
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

Title: CAIRNGORMS UPLAND ADVISORY FORUM

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Purpose

The NPPP 2017 – 2022 sets out an action to ‘establish an Upland Advisory Forum to address integration of land use objectives and bring together all relevant interests to shape good practice in the Cairngorms National Park’.

This paper sets out the establishment of that Forum

Recommendation

The Board is asked to:

- a) **Approve the establishment of the Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group as per the National Park Partnership Plan 2017 - 2022.**

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Strategic Context

1. The Cairngorms Deer Advisory Group (CDAG) was set up around 10 years ago to bring together representatives of all with an interest in deer across the Park and to provide advice to CNPA staff (and other agencies) on deer matters within the CNP. In particular, it facilitated communication between the different Deer Management Groups DMGs within the Park and ensured that a national perspective on deer issues was brought into the debates. It also facilitated the production of the Deer Framework for the CNP, which was very influential in developing thinking about future deer management within the Park.
2. However, in recent years things have moved on within the deer sector. In particular, Scottish Government expects the individual DMGs to deliver on their public interest responsibilities through the deer management planning system and each DMG is being robustly assessed every two years. This has meant that most CNPA work on deer management (a priority in the new NPPP) involves working with individual Estates and DMGs and the role of CDAG, in this respect, has diminished.

The need for an Upland Advisory Group

3. The conservation section of the new NPPP focuses effort on delivery in upland habitats, specifically landscape scale conservation, deer management and moorland management. Having good advice on all aspects of upland management is, therefore, an imperative for the coming five years of NPPP delivery. Moreover, in recent years, land management has become very much about integrated management rather than looking at individual issues e.g. forestry, deer, grouse, recreation in isolation. Thus it is proposed that a more holistic Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group would fulfil the needs of the next five years in a ‘smarter’ way than several individual, narrowly focussed, groups. The Group will be a sounding board for the CNPA and others and will not be a Working Group. Finally, CUAG advice is likely to be very useful in taking forward the work of the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership (ECMP) a key project for the CNPA over the next 5 years and beyond.

Operation of CUAG

4. The proposal to broaden CDAG into CUAG was discussed with CDAG members and approved at its meeting in Nov 2017. The chair and secretary would remain the same (currently Judith Webb and Mike Cottam).
 - a) Meeting frequency of 2 to 3 times per year
 - b) Broad membership and remit, bringing together specialist advisors with an expertise in upland management and practitioners. Members of the Group would be expected to communicate with their networks about CUAG

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- c) Meetings would be themed and that external invitees would be invited to join the core group as and when required.
 - d) The core group would comprise of representatives, practitioners and/or experts in moorland management, deer management, forestry, nature conservation, recreation, research, and farming.
 - e) It is expected that CUAG would be up and running by early summer 2018 and that at the first meeting the terms of reference for the Group will be agreed.
5. The CNPA Board representative (currently Judith Webb) for CUAG would be agreed on an annual basis as per standard Board procedures. The lead officers will be Pete Mayhew with support from Will Boyd Wallis and Mike Cottam.

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