staff input)

In addition to this there will be additional officer hours from the community planning partnership in particular the CNPA and Highland Council. There will also be a significant level of volunteer hours from members of community groups such as the Community Councils, Youth groups, local businesses and residents etc.

8. Funding conditions

- Detail the project specific conditions that need to be included in any contract for services or grant offer letter in order that CNPA obtains the intended outcomes and Value for Money.
- In the case of grant offers, our Financial Memorandum requires that SEERAD agree these conditions in advance of the grant offer being made.

The project specific conditions will be agreed with the Finance Manager however quarterly stage payments for each project would seem appropriate with no payments made in advance of need. The grant offer will include the standard conditions and be agreed with VABS in advance of the grant offer being made.

As LEADER funding has been confirmed for 2 years it would be advantageous to agree 2 year funding for the CNPA funding.

9. Deliverables/ Impact Assessment

- What end products/outputs will be delivered?
- How will success be measured?
- How will the project be monitored and what will be the feedback to the CNPA?

The planned outputs of the project are:

The planned outcomes are:

40 community groups supported by the project to delivered community projects (15 of which should, involve young people directly)

All community Action plans to be reviewed and outstanding actions to be addressed were appropriate.

Significant amount of funding drawn down into the area for community led projects

Greater understanding of the barriers that stop young people finding employment in the Badenoch and Strathspey area

More opportunities for skills development and training for young people in the Badenoch and Strathspey area (linking in and supporting skills development and training work with the CNPA and partners)

Success will be measured by achieving the above, and subsequently by partners supporting communities to deliver their action plans. Claire Ross (Community Support and Education Programme Manager) will be giving feedback to the CNPA.

10. Value for Money

- In view of the costs, do the deliverables appear to offer value for money? (consider cost of comparable projects, where available).

For the CNPA the costs of the project are approximately £2,000 per community in Badenoch and Strathspey over the 2 years. This officer will be involved over the 2 year period approx 12 communities. The additional funding that the CNPA had provisionally allocated within the corporate plan was not match funded, matching with

the project under spend doubles the potential spend. This project will also apply to the Highland Council discretionary ward forum fund for quick win funding.

11. Exit or Continuation Arrangements (where applicable)

- If this is not a discrete, time-limited, project or piece of work, what are the exit/continuation arrangements for when CNPA support ceases?

The work outlined above will all take place from 2013-2014. VABS will investigate making the project self financing from the onset of this project. They will also be looking at generating income streams that will keep the project going beyond the 2 years. There is also the idea to put some of this support online for communities once capacity has been developed in the communities by more direct support.

12. Additionality

- Does this work/project substitute for or duplicate work being carried out or proposed by others?
- What would be the effects of the CNPA not supporting the project? Would it proceed without CNPA support?

The work/project was carefully designed not to duplicate work being carried out or proposed by others. The project would not proceed without our funding which is being used to lever contributions from Leader and VABS.

13. Stakeholder Support

- Have the organisations and/or communities that would have an interest in this work/project been involved, and are they supportive?

The project will be monitored by the Community Action Planning strategy sub group which comprises representation from communities, The Highland Council, Cairngorms Business Partnership and the CNPA. The group has been established for six years and works effectively together to deliver services in a more joined up manner in the area. The group is also aware of the main issues that have come out of the OCAWF consultations that clearly set the agenda for this project. VABS will also give regular updates to the Community Planning Partnership meetings (led by the Highland Council) that involve a wide range of local partners.

14. Recommendation

I recommend that a £12,500 per annum grant be approved for each of the years 2012/13 – 2013/14. This being £25,000 just less than an 50% of the total £56,

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

15. Decision to Approve or Reject

Head of Group

Name:	Signature:	Date:

Chief Executive

Name:	Signature:	Date:

Finance Committee

Name:	Signature:	Date:

Board

Not applicable – below approval limits		
Name:	Signature:	Date: