
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING held at the Albert Hall, Ballater on Friday 6th July 2012 at 10.30am

PRESENT

Duncan Bryden	Eleanor Mackintosh
Angela Douglas	Ian MacKintosh
Jaci Douglas	Willie McKenna
Katrina Farquhar	Gordon Riddler
Dave Fallows	Gregor Rimell
David Green (Convener)	Brian Wood
Kate Howie	Allan Wright
Gregor Hutcheon	

In Attendance:

Pete Crane	Sandra Middleton
Jane Hope	Gavin Miles
Murray Ferguson	Francoise van Buuren

Apologies:

Peter Argyle	Mary McCafferty
Marcus Humphrey	Martin Price

Welcome and Introduction

1. David Green welcomed everyone to the Board Meeting.

Election of Convener

2. In the absence of the Proper Officer, the Chief Executive conducted the process of election. Duncan Bryden was proposed by Gordon Riddler and seconded by Eleanor Mackintosh; Brian Wood was proposed by Allan Wright and seconded by Gregor Hutcheon. Following election, Duncan Bryden was declared the new Convener by 10

votes to 5, to take up the position of Convener on the 8th September 2012 for three years.

Minutes of Last Meeting – approval

3. The minutes of the meeting of the 11th May were approved with no changes.

Matters Arising

4. Paragraph 8: The Board had agreed the National Park Partnership Plan for submission to Scottish Ministers, who duly approved it, and the Park Plans for both National Parks were launched at the Royal Highland Show on the 22nd June.
5. Paragraph 11: The Board had approved the Corporate Plan and after minor editorial changes flagged up at the meeting, this had now been submitted to the Sponsor Division in order to seek Ministerial approval.
6. Paragraph 16: After considering the paper on Skills Development the Board had concluded that the proposed audit of training already available in the Park should be conducted before returning to the question of the role of the CNPA. It was confirmed that the paper would be brought back to the Board in the next few months.

Declarations of Interest

7. None

Cairngorms Business Partnership – Future Support (Paper 1)

8. A paper was presented to the Board by Sandra Middleton and Murray Ferguson, providing a summary of the work delivered by the Cairngorms Business Partnership (CBP) over the previous year, and providing background information to support the recommendation for future funding and support. A recommendation was made to approve a funding package comprising £60,000 for 2012/13 and a further £120,000 for the period 2013/14 to 2014/15 subject to submission of a detailed business plan.
9. Alan Rankin (Chief Executive of the CBP) made a presentation to the meeting (shown at annex 1) explaining the work of the CBP over the last year.
10. In discussion the following points were made:
 - a) There was some discussion about measuring success. In agreeing support for delivery of the Business Plan, the main funders had aligned their reporting requirements on key performance indicators (KPIs). The point was also made that employment of young people was the key to the future and making the

most of the pool of talent in the National Park would be an important measure of success in the long term. The point was also made that it was still relatively early days; the CBP was a unique model and was getting a good reputation across Scotland which in itself was a measure of success even if not a formal KPI.

- b) There was some discussion about how the CBP should work with businesses outside the National Park. This was an ongoing debate in respect of the use of the Brand, and there were arguments both ways. Suffice to say that the debate needed to continue alongside the work of the new Brand Development Group (as proposed in Paper 2). The CBP would like to engage with a range of businesses in the “halo” of the National Park, but at the same time it was acknowledged that the value of being inside the National Park should not be weakened. The value of working outside the Park was illustrated by the joint working between the CBP and the Spirit of Speyside Whiskey Festival recently which had been of mutual benefit to all concerned.
- c) Initiatives mentioned such as those centred on golf or horses were good examples of initiatives that provided the glue to bring businesses together across the whole of the National Park.
- d) It was important to broaden the appeal and remit of the CBP to non tourism businesses. There was some discussion around the point made in Paragraph 23 concerning the potential muddle and confusion arising from having both the CBP and the Royal Deeside and Cairngorms DMO (RD CDMO) offering services to businesses in the same area. There was the potential for overlap and duplication of effort. It was acknowledged that having two enterprise networks did provide a challenge and there was considerable work in the background to try and ensure closer alignment of effort. The potential for public sector funding from different agencies duplicating each other was serious; assurances were given that this was being discussed with the Councils and the Enterprise Agencies.
- e) The CBP confirmed it would be much easier for businesses if there was a single enterprise agency to deal with in the National Park. The Business Gateway structure was also uneven across the Park.
- f) There was discussion about the capacity and capability of the CBP, which was a lean and efficient organisation to deliver all its ambitions. The possibility of a secondment from one of the public sector partners was considered. It was agreed that the CBP should develop a proposal on the skills that were needed to take forward their work and the CNPA would look to support the CBP in finding a secondment.
- g) The Cairngorms Brand provided an exciting and critical opportunity for further developing the work of the CBP.
- h) Importance of digital connectivity was raised and the importance of a positive approach to mast development. This had been raised at CoHI (Convention of Highlands and Islands).

- i) The CBP were leading on the formation of an Enterprise Forum for the Cairngorms National Park, and the production of an enterprise and diversification strategy for the Park. The first meeting of the new forum would be in August. The Convener or the Convener Elect would attend this meeting.
- j) The CNPA Board commended the CBP for their excellent work.

11. The Board agreed the recommendations of the paper as follows:

- a) Recognised and appreciated the substantial progress that had been made by the Cairngorms Business Partnership in the last year; and**
- b) Approved a funding package comprising £60,000 for 2012/13 and a further £120,000 for the period 2013/14 to 2014/15, subject to submission of a detailed business plan.**

Developing the Brand (Paper 2)

12. Pete Crane introduced the paper which updated the Board on progress to date in developing the National Park Brand, and proposed some changes to the Brand Management Group in taking this work forward. Pete gave a presentation to the Board (shown at annex 2) which illustrated the substantial progress made since 2005 in raising the profile and visibility of the Cairngorms National Park Brand. This use had contributed to some key outcomes, notably the most recent Visitor Survey showing that 82% of all visitors were aware that they were in the National Park; and 51% of visitors saying that being a National Park was important to their visit. 46% of visitors were able to describe the Brand identity without a visual prompt. The Brand had been a considerable success and represented a huge asset. The time had come to make a step change in capitalising on that asset. In taking that work forward, there were a number of challenges and opportunities as set out at Paragraph 16. In short the Brand was in a good position but more could be done. Hence a proposal was being made to the Board to make some changes to the Brand Management Group which had done an excellent job in the preceding years, but would benefit from some changes in order to revisit the strategy for developing the use of the Brand.
13. In discussion the following points were made:
- a) Linking with the previous paper, the point was made that further discussion was needed on the use of the Brand outside the National Park. This was something for the new Brand Development Group to consider.
 - b) The criteria for use of the Brand were based on inspections and “rules” of other agencies (eg VisitScotland), for reasons of practicality and economies of scale. In light of this, it was important to look at how well sustainability was taken into account.
 - c) It would be important to make sure that members of the new Brand Development Group (BDG) provided good feedback to their respective “constituencies”.

- d) Membership needed to get the right balance – fresh ideas plus knowledge and experience. It was also important to get young people involved.
- e) There was some discussion about the CNPA Brand and the CNPA’s own organisational logo and the importance of keeping the distinction between these two.
- f) The paper was welcomed in aligning the Cairngorms Business Partnership, use of the Brand, and the new Communications and Engagement Strategy.
- g) Measuring success with the Brand would comprise a number of developments such as: an increase in people giving their own time for the Park; an increase in the visitor payback contribution; partners seeing the benefit of explicitly linking their work with the Cairngorms National Park Brand; land managers seeing the Park as helping them get responsible access; people sticking up for the National Park. These were all “soft” measures and while difficult to measure, were a better reflection of success than some of the numerical indicators which were simply easy to measure. The support needed for developing the use of the Brand had traditionally come from marketing experts; now was probably the time to widen that support to include, for example, psychologists, as the objective was all about behavioural change. It was also suggested that in developing criteria some of the decisions made about using the Brand were quite complex and may involve, for example, supply chains, in which case one would need specialist technical advice.
- h) Further work had to be done for the use of the Brand for merchandising, and while the beneficiaries of such work had not yet been decided, everyone was quite clear this should not be the CNPA itself but some other “good cause” related to the National Park.
- i) The Cairngorms National Park Brand was not a substitute for organisational logos, but no one should underestimate the importance to organisations in promoting their own identity rather than an alternative/apparent competitor.

14. The Board agreed the recommendations of the paper as follows:

- a) **Agreed to change the Brand Management Group to a Brand Development Group as outlined in the paper.**
- b) **Approved the changes to the Terms of Reference for the group to allow this change to happen.**

15. Action:

- a) **Members to let the Convener know if they were interested in sitting on the Brand Development Group;**
- b) **The Brand Development Group to provide further advice to the CNPA Board in due course on developing and enhancing the use of the Brand.**

Adoption of National Park Partnership Plan 2012-17 (Paper 3)

16. Gavin Miles and Hamish Trench introduced the paper which sought the Board's adoption of the National Park Partnership Plan 2012-17 as approved by Scottish Ministers (and in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000). The paper also informed the Board of the proposed measures for monitoring delivery of the Plan over the next five years.
17. **The Board approved of the recommendations of the paper as follows:**
 - a) **Adopted the National Park Partnership Plan 2012-17 as approved by Scottish Ministers; and**
 - b) **Agreed the framework for delivery, monitoring and reporting on the Plan.**

2012-13 Budget and Operational (Paper 4)

18. This paper was for information and was noted without discussion.

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19. Jane Hope reported briefly to the Board on the allocation of additional capital to the CNPA by the Scottish Government for a number of "shovel ready" projects. A number of organisations had received similar additional capital allocation for projects that could be delivered quickly and were not already the subject of agreed funding packages. Clearly this sort of additional allocation was very welcome and would bring about real benefits to the National Park. The Finance Committee would be considering how best to deal with these requests which tended to be at quite short notice. In this most recent case, there had been little opportunity to debate the priorities for this sort of funding, simply because at short notice there were relatively few projects that were genuinely "shovel ready".
20. Eleanor Mackintosh reported on developments at Tomintoul where the Community Trust was being formed; 200 members of the community had stepped forward and 8 people were now in place as directors. This had been a great success story bringing together a range of partners, and the community who were now working together as the "Transform Team". CNPA had played an active part and Staff were congratulated for their very positive involvement.
21. David Green reported on his recent activities:
 - a) The Big Lottery Visit had been impressed by the united voice of Tomintoul and Glenlivet.
 - b) A meeting with Ross Finnie (President of LINK), a positive meeting with the main difference being on housing.

- c) The Torch Relay through the National Park, which had worked successfully;
- d) A meeting with Lorne Crerar the new Chair of HIE;
- e) A meeting with David Fraser the new Chair of Strathspey Railway;
- f) A meeting with a number of the Cairngorms Constituency MSPs in the Scottish Parliament. The MSPs had shown considerable interest and asked to be kept up to date. The importance of sustainable economic growth was evident.
- g) Attended the premier of the new film “Brave” in Inverness which it was hoped would promote Scotland to international audiences.

22. Jaci Douglas reported on her activities:

- a) Attended the UK ANPA (UK Association of Natural Park Authorities) Workshop in York about engaging communities. There was good exchange between the various National Park Authorities, and she had been proud to be part of the Cairngorms NPA which seemed to be at the leading edge. The South Downs was clearly doing interesting work with an online community forum which we could learn from.
- b) She attended the Strengthening Communities launch at Boat of Garten;
- c) Had attended two presentations for INBY (planning workshops for schools, with INBY standing for “In My Back Yard”) involving two schools from Nethy and Aviemore.

23. Gregor Hutcheon reported on his activities:

- a) As a member of COAT had done a radio interview for the BBC on the “Adopt a Path” Scheme.
- b) He noted concerns about the proposed withdrawal by the Scottish Qualifications Authority of the Environmental SVQ, and noted that this was being dealt with.

24. Eleanor Mackintosh reported on her activities:

- a) Attended a joint meeting with Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Members about shared messages around the two National Park Partnership Plans;
- b) Attended the launch of the National Park Plan at the Royal Highland Show which had gone well;
- c) Attended the Land Use Strategy meeting.
- d) Had taken part in the Ministerial visit to the Monitor Farm Project.

25. Brian Wood reported on his activities:

- a) Attended a Seminar at the Scottish Parliament about the idea of a Rural Parliament, and re-engaging rural communities with a democratic process. The Scottish Government was planning to establish a working party to look into setting up a Rural Parliament in Scotland.
- b) Attended the Public Service Leaders Conference in Edinburgh. This had focused on promoting community action planning and a working group was being set up to take this forward.

- c) Attended the Staff Consultative Forum as the Board representative.
 - d) He had taken part in the Joint National Parks Outdoors Education Project Steering Group (which was leading to a final report).
 - e) Presented Junior Ranger certificates to pupils from Aboyne Academy. The presentations were made at the Burn o' Vat Visitor Centre.
 - f) Cairngorms National Park Education Awards: sat on the group which had assessed the entries.
26. Kate Howie reported on:
- a) The Hub was going well in Blair Atholl; thanks to all the staff involved.
 - b) Local Development Plan: two sessions had already been held in Blair Atholl.
27. Willie McKenna reported on his attendance at the ANPA Workshop about engaging communities.
28. Duncan Bryden reported on:
- a) His attendance at the Convention of Highlands and Islands where the big issues had been broadband, employability and skills, and renewable energy.
 - b) Attended the Land Use Strategy meeting.
 - c) Attended the Strengthening Communities Workshop (and he noted the importance of rationalising the large numbers of groups in some communities where possible).
 - d) Attended a meeting of Board Members with Loch Lomond and the Trossachs to consider shared messages around the two National Park Plans.
29. Gordon Riddler reported on his attendance at Aberdeenshire Ward 15 Forum, and also at the Inclusive Cairngorms meeting in May where there had been a good presentation on planning.
30. Allan Wright had attended the Public Sector Leaders meeting.
31. Ian MacKintosh presented certificates to the Junior Rangers at the Websters School and commented on the high standard of presentations.
32. Katrina Farquhar reported on her activities:
- a) Attended an Affordable Housing Seminar in Banchory where Di Alexander and Peter Argyle had made presentations.
 - b) Attended the launch of the Auchtavan Project at Braemar Castle.
 - c) Attended the INBY Project at schools in Ballater and Braemar.
33. It was agreed that during the absence of Mary McCafferty through illness, Allan Wright would sit on the Finance Committee.

Date of Next Meeting:

34. Next formal meeting Friday 31st August, Grant Arms Hotel, Grantown-on-Spey.