

Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum

MINUTES OF THE THIRTY NINTH MEETING Community Hall, Boat of Garten

Tuesday 4th February 2014

Summary of Action points arising from meeting

API – LOAF to consider best method of collating a group response to the LEADER consultation

AP2 – AM to circulate relevant background to inform LEADER consultation response

AP3 – LOAF to further consider subject of disturbance within the Caper Framework

AP4 – LOAF to be further consulted on Caper Framework following analysis of Workshop findings

Forum members in attendance:

Malcolm McIntyre	Paul Webster
Nic Cole	David Lyle
Dave Craig	Eric Baird
Peter Holden	Gordon Riddler
Nigel Williams	Hebe Carus
Jeremy Usher Smith	

Others in attendance:

Justin Prigmore, CNPA	Pete Crane, CNPA
Adam Streeter-Smith, CNPA	Alice Mayne, CNPA
Peter Mackay (public)	

Item 2 - Apologies

Ian Hill	Ruaridh Ormiston
Malcolm MacIntyre	Richard Wallace
Richard Gledson	

Item 3 - Minutes of the last meeting – approval and matters arising not otherwise appearing on the agenda.

The minutes were agreed with no amendments.

Action points arising from the last meeting

- API-** AQSS updated the Forum. Action ongoing.
- AP2-** Discharged.
- AP3-** Discharged.

- AP4-** Discharged.
- AP5 -** Discharged.
- AP6 -** Action subject of 39th meeting.
- AP7-** Discharged.
- AP8-** AQSS updated the Forum. Action carried.
- API2 –** Action carried.
- API0 -** Discharged.
- API1 –** DS updated the Forum. Action ongoing.
- AP9 -** Action subject of 39th meeting.

Item 4 Local Development Strategy

1. Alice Mayne introduced the Local Development Strategy (LDS) for the new LEADER Programme for 2014-2020. This is now under consultation in a number of formats. These include an online survey and a form to be completed. A series of local consultation events will also be held.
2. The aim of LEADER is to increase the capacity of local rural community and business networks to build knowledge and skills and to encourage innovation and co-operation to tackle local development objectives.
3. Alice highlighted that funding is likely to take the form of 3 grant streams - the main grant, small grants and youth grants - each being dependant on meeting a number of themes. There is a strong desire to see communities collaborate on projects to meet a number of the themes.
4. Members asked how much funding will be available. Based on the calculation that £66 million has to be split between 21 LAG's it is expected the funding pot will be around £2.5 million over 4 years. Funds would be open from January 2015.
5. The Cairngorms Local Action Group are seeking views on the proposed investment themes and are asking for information about how relevant individuals and groups might support projects in the new programme. Alice would like the LOAF to respond to the consultation.
6. Further background information will be provided alongside the consultation.

API – LOAF to consider best method of collating a group response to the consultation.

AP2 – AM to circulate relevant LEADER background to inform consultation response.

Item 5 Capercaillie Framework – presentation

7. Justin Prigmore introduced the Capercaillie Framework which he is leading on. JP outlined the key principles guiding the purpose of the Framework and illustrated how current data informs understanding to date.

8. JP highlighted that Capercaillie had contracted across their former range and that populations were close to collapse. He also reported that 80% of the UK Capercaillie population is in the Cairngorms National Park and of this, 75% is in Strathspey. Some discussion was had surrounding the extent of data and what gaps there might be. Members raised concerns that there were wider issues at play such as habitat loss and climate change and that these needed to be taken into account.
9. The Forum were asked to advise on how the issue of disturbance should be treated and evaluated within the developing framework.
10. EB reminded members that the development of the framework and the implementation of its recommendations mean that the LOAF will be closely involved in this initiative over the coming months.

AP3 – LOAF to further consider subject of disturbance within the Caper Framework

Item 6 Capercaillie Framework - workshop

11. Following JP's presentation the Forum were split into two groups and workshop sessions took place.
12. Each workshop group was asked to consider three key questions as follows:
 - a. Do the LOAF know enough about this subject (caper ecology/disturbance) to allow for informed evaluation of the main issues? What more do you need to know?
 - b. Do we have enough recreation data? What are the gaps? What data does the LOAF recommend we gather to ensure we are able to make appropriate recommendations?
 - c. How do we most effectively involve the LOAF in the peer review/analysis stage of this project?
13. A separate summary of the workshop discussion has been collated and is appended to these minutes.

AP4 – LOAF to be further consulted on Caper Framework following analysis of Workshop findings

Item 7 Outdoor Access Casework

14. AQSS introduced this item highlighting that the Access Team is currently short staffed due to Bob Grant's departure and Adam taking on the role of co-ordinating the Ranger Service meaning a reduction in his time spent on access work.

15. The Forum were asked whether they were accepting of a temporary 'hold' being placed on lower priority access casework until such time as the team is back to full strength. The Forum agreed to this and to a review of the situation at the time of next meeting in May.
16. There was further discussion around the matter being temporary and assurances were given this was the case and there was a continuing intention to resolve access cases and see them closed.

Item 8 Update & Forward Look

17. DS introduced this item explaining that the team was awaiting a new manager starting at the end of February and therefore a number of areas of work had been put on hold, including progression of the Speyside Way extension. Future priorities for the team would also emerge more clearly once the team manager is in place.
18. DS highlighted that the Laggan paths leaflet has now been published (members received a copy) and an options appraisal for a possible extension to the Deeside way was to be carried out. Members noted these points and Item 8 discussion was concluded.

Item 9 LOAF Recruitment

19. DS explained that following suggestion from others the current recruitment form was felt to be overly intrusive and it had been examined to determine whether this was so and if changes could be made. Additional enquiries had also been made to assess the validity of the claim.
20. Following this it was found that the form was considered to be largely appropriate however it had been decided that some changes to the wording guiding the main applicant statement would help simplify matters.
21. It was also highlighted that new member recruitment would be taking place ahead of the next (May) meeting and more would also be done to target specific user representation on the Forum and to seek to address the current gender imbalance. Members noted and agreed these points and Item 9 was concluded.

Item 10 AOCB

22. Jeremy Usher Smith iterated ongoing concerns surrounding public access provision within the A9 dualling scheme, these were discussed briefly and it was suggested that this be a topic on the Agenda for the May Forum meeting.
23. Dave Craig raised a number of matters for members' attention:

- a. Highland Council is currently embarking on a process to de-designate a number of adopted Core Paths.
 - b. FCS have produced a new video highlighting forest access
 - c. Network Rail have chosen to lock access to some level crossings
24. Nic Cole highlighted that there had been a lot of press interest around an ongoing issue of public access in Glen Lyon and that MCoF S are surveying members to build up a strong evidence base for taking the matter forward.

Item 11 - Date of next meeting

To be held Tuesday 6th May 2014 at Ballater