

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR INFORMATION

Title: OPERATIONAL PLAN 2006/07, QUARTER 2

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Purpose

To present a review of progress on the 2006/07 Operational Plan over the first half of the year.

Recommendation

The Board is requested to note the progress made on the 2006/07 Operational Plan actions over the course of the first half of the year, and in particular that:

- a) Activity to date on 6 of the 7 priority 1 goals for 2006/07 remains broadly on track to deliver the outcomes sought by the end of 2006/07 and these, therefore, remain classed as green at this half-way stage of 2006/07. Work toward placing the Local Plan on deposit by June 2007 remains highlighted as amber.
- b) Of the 13 priority 2 goals, 12 are classed as green and broadly on track to deliver the outcomes sought by the end of 2006/07. Work on definition and support of public benefits produced by land managers is currently highlighted as amber.

Executive Summary

The Operational Plan sets out a range of actions, and performance measures associated with these actions, which contribute over the course of 2006/07 to the ultimate delivery of the 20 Corporate Plan goals by the end of 2007/08. The Management Team's review of the delivery of the 2006/07 Operational Plan to date has sought to identify whether planned activities remain broadly on target in terms of timetable and delivery of intended outcomes, or whether, for any reason, there is any risk of actions not being delivered within target timescales.

The Management Team has adopted a "traffic light" system of categorising progress, with each action classed as green, amber or red depending on the level of risk attached to delivery of intended outcomes.

The monitoring process has highlighted that 2 of the 20 goals are assessed as amber - having an increased risk of non-delivery within planned timetables and/or to deliver planned outcomes. The review indicates that progress on the remaining 18 of 20 goals is broadly in

line with intentions set out in the Operational Plan. Officers will continue to seek to bring those actions back on track where possible as we move into the second half of the current Operational Plan period.

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2006/07, QUARTER 2 – FOR INFORMATION

Background

1. The Operational Plan for 2006/07 was agreed by the Board at its meeting in April 2006. This plan stems from the Corporate Plan for 2005/06 to 2007/08, approved by the Board in February 2005, and represents the second year of delivery moving toward the outcomes sought by the Board in that Corporate Plan.
2. The Operational Plan monitoring process follows a now standard procedure which has been set out to the Board in previous quarterly update reports.
3. For 2006/07, the Operational Plan review process focuses on achievement of a key performance indicator (KPI) which has been established for each activity. This approach seeks to emphasise delivery of intended outputs or outcomes, rather than meeting intended milestones or input targets which had formed the basis for monitoring over the course of the previous year.
4. In reviewing the status of delivery of operational plan actions against these performance indicators, the Management Team have used a three way system of categorisation:
 - a) Green: action being delivered broadly in line with timetable and intended outcomes envisaged in operational plan.
 - b) Amber: there are some changes to the timetable and/or intended delivery plans which pose some risk to delivery of intended outcomes.
 - c) Red: changes to timetable and/or delivery plans pose a significant risk to delivery of intended outcomes.

Results of Review Process

5. The Annex to this paper sets out the Operational Plan, with actions colour coded according to the above guidelines, together with a brief commentary on progress and achievements over the course of the first half of the year.
6. The review of activity over the first quarter of 2006/07 indicated increased concern over delivery of one of the 7 top priority goals: **adoption of a Local Plan for the Park by Spring 2007** and this was highlighted as amber in the Quarter 1 Operational Plan report to the Board in August. The Board considered a separate report on this at its meeting in August 2006 and agreed to postpone putting the draft Local Plan on deposit until June 2007. As it is still relatively soon after agreeing to revise the Local Plan timetable, this goal and associated actions have continued to be highlighted as amber pending the development of sufficient evidence that timetabled actions will be achieved.

7. Activity on the other 6 priority 1 goals remains broadly on track to deliver the outcomes sought by the end of 2006/07 and these, therefore, remain classed as green at this half-way stage of 2006/07.
8. **Good communication and consultation by land managers on objective setting for public benefits (Priority 2)** had also been classed as amber at the end of the first quarter. However, good progress has been made on a number of the activities contributing to this goal over the second quarter of the year. Accordingly, this goal is now back in line with plans and reclassified as green.
9. **Public benefits which can be produced by land managers defined and supported through publicly funded integrated schemes (Priority 2)** is now highlighted as amber, with intended delivery by the end of the year at some risk. While progress has been made on a number of activities contributing to this goal, there are also a number of strands of activity where the status of work at present is not sufficiently clear to give sufficient assurance that target performance will be achieved by the end of the year. In some cases, this is due to ongoing development of national policy, and out of the control of the Authority's officers. Accordingly, this area of work has been highlighted as of some increased delivery risk at this point.
10. Activity on 12 of the 13 priority 2 goals therefore remains broadly on track to deliver the outcomes sought by the end of 2006/07 and these, therefore, remain classed as green at this half-way stage of 2006/07.
11. It is important to bear in mind the overall context of this operational plan monitoring update, as seeking to reflect progress in delivering outcomes sought in the Corporate Plan. The Operational Plan review continues to indicate that the great majority of the objectives set in the Authority's Corporate Plan remain on target for completion.

Next Steps

12. The Management Team will continue to review progress on the Operational Plan for 2006/07, and will report again to the Board early in 2007.
13. Corporate Services officers are also reporting regularly to the Board's Finance Committee on the Authority's budget position for the year. The use of budgets allocated to support Operational Plan activities represents a particular focus for this monitoring work and the Committee will be presented with a report looking at the budget position half way through the year at its next meeting in October.
14. We also reported to the Board in August that the Management Team was in the process of developing a "Balanced Scorecard" model for monitoring organisational performance. This is still in the process of development and will be presented to the Board with the Quarter 3 Operational Plan review.

Implications

Financial Implications

15. The Board's Finance Committee will consider the Authority's budget management over the early stages of the year at its meeting in September 2006.
16. The latest budget review considered by Management Team, to the end of June 2006, indicates that total expenditure of £0.837m to the end of the first quarter compared with a budget for the period of £1.006m. Of this shortfall of £0.169m in expenditure against budget, some £0.120m is accounted for by delayed expenditure on Operational Plan activities. This position is similar to that found over previous years, in which expenditure on planned activities has picked up towards the end of the year.

Presentational Implications

17. The Authority continues to make good progress across a wide range of planned activities. Therefore, the Authority is able to report continued successful delivery of its Corporate Plan objectives into the second year of the three year plan, often involving working with and through others, maximising the effect of its relatively small limited resources by acting as a catalyst, a co-ordinator, and enabler.
18. We are now highlighting some potential delay in the original timetable envisaged for putting a draft Local Plan on deposit. The paper on this highlights that this may be a disappointment for some stakeholders, while indicating that the over-riding concern is to have a Local Plan that is thoroughly evidence based and fit for purpose.

Implications for Stakeholders

19. In working with and through others in meeting the Authority's objectives to date, other stakeholders will also benefit from that process of co-ordination and joined-up activity. There is, therefore, some confidence that in delivering our operational plan for the year, the Authority will also be contributing to the wider delivery objectives for a range of stakeholders with an interest in the Cairngorms National Park area.

Next Steps

20. Having highlighted areas where delivery is at some risk, officers will continue to seek to bring those actions back on track where possible while continuing progress on the other, vast majority of areas, which are currently running to plan.
21. Corporate Services staff will co-ordinate a further review of delivery of activities towards the end of the second quarter, to inform mid-year budget reallocations and future reports to the Finance Committee and Board.

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