
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING **held in the Pagoda, Grantown-on-Spey** **on Friday 26 January 2018 at 14.10**

PRESENT

Peter Argyle (Convener)
Rebecca Badger
Carolyn Caddick
Angela Douglas
Paul Easto
Pippa Hadley
Gregor Hutcheon
Janet Hunter

John Latham
Eleanor Mackintosh
Willie McKenna
Ian McLaren
Gordon Riddler
Judith Webb
Walter Wilson
Brian Wood (Deputy Convener)

In Attendance:

Grant Moir, Chief Executive,
Pete Mayhew, Director of Conservation & Visitor Experience,
Will Boyd Wallis, Head of Land Management & Conservation,
John Risby, Forestry Commission Scotland,
Alix Harkness, Clerk to the Board.

Apologies: Geva Blackett Dave Fallows
 Xander McDade

Welcome and Introduction

1. Peter Argyle, the Convener, welcomed everyone to the meeting in Grantown-on-Spey.
2. Apologies were received from the above Members.

Matters Arising

3. The Convener reminded Members that at the last meeting he had asked for volunteers to attend the Scottish Tourism Alliance Conference on 1st March 2018 in Glasgow. He said that no one had put themselves forward so made a plea for volunteers. Walter Wilson volunteered and this was agreed.
4. Grant Moir announced that the successful Heritage Lottery Fund bid for the Badenoch Great Place project press release went out yesterday and advised that the good news would allow work to commence on the Newtonmore/ Kingussie priority area earlier than anticipated.
5. Grant Moir advised Members that the session with Lorne Crerar and Charlotte Wright, HIE that was cancelled in December as a result of bad weather had been rescheduled and would take place on 15th March 2018 in Blair Atholl.
6. **Actions:**
 - i. **Walter Wilson to represent the Board and attend the Scottish Tourism Alliance Conference on 1st March 2018 in Glasgow.**

Declarations of Interest

7. Angela Douglas declared an interest in:
 - Paper 1 – Indirect Interest – Has various professional forestry interests.
8. Judith Webb declared an interest in:
 - Paper 1 – Indirect Interest – Has various professional forestry interests

Cairngorms Forest Strategy (Paper 1)

9. Will Boyd Wallis, Head of Land Management & Conservation introduced the paper which seeks the Board's agreement to undertake a formal consultation on the draft Cairngorms Forest Strategy beginning 12th February 2018 lasting 6 weeks. He added that reference to individual trees in settlements and communities would be added.
10. The Board discussed the Paper and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) Praise for an overall well written document that is accessible to all and not just for people who can understand trees.

- b) Concern was raised surrounding the use of the words 'large areas' in reference to woodland creation on agricultural land which could have different interpretations. Will Boyd Wallis agreed to remove this word from the last bullet point on page 16. (A1)
- c) A suggestion was made to explain the Scottish Government's regulatory body for forestry is currently Forest Commission Scotland to highlight that forestry is subject to regulation (page 5). Will Boyd Wallis agreed to add a sentence to that effect. (A2)
- d) Suggestion made to make reference to community engagement under the harvesting section bulleted points on page 21. (A3)
- e) With reference to page 26 where the promotion of community management and ownership is mentioned, was that the only place in the whole document that it was mentioned and what was the Authority's position on it?
- f) Concern raised on the woodland grant scheme where landowners are paid to grow trees but the community has no say on what happens to the trees. John Risby advised that grants to deliver Scottish Government policy are not means tested and that there is a process of notifying community councils of plans and felling.
- g) Could some kind of community payback be introduced? Will Boyd Wallis advised that consideration of that was a national policy issue and could not be taken forward through a regional strategy.
- h) Will Boyd Wallis confirmed that carbon sequestration is mentioned in the Vision section as well as many other places throughout the document.
- i) Suggestion made to add a sentence that states that forests provide communities' with an identity particularly in Badenoch and Strathspey. Will Boyd Wallis agreed to add this. (A4)
- j) Suggestion made to add a short summary on how forestry is governed in the National Park. Grant Moir advised that it could accompany the Strategy on the website so that it can be easily updated. Agreement to refer to this in the strategy itself. (A5)
- k) Was the native provenance of trees a big issue? Will Boyd Wallis explained that the emphasis was on native woodlands and trees deliberately because it was a National Park but there is provision for use of some non-native species.
- l) With regards to monitoring of the Strategy how would it be reviewed and how would we know if it's being achieved? Grant Moir advised that specific deliverables would be included in the National Park Partnership Plan 6 monthly reporting and an additional annual update on work carried out over past year.
- m) Comment made that there were lots of positive thought and wishes detailed in the document but not so much on the 'how'. Grant Moir advised that many of the actions would be carried out through other plans and projects being undertaken in the Park.

- n) With reference to the 100 year vision, a member disliked the use of the word 'dramatic' and how this fits with creating open vista's that brings tourist in. Will Boyd Wallis advised that he was aiming towards an optimistic outlook and that one of the fundamental points for the Strategy was that open land is not lost but a place where forestry, moorland and mountains sit well together.
- o) Request made to remove the word 'large' from the last bullet point of the first green box on page 16 as the meaning was too ambiguous. This was agreed. (A1)
- p) John Risby confirmed that from his point of view the document was well set out and very clear and that it would be used to inform decisions on ongoing projects.
- q) Discussion around the opening sentences of the document being very dry and suggestion made to describe the benefits of trees and woodlands in the National Park. Will Boyd Wallis noted this and explained that the text to accompany the finished Strategy on the web would be to that effect. (A6)
- r) Somewhere in the draft there was a sentence about a habitat not being managed for wading birds and a suggestion made that the word 'not' should be removed. Agreement for Board Member John Latham to find the sentence and let Will Boyd Wallis know so that it could be corrected. (A7)
- s) Suggestion made to add an Executive Summary. It was agreed this would be included in the final draft and an introductory text would be provided on the website during the consultation. (A8)
- t) With reference to the word 'fuzzy' on page 17, suggestion made to change this to 'softer edge'. This was agreed. (A9)
- u) With reference to the table on page 34, the heading in the second column contained a small 'e' and should be a capital 'E'. This was agreed. (A10)
- v) Discussion around beavers and mentioning any other potential species.
- w) Suggestion made for the vision to be written in an active voice as opposed to a passive voice. Agreed that Board Member, Becky Badger suggest some changes and send onto Will Boyd Wallis for consideration. (A11)
- x) Board Member, Angela Douglas to pass her points to Will Boyd Wallis after the meeting. (A12)
- y) Suggestion made to find an adjective to accompany 'open landscapes' in the vision. This was agreed. (A13)

11. **The Board considered and agreed to a 6 week consultation on the Cairngorms Forest Strategy starting in mid-February 2018 subject to changes referenced as A1 – A13.**

12. The Convener thanked John Risby for attending the meeting.

13. **Actions:**

- i. **John Latham to find rogue 'not' and let Will Boyd Wallis know.**
- ii. **Rebecca Badger to suggest some changes to the vision and send to Will Boyd Wallis for consideration.**
- iii. **Angela Douglas to pass her points to Will Boyd Wallis after the meeting.**

AOCB

14. There were no items presented.

Date of Next Meeting

15. Next formal Board meeting to be held on 16 March 2018, Blair Castle, Blair Atholl.

16. The meeting concluded at 15.05.