
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING held in the Community Hall, Boat of Garten on Friday 6 October 2017 at 10.00am

PRESENT

Peter Argyle (Convener)	Eleanor Mackintosh
Rebecca Badger	Xander McDade
Geva Blackett	Ian McLaren
Carolyn Caddick	Willie McKenna
Angela Douglas	Gordon Riddler
Paul Easto	Judith Webb
Pippa Hadley	Walter Wilson
Janet Hunter	Brian Wood (Deputy Convener)
John Latham	

In Attendance:

Grant Moir, Chief Executive,
Murray Ferguson, Director of Planning & Rural Development,
Francoise van Buuren, Head of Communications and Engagement,
Gavin Miles, Head of Planning & Communities,
Pete Crane, Head of Visitor Services,
David Berry, Planning Manager (Forward Planning & Service Improvement),
David Watson, Economic Development Manager,
Katie Crerar, Planning Officer (Forward Planning & Service Improvement),
Alix Harkness, Clerk to the Board.

Apologies: Dave Fallows Gregor Hutcheon

Welcome and Introduction

1. Peter Argyle, the Convener, welcomed everyone to the meeting in Boat of Garten. He gave special welcome to the new Board Members: Carolyn Caddick, Pippa Hadley, Xander McDade, Ian McLaren and Walter Wilson.

2. The Convener welcomed Pete Mayhew to the post of Director of Conservation & Visitor Experience and reminded members that he starts officially on 16th October 2017.
3. The Convener said that interesting discussions with Cairngorms Business Partnership's Chairman, Angus McNicol, Chief Executive, Mark Tate and the following Members of their Board: Alisdair Colquhoun, Cath Wright, Philippa Grant focussing on the Cairngorms Business Partnership and the economy of the Cairngorms National Park had taken place the previous evening. It was agreed that informal sessions with the CBP Board would be scheduled to take place on an annual basis going forward.
4. The Convener reminded members that last May the verifiers from Europarc had come and had left impressed. He announced that the Cairngorms National Park had been awarded Sustainable Tourism status by the Europarc Federation.
5. Apologies were received from the above Members.
6. **Action:**
 - i. **Annual Informal discussions with CBP Board Members to be scheduled going forward.**

Minutes of Last Meeting held on 9 June, 2017 – for approval

7. The draft Minutes of the last meeting held on 9 June 2017 were agreed with no amendments.

Matters Arising

8. The Convener provided an update on the Action points from the minutes of the meeting on 9 June 2017:
 - Action Point at Para 12 (i.) – Closed – Board Members wishing to attend Volunteering Public Meetings on 17/18th June were to inform Hamish Trench.
 - Action Point at Para 12 (ii.) – Closed – Murray Ferguson was to circulate to the Board a list of the current planning applications being worked up for the Planning Committee.
 - Action Point at Para 12 (iii.) – Closed – Board Members wishing to attend the CBP Conference on 28th June 2017 were to let Alix know.
 - Action Point at Para 21 (i.) – Closed – Grant Moir was to circulate SNH's report on Satellite Tagging.
 - Action Point at Para 21 (ii.) – Open – Grant was to circulate SNH's further

report when published, this report has not yet been published.

9. A suggestion was made to revisit and reschedule a discussion on mountain hares. This was agreed.
10. With reference to paragraph 23 of the minute of 9th June 2017, what had been the outcome of the Letter the Convener had written to Lorne Crerar, HIE Convener? The Convener advised that a meeting had been held with HIE and that Lorne Crerar had been invited to attend the next Informal Board evening on 7th December 2017.
11. **Action:**
 - i. **Board discussion on Mountain Hares to be rescheduled at the appropriate time.**

Declarations of Interest

12. Xander McDade declared an interest in:
 - a) Paper 2 – Indirect Interest - Owns land at Pitagowan that has not been zoned.
13. Pippa Hadley declared an interest in:
 - a) Paper 2 – Indirect Interest – Had objected to changes in the conditions associated with development in Kingussie.

CEO Report (Paper 1)

14. Grant Moir Chief Executive introduced Paper 1 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. He highlighted the following areas:
 - a) With reference to paragraph 1a the Heritage Lottery Fund application for the capercaillie bid had been unsuccessful. He advised that they were looking to work on the bid and resubmit it next year. He explained that only 30% of the applications were awarded funding this time round and that all projects that were awarded funding in this round were resubmissions. Only one project in Scotland was funded in this round.
 - b) Peatland Restoration – there was now a total of 5 projects at a cost of £800,000. With other projects covering 173Ha in the pipeline.

- c) Wildlife Crime – CNPA had met with Scottish Government and Police Scotland and the information on how the special constables would work was being pulled together.
- d) Volunteer Rangers – had completed their training. 7 of the 8 live in the Cairngorms National Park and the 8th comes up from Edinburgh.
- e) Strengthening Communities Conference - held in Aviemore was very useful and one of the topics discussed was community housing.
- f) Land Reform Conference – was another useful conference and the work programme covers areas of interest to the CNPA.

15. The Board considered the detail in the Paper and discussions took place around the following:

- a) Would the new Board Members be given the same opportunity to meet with the East Cairngorm Moorland Partnership as the existing Board Members had? Grant advised that they would and that something would be organised in the Spring of 2018.
- b) Active Aviemore – how much funding had been secured and where from? Pete Crane advised that funding had been secured from Sustrans and NHS and that they were confident that the funding would be forthcoming in the next 18 months to two years.
- c) Comment made that there were really excellent pieces work coming forward
- d) A9 Dualling concerns on deer movements – was there an update? Grant Moir agreed to contact SNH for an update to provide the Board with.
- e) Wee Walks Week – was there any data available in terms of trend in comparison to last year? Francoise Van Buuren advised that the average walk was 8 miles ~~however that the~~ but participation numbers ~~were not as high~~ appear to be less than last year, however these figures only reflect ~~as they only count~~ those who registered and therefore is not a true reflection ~~on~~ of the total numbers of participants.

16. **The Board noted the Paper.**

17. **Actions:**

- i. **Board Informal session and visit to East Cairngorm Moorland Partnership to be scheduled for new Board members in the Spring of 2018.**
- ii. **Grant to ask SNH for update on deer movement concerns and circulate to the Board.**

Local Development Plan Consultation (Paper 2)

18. David Berry, Planning Manager (Forward Planning & Service Improvement) introduced Paper 2 which seeks the Board's agreement to publish the Main Issues Report for the next Local Development Plan for a period of consultation. He added that he wished to propose the addition of Active Aviemore indicative lines into the MIR Consultation document and showed these to the Board on one of the presentation slides.
19. Grant Moir advised that they would be looking to involve Board Members in the planned community events.
20. The Board considered the detail in the Paper and discussions took place around the following:
 - a) The Convener thanked David Berry and his team for all the work that had gone into the document and stated that he really liked the Main Issues Report as an open consultation.
 - b) Liaison to take place with local Board members before setting up community meetings to ensure availability. David Berry agreed.
 - c) Comment made that the document is well set out to show the preferred options as well as the alternative options and also shows the rationale behind the preferred options.
 - d) The Planning Committee Convener, Eleanor Mackintosh reported that they had presented it to the Developers Forum at their last meeting and the document had been well received.
 - e) Clarification requested as to how the consultation would work. David Berry advised that it would be similar to that of the National Park Partnership Plan where participants would be encouraged as much as possible to respond online however comments via email or hand written would also be accepted. He added that the process would be more a place based approach and tailored to individual places.
 - f) Was the Active Aviemore transport element intended to be more than just a map? David Berry advised that the plan in the MIR would spatially indicate the likely active travel improvements and there will be further background information in support of the Consultation document which participants can dip in and out of as they wish. Gavin Miles added that Active Aviemore was in its early stages at present but if by next year it had moved forward more information could be added into the main document at that point.
 - g) Board Members asked that those attending Community meetings during this consultation are supported by staff. David Berry agreed to this.
 - h) Request made to list Struan Hotel site in Carr-bridge as an issue. David Berry agreed to this amendment.

21. **The Board:**
- a) **Agreed the addition of the Active Aviemore map to the Main Issues Report Consultation document; and**
 - b) **Approved the publication of the Main Issues Report for consultation purposes.**

22. **Actions:**

- i. **David Berry to liaise with Board Members local to Communities before setting up meeting dates.**
- ii. **Board Members attending community meetings during the consultation period to be supported by members of staff.**
- iii. **Struan Hotel site to be added to the Main Issues Report as an issue.**

Board Member Committee/ Group Membership (Paper 3)

23. Grant Moir, Chief Executive introduced Paper 3 which asks the Board to agree the Board Membership of Committees and Groups for the next year.
24. The Board considered the current membership of the Groups and Committees and agreed the following:
- a) Finance & Delivery Committee – Xander Mcdade and Rebecca Badger to join this Committee. A Convener for the Committee will be elected at their next meeting.
 - b) Audit & Risk Committee – Rebecca Badger to come off this Committee and Janet Hunter, Judith Webb and Walter Wilson to join this Committee.
 - c) Staffing & Recruitment Committee - Carolyn Caddick and Gregor Hutcheon to join this Committee bringing the total number of members to 6.
 - d) Staff Consultative Forum Board Representation – will be determined at Staffing & Recruitment Committee’s next meeting.
 - e) Association of Cairngorms Communities – Brian Wood to become the Board Representative.
 - f) Local Outdoor Access Forum (LOAF) – Eleanor Mackintosh to become the Board Representative.
 - g) Inclusive Cairngorms – Janet Hunter to become the Board Representative.
 - h) With regards to the Land Management Forum had a review taken place to find out how well it was working? Grant advised that there was commitment in the

National Park Partnership Plan for the creation of an Upland Forum but that how this should be formed was still being considered. . He explained that he would organise for a paper or at the very least an update to be brought to the Board by Spring 2018.

25. The Board agreed the membership of the Groups/Committees for the coming year.

26. Actions:

- i. Board members named in paragraph 17a) to g) to join listed groups.**
- ii. Update or Paper on the creation of an Upland Forum to be brought to the Board at their March 2018 Board meeting.**

Communications and Engagement Programme 2017/18 (Paper 4)

27. Francoise van Buuren, Head of Communications and Engagement introduced Paper 4 which provides an update on the communications and engagement activities carried out during 2017/ 18 and seeks to gain approval for the proposed programme of activity for 2018/ 19. She explained that this programme of work has been guided by the Communications and Brand Board group chaired by Brian Wood consisting of Gregor Hutcheon, Paul Easto, Eleanor Mackintosh, Janet Hunter, Angela Douglas and Dave Fallows.
28. Brian Wood, Chair of the Communications and Brand Board group commended the Paper and thanked Francoise van Buuren and colleagues on work that had been done.
29. The Board considered the detail in the Paper and discussions took place around the following:
 - a) Suggestion made to add VisitAberdeenshire into paragraph 13c. This was agreed.
 - b) Board representative on VisitAberdeenshire Board asked for briefing notes from communications team to inform networking sessions that take place immediately before the VisitAberdeenshire meetings. Francoise advised the Board Member to get in touch directly with the Communications team who would be happy to help.
 - c) Make it Yours – are there any insights available as to how successful the work has been? Francoise advised that the feedback forms received had been positive about the training. Pete Crane added that the best feedback will be from the

- Europarc Verifiers however this information had not yet been received. It was agreed to bring this information to the Board when it was forthcoming.
- d) Congratulations for having exceeded the target of the number of social media followers.
 - e) A Board Member encouraged all Board members going forward to get behind and support some of the events being run.
 - f) Suggestion made to reach out to the wider councillor population and not just to those within the Cairngorms National Park area. Francoise advised that the Convener sends out an e-bulletin to all councillors and agreed to look into expanding the reach of the e-bulletin to include the wider councillor population.
 - g) Could the Make it Yours campaign use social media to persuade people about responsible access for example the dangers of leaving barbeques unattended? Pete Crane agreed that it could be brought in.
 - h) Remark made that there had been positive visitor comments but still some reticence from residents. Grant explained that the solution to this was not only a communications issue and that it is about doing good things in those communities with residents. He explained that positive interactions with the average resident would help bring positive resident comments, pieces of work like the Volunteer Rangers, Cairngorms Nature Festival and John Muir Award.
 - i) Likes and followers are not necessarily interactions, was there any more context to explain how engaging the National Park was? Francoise advised that key figures could be provided and that they had seen the campaigns approach inspire people to get involved.
 - j) Had the Wee walks week been targeted at certain age groups and areas? Francoise explained that it had been targeted at residents and people who are less active and invited the Board to meet Sian Jamieson, the CNPA Digital Communications Officer to hear how the targeting works.
 - k) Suggestion made to use the local newspapers and community newsletters more often. Suggestion made for Board Members with the support of Communications to write in these newsletters to help connect with the local residents. Francoise suggested that Board Members wishing to do this get in touch with the Communications team and the Press Officers would help to inform an article. Grant agreed to circulate to Members a list of all the community newsletters around the National Park.
 - l) Murray Ferguson advised that Liz Henderson, Community Manager was now in post and that one of her first tasks was to find out how to best support Board members at Community Council meetings.

30. The Board approved the proposed Communications and Engagement Programme for 2018/19. The final communications & engagement budget will be approved as part of the operational plan in March 2018.

31. **Actions:**

- i. **Visit Aberdeenshire to be listed under paragraph 13c.**
- ii. **Feedback from Europarc Verifiers to be circulated to the Board when available.**
- iii. **Wider Councillor population to be added to circulation list for Convener's e-bulletin.**
- iv. **Responsible access to be added to the Make it Yours campaign.**
- v. **A list of all the community newsletters in the Cairngorms National Park to be circulated to the Board.**

National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017 Delivery Update (Paper 5)

32. Grant Moir, CEO introduced Paper 5 which presents an update of delivery progress achieved during the 2012-2017 Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP).
33. The Board considered the detail in the Paper and discussions took place around the following:
 - a) Appreciation shown on the format of the paper and compliments received on how clear and easy it was to follow. Praise for the summary of achievements and the exceptions.
 - b) With reference to page 2 of Annex 1 that had been rated as red that was a disappointing result had this been as a result of high expectations to do with the legitimacy of the accreditation of the Wildlife Estates scheme? Grant advised that there was a hiatus with the scheme whilst it is reviewed by SLE and that the main person dealing with the scheme from Scottish Land & Estates had moved on. He added that he would bring an update to the Board on that when more information was available.
 - c) Could it be explained why the area of new woodland planted had been rated as amber as opposed to red? Grant advised that the figure there is the total area planted however that there has been lots of regeneration in that period that there data is not readily available for yet. He added that an estimate of the regeneration has been captured into the rating.
 - d) Volunteer days – There was a query around the number of volunteer days. Grant advised that there had been an issue around consistency of data collection

by some of the ranger services across the National Park and therefore we couldn't be completely sure of the accuracy of trend data.

- e) Community roll out of Broadband, was this realistic rating? Grant advised that it had taken a lot of effort by volunteers to get to the point of going to procurement however in light of recent event he understood where this concern came from.

34. **The Board noted the update on delivery of the National Park Partnership Plan.**

35. **Actions:**

- i. **Update on Scottish Land and Estates Wildlife Estates accreditation scheme to be brought to the Board when available.**

Broadband Provision in the Cairngorms (Paper 6)

- 36. Murray Ferguson, Director of Planning & Rural Development, introduced Paper 6 which provides an update on the work undertaken within the Cairngorms National Park to the proposed community-led project and the reasons underpinning the change in delivery arrangements for superfast broadband.
- 37. Grant Moir thanked the volunteers in Cairngorms Community Broadband for the enormous amount of time and work they had put in.
- 38. David Watson, Economic Development Manager explained that the Scottish Government's R100 Programme do not expect to get to 100% but to 98.1%. He informed the Board that their intention would be to concentrate on the worst areas first and committing to superfast broadband of a speed of 30MB/ sec in those areas. He explained that by December 2018 the premises that will be dealt as part of the programme will be made available.
- 39. The Board considered the detail in the Paper and discussions took place around the following:
 - a) Recognition of the huge amount of work and energy that has gone into this and the shared frustration.
 - b) What advice should be given to communities who have been let down so many times and who would not welcome any further delay? Murray advised that the expectation of the R100 programme was to help the remotest parts of Scotland. The Convener agreed to write a letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity.

40. **The Board noted:**
- a) **the update on the Authority's support and the resources invested in seeking to secure a community-led high speed broadband service provision in the Cairngorms; and**
 - b) **that there is an expectation of, and dependence on, the national RI00 programme to deliver superfast broadband services to all rural communities in the Cairngorms.**

41. **Actions:**

- i. **The Convener to write a letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity.**

Election of Board Deputy Convener and Planning Committee Convener (Paper 7)

42. Grant Moir, CEO introduced Paper 7 seeks agreement of Board members that the elections for the positions of Board Deputy Convener and Planning Committee Convener will take place at the following Board meeting to be held in December 2017 and to summarise the process for this election.

43. **The Board:**

- a) **Agreed to extend the period of election of the current Board Deputy Convener and Planning Committee Convener until 31 December 2017.**
- b) **Agreed that election for the Board Deputy Convener and Planning Committee Convener shall take place at the Board meeting in December 2017, with members elected to these positions taking up their roles with effect from 1 January 2018.**
- c) **Noted that the election for both positions will follow the process set out in paragraphs 4-7 of the CNPA Standing Orders. These paragraphs have been extracted and set out in the Annex to this paper for ease of reference.**
- d) **Agreed that the order of the elections to be undertaken at the December Board meeting shall be to first elect the Board Deputy Convener and secondly to elect the Planning Committee Convener.**

44. **Actions: None.**

AOCB

45. Grant Moir informed the Board the 14th December 2017 was the date that the Scottish Budget would be announced and that because this was after the December Board meeting there will not be a draft budget paper at that meeting. He added that it would be the intention to bring the draft budget to an informal Board discussion early in 2018 and then formally at the Board meeting in March 2018.

46. **Action:**

- i. **Draft Budget paper to be scheduled to be brought to the Board at an Informal Business session early in 2018.**

Date of Next Meeting

47. Next formal Board meeting to be held on 8 December 2017, The Pagoda, Grantown on Spey.

48. The Public part of this meeting concluded at 11.45.