CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING
held at The Village Hall, Braemar
on Friday 5th October 2007 at 11.30am

PRESENT

Eric Baird	Eleanor Mackintosh
Stuart Black	Ian Mackintosh
Geva Blackett	Anne MacLean
Duncan Bryden	Alastair MacLennan
Nonie Coulthard	William McKenna
Jaci Douglas	Fiona Murdoch
David Fallows	Sandy Park
Lucy Grant	Andrew Rafferty
David Green (Convenor)	Richard Stroud
Marcus Humphrey	Susan Walker
Bob Kinnaird	Ross Watson
Bruce Luffman	

In Attendance:

Jane Hope	Fiona Milligan
Francoise van Buuren	Andy Rinning
David Cameron	Chris Taylor
Andrew Harper	

Apologies:
Mary McCafferty
Drew Hendry

Minutes of Last Meeting – approval

1. The Minutes of the last meeting 10th August 2007 were approved: with no changes.

Matters Arising

2. None

Declarations of Interest

3. There were three declarations of interest all relating to paper 3:

a. Bob Kinnaird declared an interest as the director of an organisation using a family brand.

b. Alastair McLennan declared an interest as the chair of an organisation using a family brand.

The Convener suggested, with agreement, that the expertise of these two board members should be brought into the debate, but they should not be part of the decision and should leave the room for any vote.

c. Dave Fallows noted for the record an interest as an individual user of the Cairngorms National Park brand; this did not preclude him from taking a full part in the discussion and decision on the paper.

Election of Deputy Convenor (Paper 1)

4. Eric Baird was elected unopposed (proposed by Bruce Luffman, seconded by Sandy Park) for three years.

Committee Membership (Paper two)

5. **The Board agreed the recommendations of the paper as follows:**
   a) **Approved the committee memberships set out in annexe one;**
   b) **Approved the revised terms of reference for the audit committee set out in annexe two;**
   c) **Noted the revised operation arrangements for the audit committee.**

Park Brand Strategy Development (Paper 3)

6. Fiona Milligan introduced the paper which updated the board on work undertaken by the Brand Management Group (BMG) on the future use of family brands derived from the Cairngorms National Park Brand. Board approval was sought for one of several options and for revised terms of reference for the BMG.

7. The Cairngorms National Park brand was an important tool for delivering the National Park Plan. A great deal was expected of the brand as it was not just being used to market a single product, and this made it very different from the usual product brands. Around 130 organisations were already using the "generic" Cairngorms National Park brand; nevertheless, this did not represent the full potential of the brand. Opportunities to develop this potential arose from through the notion of the family of brands, which in turn had emerged from a number of umbrella organisations approaching the CNPA to incorporate the Cairngorms National Park brand into their own identities. This held out the opportunity of reaching a much wider audience through businesses within the National Park and was consistent with the CNPA philosophy of working in an inclusive way. It provided a key tool for enhancing quality and environmental standards, and for delivering a wide range of National Park Plan outcomes

8. The majority of Cairngorms National Park brand usage was in the "generic" way, and there were three current users of the family brand derivatives. Following some concerns expressed by the board, and an informal discussion in June 2007, further work had been

undertaken to look at those concerns. A small survey of people in the National Park had been undertaken to assess attitudes to the various options – this was set out at paragraph 28 in the paper. This led to the notion of three options for development of the brand. The options as set out in the paper were not final designs, (which could be finalised separately), but encapsulated the principles at issue. None of the options were risk free; the benefits and the risks were set out for each of the options in the paper at paragraph 34. It was emphasised in relation to option two, that this incorporated the notion that the use of fonts could be varied in this option and this would be for the BMG to consider separately. In relation to option three it was noted that this option encapsulated the notion that there should be a specific linkage with the National Park through the addition of the words "National Park" in some form (for example, "in the National Park" or "from the National Park") at the discretion of the BMG. In other words the designs put forward in the paper at paragraph 34 were indicative for purposes of the board discussion.

9. The board was asked to consider which option best met the needs of the National Park Plan. In discussion the following points were made:
   a) It was essential to take a strategic view, and revert to the principles of the Park brand; this implied looking at how best the use of the brand could deliver the values implicit in the brand. It was important that people could buy into these values through use of the brand. Option 3 offered a pragmatic solution – it was not perfect but it was felt to be the option of least risk by the majority of the BMG. Any option other than the status quo implied some cost, but these costs could be planned for by phasing in the introduction of option three. There would be concerns about design which would need to be addressed, as described.
   b) The counter view was that the best design was one which was simple, clean and uncluttered. The more cluttered the design, the less adaptable it would be in the future, and the less likely it was that groupings of businesses would wish to incorporate it into their own identities. Option three, through this clutter, began to lose the direct tie between the Cairngorms and the symbol of the bird.
   c) An observation by a member of the Cairngorms Farmers market was that the bird and the word Cairngorms on the side of the trailer led people to think that the farmers market was one and the same thing as the National Park. That should not necessarily be seen as confusion, but more a reflection that if people see the same symbol in many different ways they will eventually begin to understand what it stands for. Understanding did not come from writing a story underneath the logo – people would not necessarily read that.
   d) Paragraph 27 referred to the use of the bird symbol alone on the small entry point markers. While there was no real rationale given for the use of the bird on its own in this way, the explanation appeared to be that it was acceptable to leave out the words "Cairngorms" and "National Park" in instances where these were unreadable. The rational therefore could be considered to be that of "horses for courses" which was totally consistent with the view expressed in point (b) above. In other words, if it was acceptable to leave out the words "Cairngorms National Park" in some cases, absence of these words should not be the reason for dismissing option two. Attention was drawn to the fact that a recent advert in the newspaper which used the Cairngorms National Park brand was so small that the wording "National Park" or "Farmers Market" was so small as to be

illegible. In reality, people only saw the bird logo and the word Cairngorms. The survey referred to at paragraphs 28 to 30 included flyer number one which had the Cairngorms brand used in "generic" way. It was worth noting that the visitor responses did not appear to register that use of the brand. Further, the conclusion at paragraph 30 - that the strongest sense of National Park identity was given by flyer two-was self evident given that only flyer two mentioned National Park in the logo. This was not a reason for justifying option three over option two in future designs.

e) The current criteria for development of family brands were set out appendix two. These included the criterion that at least 70% of group members must be within the Cairngorms National Park. This was felt to be questionable given that quite a number of members could therefore be outside the National Park and this sat oddly with the notion of option three specifying "in the National Park".

f) There was further discussion about the implications of this criterion. It seemed to imply the businesses could be based in the Park but not delivering activities within the Park and yet still able to use the brand. The type of application had not arisen in practice and the BMG had not specifically looked into it. The underlying rational was that 70% of business needed to be carried out in the Park in order to qualify for use of the brand, this being more important than where the business was being operated from. The majority of businesses in the Park that were interested in use of the brand were tourism businesses doing business in the Park. Nevertheless, it was agreed that the point needed further thought and would be further considered by the BMG.

g) There was no clear rational for deciding on the inclusion of the term "in the National Park" or some other wording. Indeed much of the argumentation (notably at paragraph 36 and 41) was more about option two than it was about option three. The bird image and the word Cairngorms was all that was needed to convey the sense of the National Park.

h) A recent speech by the Convenor had interestingly made references to the "Cairngorms", and references to the "National Park", but had not included reference to the "Cairngorms National Park".

i) Option three looked as if it had been designed by a committee. Bringing a fresh pair of eyes to the issue brought the observation that adding words simply diluted the message. The impact of any logo was fleeting; many people had a fleeting glance only, and simplicity was the key to an immediate impact. The Board were in danger of looking at the issue too hard.

j) It was essential that visitors received the message that they were in the Cairngorms National Park; most visitors were aware of being in the Cairngorms, but not necessarily the National Park. Emphasising this by including the word "National Park" was important to make this association. Option 2 risked failing to reinforce the National Park message. Further, using the phrase "in the National Park" reinforced the idea that the organisation in question was part of the National Park but was not actually the Park itself or the National Park Authority. (It was noted that the precise wording was not necessarily "in" the National Park, but would be either "in" or "from" as appropriate at the discretion of the Brand Management Group and with agreement of the relevant organisation.)

k) The world was currently saturated with images; the National Park element of the brand design was crucial in indentifying the group identity for the area. The brand should be about what businesses can do for the National Park and vice versa. A recent survey on attitudes in Scotland to the environment had revealed that only a small proportion thought that National Parks had an aim to help the area's communities. The attitude could be changed if businesses were working with a logo that set them in the context of the National Park, and it was therefore logical to go with option 3. More time and brand use was needed to reinforce the association of the bird image with the idea of the National Park in people's minds. The situation could be reviewed in a few years time to check on the strength of that association.

l) The primary purpose behind the family of brands should be to advocate the values of the National Park. It was therefore important to keep the three elements of the brand- the bird the word Cairngorms and the words "National Park" together. It would be premature to pull those three elements apart until the brand was sufficiently well understood. Having accepted the notion of the family of brands, the CNPA needed to consider rolling this out so that it was understood by potential users.

m) Paragraph 34 – it was important to see the typography unified.

n) Paragraph 36 – the third bullet point should refer to "subject to agreement with family brand organisations" rather than simply "subject to discussion".

o) For option 3 to be viable, it was essential that users were content and would indeed use the family brand approach. Unless that was the case, there would be no benefit in terms of raising National Park awareness. Current users of the family brands appeared to be aware of the position that the CNPA were in, and the issues being addressed. A key issue for potential users seemed to be design; that could be resolved, and the CNPA would be happy to work with organisations, without being prescriptive. The brand was seen as valuable and there was a lot of interest, provided the design issues could be dealt with.

p) With reference to paragraph 48, developing the opportunities for groupings concerned with social inclusion to explicitly align themselves with the National Park values should involve these grouping themselves.

q) It was noted that where Associations had been awarded use of the brand conditional upon all the members meeting the GTBS and Visit Scotland criteria, there were instances were these conditions had not been met and these needed investigating if the brand was to retain its credibility.

r) The DMO on Deeside was emerging with the possibility that their area could extend outside the Park towards Banchory. If this was the case, there needed to be a close look at whether or not the DMO would meet the criteria for use of the Park brand as set out in appendix two (with particular reference to the 70% criterion discussed earlier).

s) It was emphasised that a decision needed to be made now and for the decision to be implemented, stuck with, and rolled out across the Park to maintain the credibility of the Brand.

10. Option 2 was proposed by Bruce Luffman (seconded by Geva Blackett); option 3 was proposed by Sue Walker (seconded by Eleanor Mackintosh). On a vote, option 3 was preferred by 16 votes to 5 (voting details shown in appendix one).

11. There was some discussion on the terms of reference as set out in appendix 5. Several points were made as follows:

    a) The third bullet under paragraph two required the brand management group to refer back to the CNPA board any matter on proposed use or implementation of the brand which it felt would constitute a change from the current policy. This was felt to be sufficiently clear, given that there would always be an element of judgement which had to reside with the brand management group on whether or not an issue constituted a change in strategic direction. The judgement on criteria which had been discussed during the previous part of the meeting had clearly been delegated to the brand management group, on the basis that all the points made by other board members during the discussion would be taken into account by the brand management group in reaching their decisions.

    b) There was one community representative on the brand management group as a voting member.

    c) It was noted that in devising criteria specialist advice might be needed and the BMG was empowered to co-opt people onto the group to advice as necessary.

    d) It was noted that there were now two streams to the use of the brand; one involved the generic use of the brand as originally devised, and the second now incorporated the use of family brands in certain situations as set out in annex 2 (notably groups seeking to develop a new visual identity within the family frame-work). These two streams were not mutually exclusive and use of the brand in the generic way would still continue.

12. **The Board concluded on the recommendation of the paper as follows:**

    a) **Agreed that the family brand approach to use of the Cairngorms National Park brand should be adopted and promoted along the lines of option three as set out in the paper. The essential elements of this were as follows:**

        i. **Final design details at discretion of BMG**

        ii. **"Cairngorms" to be included**

        iii. **"National Park" to be part of the logo but in a way to be decided by the BMG;**

        iv. **Bird on the right;**

        v. **BMG to consider the criteria in more detail and to make final decisions with no referral back to the board;**

        vi. **This approach to be rolled out in a business friendly way.**

    b) **Agreed the terms of reference for the brand management group (BMG) as set out at appendix 5 of the paper.**

LEADER Programme Update (Paper 4)

13. Andrew Harper introduced the paper which updated the board on the current Cairngorms LEADER+ programme and the bid for a new Cairngorms National Park LEADER programme. Approval was sought from the board for an extension of the current LEADER+ administration staff contracts, should the implementation of the new programme be delayed.

14. The members of staff concerned with the LEADER programme were congratulated for running a very successful and well received programme over recent years.

15. **The Board agreed the recommendations of the paper as follows:**
    a) **Noted the work being undertaken to close down the current LEADER + programme;**
    b) **Noted progress with the bid for a new Cairngorms National Park LEADER programme;**
    c) **Approved an extension on the current LEADER + administration staff contract to March 2008, to be reviewed once the outcome of the bid for the new LEADER programme was known.**

Corporate Plan; Theme 3 (Paper 5)

16. This paper was for information. A number of points were raised for clarification:
    a) Paragraph 20 referred to the six themes under which applications had been received for projects under the community investment programme. Demand had been lowest under the outdoor access theme and the cultural heritage theme. However, it was noted that all themes were being promoted equally. It was also noted that quite a number of cultural heritage projects had been supported albeit through other strands such as events, interpretation, marketing; so that support for cultural heritage was probably higher than it appeared. It was also noted that a number of late applications were coming in under the cultural heritage theme.
    b) It was noted that there were some planning applications that had been on the books for a considerable amount of time because the Park Authority were waiting for information to be provided by the applicants. The difficulty was that these applications unfairly reflected on the statistics for the length of time for applications to be dealt with. It was confirmed that officers were actively pursuing these applications with the applicants with a view to either getting them withdrawn or completing them.
    c) There was some discussion about the measurement of progress with particular streams of work noting that the paper presented updates in terms of activities and outputs rather than outcomes. It was noted that a robust monitoring framework was being put in place with conjunction in the National Park Plan and this would feed through with the corporate plan providing an output basis on which to report. Nevertheless, there would always be a place for reporting on activities and outputs on a more short term basis.
    d) The Aviemore master plan was being progressed, with the consultants (Land Use Consultants) due to report back to the CNPA shortly. The steering group consisted of CNPA, Highland Council and HIE. As part of assessing that report from LUC, there would be a proposal put together for consulting people locally.
    e) It was noted under paragraph 30 that determination times on planning applications were moving in the right direction.

Operational Plan 07/08 Quarter 2 (Paper 6)

17. This paper was for information. Several points were made in response to questions:

a) The visitor payback scheme had been deferred until 2008. This did not mean no work was being taken forward; indeed this was an output in the National Park Plan and was being discussed through the delivery teams.

b) The off road cycle route was making progress in that planning permission and the funding package were in place, but the landowners permission was still waited, and negotiations were in progress.

AOCB

18. Vital Spark Conference in Aviemore. This had taken place recently and had been very well received. It had reinforced the importance of a strategic approach to communication and getting messages right. Interest in the Cairngorms National Park was obviously very high. Congratulations were passed onto the organisers, and in particular the efforts of Andy Ford in the CNPA. It was noted that the various visits had flagged up that the way that the National Park Plan was being interpreted and used on the ground was still variable and much work was still needed to embed people's awareness of the plan and what it meant. In the end delivery of the plan depended on people on the ground.

19. Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum. The annual outdoor event had been held recently. There had been good debate with good visits; the event had been well organised by CNPA staff, with several board members attending.

20. ANPA Conference in the Peak District. This conference of all the National Park Authorities in the UK had been attended by several members of staff and a board member. It had been interesting to note the stark contrast between the newest National Park in the New Forest and the Cairngorms – huge development pressures were obvious in the New Forest which put those in the Cairngorms into perspective. There was considerable interest in the Cairngorms and in the Scottish perspective of National Parks. Some useful work had been seen on rejuvenation on peat moorland which was looking to recreate moorland as carbon sinks rather than carbon sources. Chris Taylor from the CNPA had made an excellent presentation on the brand. There was considerable interest amongst the other park authorities in the work the Cairngorms National Park authority was doing on the brand and on Rangers.

21. Cultural Heritage. The recent CAP course on the Changing Culture of the Cairngorms was highly commended and it was suggested that Ross Noble be asked to speak to the board at some discussion session.

22. Various activities which had taken place recently were noted for information:
    a) A meeting with local MSPs to take soundings on the Local Plan and Housing policy had been held on the third October;
    b) A large meeting for all partners had been held on the 28th September to reaffirm the delivery plans for taking forward the National Park Plan and bring together the advisory forums;
    c) The Convenor was seeking a meeting with the Minister to discuss the spending review and the sorts of projects which the Park Authority could successfully deliver for Ministers;
    d) A meeting on travel policy had been convened, attended largely by staff but also attended by Eleanor Mackintosh. This involved assessing business travel to

reduce costs and impact on climate change. The plan predominately covered travel by staff but had been encouraged to include travel by the board as well.

e) A request was made for a critical path and time tables for taking forward the local plan following completion of the deposit phase. The importance of having discussions with developers as the plan was taken forward was stressed.

Date of Next Meeting

23. 30th November 2007 in the Lonach Hall, Strathdon.

Vote on Paper 3
(Motion to accept option two; amendment to accept option three)

Board Name	Option Two	Option Three
Eric Baird		√
Stewart Black		√
Geva Blackett	√	
Duncan Bryden		√
Nonie Coulthard		√
Lucy Grant		√
David Green		√
Marcus Humphrey		√
Bruce Luffman	√	
Eleanor Mackintosh		√
Anne Mclean		√
Willie McKenna		√
Sandy Park		√
Andrew Rafferty	√	
Fiona Murdoch	√	
Richard Stroud		√
Dave Fallows		√
Ross Watson		√
Ian Mackintosh	√	
Sue Walker		√
Jaci Douglas		√
Total	5	16