



## For decision

**Title: Governance Committee Annual report to Board**  
**Prepared by: David Cameron, Director of Corporate Services & Deputy Chief Executive**

### **Purpose**

This paper presents the draft Annual Report of the Governance Committee to the Board.

### **Recommendations**

The Board is asked to:

- a) Review the draft Annual Report to the Board and agree any amendments prior to submission to the board in September.

### **Draft Governance Committee Annual Report to Board for Period August 2022 to September 2023**

### **Activity in Period**

1. The Governance Committee was established following a review of the Cairngorms National Park Authority's board committee structures over the first quarter of 2021/22. The Committee formalised the "Governance Group" of Convener, Deputy Convener and Committee Chairs which previously met to support management of governance, strategic development and board management activities.
2. The Committee met a total of four times up to and including the meeting of 18 August 2023.
3. The Committee has sought assurance over the following key aspects of the Cairngorms National Park Authority's operations over the course of the reporting period:
  - a) Operation of board committees within their terms of reference;



- b) Communication strategy and its implementation;
- c) Committee memberships;
- d) Board complaints procedure;
- e) Board development, evaluation and training;
- f) Board appointment processes;
- g) Staff Register of Interest Assurance Processes;
- h) Board and events timetables;
- i) Work of the Cairngorms Youth Action Team.

## **Review of Activities and Commentary**

- 4. The Committee has continued to embed its role within the Park Authority's Committee structure over this second year of its operations.
- 5. The Committee had a number of changes in membership over the course of the period covered by this report, reflecting the wider period of change in the membership of the full board over this time and also the number of consequential elections held for a number of Convener and Committee Chair roles. The Committee is open to for attendance by any board member where members have an interest on any specific matter under discussion.
- 6. The Committee has identified two additions or points of clarification required to its terms of reference over the course of this reporting period. The proposed additions
  - a) Support the Convener in identifying an appropriate sub-group of the board, with maximum of four members including the Convener, to advise on matters of pay, terms and conditions, appointment and any other contractual matters relating to the Chief Executive Officer and any other staff falling within the Scottish Government's Senior Appointments Pay Processes.
  - b) To oversee and provide assurance to the Board on the development of the Park Authority's communications strategy and on the implementation of actions plans and achievement of the strategic outcomes of that communication strategy. [This amendment clarifies the reporting line for communications activity which had previously been handled under the aspect of the terms of reference: oversee and provide assurance to the Board on implementation of strategically significant corporate programmes of work not falling within the remit of other Committees,



such as business continuity planning and significant IT or organisational development programmes.]

7. Part of the Committee's role is to consider the schedule of business for the full board. There have been no instances of need for escalation of concerns around any items of business considered by the Committee to the full board. Some minor matters have been made known to other committees to enhance coordinated assurance over organisational performance.
8. Timetabling of committees continues to be tested to find the correct time allocation for the Committee amongst a range of other board business commitments and recognising that many members are only able to attend Park Authority board and committee meetings on Fridays.

## **Conclusions**

9. The Committee believes that the establishment of the Committee has made a positive enhancement to the assurance processes of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, formalising and scheduling key governance overview activities and discussions which had previously been on a more ad hoc basis.
10. The Committee believes there are no significant changes needed in the Committee's operations over the coming year.
11. The Committee is grateful to the support of officers provided over the year, for full and clear papers and effective, helpful engagement at our meetings.

David Cameron