
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING **held at Braemar Village Hall** **on Friday 27 June 2014 at 10.30am**

PRESENT

Duncan Bryden (Convenor)	Eleanor Mackintosh
Angela Douglas	Mary McCafferty
Paul Easto	Willie McKenna
Dave Fallows	Fiona Murdoch
Jeanette Gaul	Martin Price
Gregor Hutcheon	Gordon Riddler
John Latham	Brian Wood (Deputy Convenor)
Bill Lobban	

In Attendance:

Grant Moir, Chief Executive,
David Cameron, Director of Corporate Services,
Murray Ferguson, Director of Planning & Rural Development,
Hamish Trench, Director of Conservation & Visitor Services,
Sandra Middleton, Head of Rural Development,
Pete Crane, Head of Visitor Services,
David Clyne, Recreation & Access Manager,
Alix Harkness, Clerk to the Board.

Apologies:

Peter Argyle	Katrina Farquhar
Kate Howie	Gregor Rimell

Welcome and Introduction

1. Duncan Bryden, the Convenor, welcomed everyone to the meeting in Braemar.
2. The Convenor said that a positive session with Peter Ord, Chairman and Dougie Baird, Chief Executive of Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust (COAT) had taken place the

previous evening. The Convenor added that the walk around the village on a path created by COAT and the presentation given to the Board after was very useful. The Convenor thanked COAT and the staff for the time and effort that was put into it.

3. The Convenor welcomed Paul Easto to the Board and David Clyne to the post of Recreation and Access Manager.
4. Martin Price reminded the Board that he was retiring from the position of Board Member on 30th September 2014. Martin added that he had really enjoyed being a Board Member and in particular his role in helping to develop Cairngorms Nature and the Research Strategy.
5. The Convenor, on behalf of the Board, expressed best wishes to a member of the public, Jane Angus, who was seated in the public gallery and who had taken unwell at the Planning Committee meeting on 6 June 2014.
6. Apologies received from Board Members were noted.

Minutes of Last Meeting held on 21 March, 2014 – for approval

7. The draft Minutes of the last meeting held on 21 March 2014 were agreed subject to the following amendments:
 - Para 19, Action ii, page 4: that the word ‘award’ be removed
 - Paras. 45-52, pages 7 and 8: that the word ‘Vice-Convenor’ is replaced with Deputy Convenor throughout.

Matters Arising

8. The Convenor advised that the actions from the last meeting of the Board had all been delivered bar one and invited David Cameron to update the Board on the progress of that action.
9. David Cameron, Director of Corporate Services, advised the Board that in relation to the action at paragraph 10, it was agreed that an updated paper would be brought back to the Board at their September meeting to coincide with the developments of LEADER.

Declarations of Interest

10. There were no interests declared.

Deputy Convenor Election (Paper 1)

11. David Cameron, Director of Corporate Services, introduced Paper 1 which details the procedure for the election of Deputy Convenor of the Board as the first agenda item at the Board Meeting in September 2014.

12. The Board agreed that they were content with the proposal.

13. Action: None.

CEO Report (Paper 2)

14. Grant Moir, Chief Executive, introduced Paper 2 which highlights the main strategic work streams that are being directed by Management Team. Grant explained that these are areas where significant staff resources are being directed to deliver National Park Partnership Plan priorities.

15. The Board discussed the following:

- The progress on tackling wildlife crime in the Park;
- The plans for the new Cairngorms Tourism Partnership;
- Notifications regarding road works taking place on the A9 in Badenoch & Strathspey and the potential disruption to tourism that this creates;

16. The Board agreed that this Paper was useful and thanked Grant for pulling it together.

17. Actions:

- David Cameron to circulate to the Board the total number of FTE staff employed by the Cairngorms National Park Authority.**

Cairngorms Economic Development and Diversification Strategy (Paper 3)

18. Sandra Middleton, Head of Rural Development, and Murray Ferguson, Director of Planning and Rural Development introduced Paper 3 which presents the final draft of the Cairngorms Economic Development and Diversification Strategy.

19. Murray added a further recommendation requesting that a Champion from the Board be nominated to provide a Board link to the Cairngorms Economic Forum and champion the implementation of the strategy.

20. The Board considered the detail in the Strategy paper and discussions took place around the following:

- Praise to the authors for the accessibility of the Paper and the Strategy;
- Recognition that the Communications team would have to support much of the communications work contained in the Strategy which had not already been incorporated in the current Communications Strategy;
- The rationale for choosing the delivery groups identified to lead on each priority theme detailed in the Action Plan of the Strategy and the need for a simple set of arrangements;
- The future role of the Cairngorms Business Partnership;
- The priority themes and their prioritisation;
- The potential involvement of the University of the Highlands and Islands;
- The next stage of the process which involves the Economic Forum agreeing the delivery arrangements and monitoring of progress;
- Reputational risks to the CNPA around the accountability for delivery of the Strategy;
- The importance of the Economic Forum being led by the private sector.

21. The Convenor advised that those that wish to be the Board Champion should indicate this to Murray Ferguson after the meeting.

22. The Board agreed to endorse the Economic Development and Diversification Strategy subject to the following guidance:

- **Sandra Middleton to seek advice from Martin Price on how to involve UHI;**
- **Review of the oversight responsibilities in relation to forestry actions in the plan;**
- **The addition of the implementation of the Economic Strategy and accountability to the CNPA Strategic Risk Register;**
- **The Economic Forum to be predominantly made up of the private sector and to be chaired by a representative from the private sector;**
- **Ensure the Action Plan should detail what will be delivered by whom and by when.**

23. The Board agreed the CNPA's contribution to the delivery of the Strategy.

24. Actions:

- A Board Champion to be identified.**

Research Strategy (Paper 4)

25. Hamish Trench, Director of Conservation and Visitor Experience, introduced Paper 4 which seeks the Board's approval of a Research Strategy for the Cairngorms National Park.

26. Members discussed the following:

- Recognition that this is an opportunity for the Cairngorms National Park to share best practice and to become an exemplar to others;
- The research questions and priorities detailed on pages 8 and 9 of the Paper;
- Funding that could be accessed for research and the resource needs;
- The research hub on the CNPA website;
- The evidence base for capturing a baseline;
- The opportunity to use secondary school students to carry out some survey work and involving them in this type of work;
- Recognition that the Communications team would have to support much of the communications work contained in the Strategy which had not already been incorporated in the current Communications Strategy.

27. Martin Price advised that he would remain involved in the Research Strategy Group even after his time on the CNPA Board had ended.

28. The Board concluded that that were content with approving the Research Strategy including current research priorities and agreed that it would be a valuable tool for supporting the work of the Cairngorms National Park Authority.

29. Action: None.

Revised Model Code of Conduct (Paper 5)

30. David Cameron, Director of Corporate Services, introduced Paper 5 which presents the revised model code of conduct prepared by the Standards Commission for Scotland. He asked the Board to consider the model code and to determine whether any adaptations are required to suit the specific circumstances of the Cairngorms National Park Authority.

31. In discussion concern was raised that neither of the Model Codes of Conduct in Annex 1 and 2 addressed the issues around the Board Members who are directly elected.

32. David Cameron advised the Board that a letter, similar to that issued to new ministerially appointed members of the CNPA Board, will be sent to directly elected Board Members in the future. He went on to remind the Board that it is hoped they will attend underpinning training on the Codes and the 'On the Board' guidance at the informal discussion scheduled for 10 October 2014.

33. The Board concluded that they were happy to endorse the recommendations detailed on Page 1 of the paper.

34. Action:

- i. **Board Training on the Board Model of Conduct and guidance to be organised for 10 October 2014 Board Discussion Session.**

Active Cairngorms (Paper 6)

35. David Clyne, Recreation and Access Manager, introduced Paper 6 which discusses the scope and development of the Active Cairngorms Strategy.

36. The Board considered Paper 6 and the following points were discussed:

- The relationship of the Cycling Action Plan and Core Paths Plan to the Active Cairngorms Strategy;
- The need to tap into the 'Get Scotland Walking' Scottish Government campaign to target local communities and visitors;
- The need to make more links to the Health Agenda within the Strategy;
- The need to take into account that the population is ageing and the need to encourage other ways of getting people active, such as encouraging the use of electric bikes;
- To ensure other activities including cross country skiing are considered;
- The timetable for this Strategy coming into being and ensuring it is aligned with work on the next National Park Partnership Plan;
- Volunteering and developing community ownership of paths;
- Maintenance commitments for the Deeside and Speyside Way.

37. The Board concluded that the Active Cairngorm Strategy should maximise the connections into the health and wellbeing agenda and ensure good integration with the other strategies of the National Park.

38. The meeting adjourned -for lunch at this point.

Long Distance Routes Update (Paper 7)

39. Pete Crane, Head of Visitor Services introduced Paper 7 which provides the Board with an update on the long distance routes in the Cairngorms National Park.

40. The Board engaged in a full discussion and the following points were made:

- The source of estimated figures regarding the Deeside Way;
- The significant land ownership issues affecting implementation of the Deeside Way extension;
- The budget for capital works and the impact the lack of resources would have on the projects.

41. The Board noted the update and welcomed the progress made in implementing the Speyside Way extension.

42. Action:

- Pete Crane to provide the Board with a copy of the Deeside Way extension feasibility document via the Clerk to the Board, Alix Harkness.**

Tomintoul & Glenlivet Landscape Partnership (Paper 8)

43. Hamish Trench, Director of Conservation and Visitor Experience, introduced Paper 8 which provides an update on the submission of a Stage 1 Landscape Partnership bid for Tomintoul and Glenlivet to the Heritage Lottery Fund. Hamish highlighted that the Stage 1 application had been submitted in May 2014 and that a decision was likely in October 2014, later than originally expected.

44. Hamish highlighted that the CNPA is now the lead partner in the project. The Board discussed the paper and agreed that should the Stage 1 bid be successful the CNPA would work with the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust to increase their confidence and capacity to potentially lead Stage 2. In addition Hamish was asked to highlight to the Project Steering Group, which he chairs, the Board's desire to see the Trust play an important role in future project stages and implementation.

45. In conclusion the Board agreed that they were pleased that the application to HLF had been submitted and were looking forward to hearing the outcome.

46. Action:

- i. **Hamish Trench was asked to highlight to the Project Steering Group the Board's desire to see the Trust play an important role in future project stages.**

Cairngorm and Glenmore Partnership - Update (Paper 9)

47. Hamish Trench, Director of Conservation and Visitor Services introduced Paper 9 which provides an update on the progress in developing a long term masterplan for Cairngorm and Glenmore.

48. The Board considered the Paper and made the following suggestions:

- That more work needs to be done to provide evidence within the masterplan which illustrates how this work will benefit the wider area of Badenoch and Strathspey;
- That the masterplan documents should set out more context and ensure pictures reflect the aspiration/be forward looking;
- To consider how best to collate/use customer feedback and market intelligence to inform the masterplan process.

49. The Board noted the progress and the on-going engagement programme and agreed that it was of great value to receive these updates. They stressed it was vital to get the right balance on this important and popular site in the heart of the Park and that many people had a stake in its future.

50. Pete Crane and David Clyne left the room at this point.

51. The Board took Paper 10 in a closed session for reasons of commercial confidentiality.

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52. The Convenor advised the Board that the issue of the Board Forum is being looked into and a contract with a new website designer to re-develop the website had been agreed at a meeting of the Communications Group, the previous day. He added that it is hoped that a new members' only area could be developed within the new website.

53. The Convenor highlighted to the Board that the email addresses for the Board had been set up. Helen Jenkins, Corporate Governance Manager, is currently working on the accompanying guidance. David Cameron, Director of Corporate Services, advised that both the email address and the guidance would be released to the Board at the same time.

54. The Convenor mentioned the release of National Planning Framework 3 and Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and explained that the National Parks have come out of it in a positive light. Grant Moir, Chief Executive, made the following points:

- Para 161 in SPP sets out policy on onshore wind and National Parks are listed as Category 1 areas where windfarms will not be acceptable;
- Paras 84 to 86 of SPP set out guidance around National Parks;
- Para 121 of SPP sets out a revised approach to housing provision in National Parks which the Board will need to consider.

55. The Convenor highlighted that on page 98 of the Queens recent speech there was reference to the English and Welsh National Parks being required to consider directly elected members on their Boards.

56. The Convenor advised the Board that David Cameron had requested that a Board Member sit on Leader Strategy Steering Group to represent the CNPA Board. The Convenor advised that he and the Deputy Convenor would identify a Board Member to take on that role.

Date of Next Meeting

57. Next formal Board meeting to be held on 12 September in the Cairngorm Hotel, Aviemore.

58. Meeting ended at 15.00.