



Minutes of the Performance Committee

Held at Cairngorms National Park Authority office, Grantown on Spey

In person

8 December 2023 at 1.30pm

Present

Kenny Deans (Convener)

John Kirk

Chris Beattie

Ann Ross

Steve Micklewright

Sandy Bremner

Eleanor Mackintosh

In Attendance

Grant Moir, CEO

David Cameron, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services

David Clyne, Head of Cairngorms 2030

Colin McClean, Head of Land Management

Andy Ford, Director for Nature and Climate Change

Mariaan Pita, Executive Support Manager

Apologies

None

Welcome and introduction

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Performance Committee.

Declarations of interest

2. Eleanor Mackintosh noted for transparency a connection to item 7 as she is the Board representative on the Cairngorms Trust Board.
3. Chris Beattie noted for transparency a connection to item 8 as he is the Board representative on the Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group.



Minutes of Previous Meetings & Matters Arising

4. The minutes of the previous meeting, 9 June 2023 held in person, were approved.
5. Action points arising from previous meetings:
 - a) 11 February 2022
 - i. **Para 19ii) - Report relating to Visit Scotland funding to be brought to the Committee. In Hand**
 - b) 9 June 2023
 - i. **Para 16i) The Director for Nature and Climate Change to feedback to the festival steering group members comments on timing. Completed**

Vice Chair Nomination

6. David Cameron, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services, introduced the item, inviting nominations for Vice Chair of the Performance Committee to come forward from the committee members.
7. The Chair nominated Steve Micklewright as Vice Chair; Chris Beattie seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations and Steve Micklewright was confirmed as Vice Chair.

Cairngorms 2030: Q4 2023 (Paper 1)

8. David Clyne, Head of Cairngorms 2030, introduced the paper which presents an update on Q4 2023 on the Cairngorms 2030 Programme and the planned development work to end March 2024.

The Performance Committee discussed the update and made the following comments and observations:

- a) A member asked with pressure on budgets how are we working with other public partners to make sure they can still deliver the projects with us.
- b) Head of Cairngorms 2030 confirmed that we are working with partners to identify their priorities. We are looking at match funding and local authorities already have their funding in place for the first year, but we have identified alternative ideas if this becomes an issue, and we will continue to monitor the match funding position closely.
- c) In the presentation that was given to National Heritage Lottery Fund, we recognised there is a risk to the programme over 5 years in terms of securing



match funding and we are looking at the whole package. We noted that if there are losses in some planned match funding contributions, we will try and generate match funding from other sources. The Programme has had success in attracting new partners and match funding as activities progress and there is reason to believe this will continue into the delivery phase.

- d) A member asked what the impact would be on staff and how that would be managed. Head of Cairngorms 2030 confirmed that we have started some of the recruitment internally and then we will look at where we are in terms of budget in January and if staff move across look at the posts to see if we want to keep that role or look at alternatives. The Senior Management Team are also developing wider operational plans alongside C2030 project proposals to provide an integrated approach to change management.

9. The Committee noted the paper.

10. Action Point Arising: none.

Cairngorms Trust and Community Led Local Development Update (Paper 2)

- 11. David Cameon, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services introduced an update on the work of the Cairngorms Local Action Group Trust and the collective work of the Cairngorms Trust and the Park Authority in Community Led Local Development activity.
- 12. The Performance Committee discussed the update and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) A member confirmed that it is clear this area is operating effectively through funding from Scottish Government to delivery projects led by the Cairngorms Trust.
 - b) It was noted that we have been able to support aspects of the Trust in terms of staff and activities. Part of the forward plan is looking at voluntary giving and making the Trust more self-sufficient.
 - c) Director of Corporate Services confirmed that we continue seeking external funding to have enough charitable funding for the Trust to run itself and cover its own costs. Any donations that are currently made the trustees can rightfully claim will be spent 100% on projects as other costs are covered from elsewhere.



d) Members agreed that there are good milestones set out in the draft business plan.

13. The Committee noted the paper.

14. Action Point Arising: none.

Ann Ross left the meeting at 2.00pm

Beaver Update (Paper 3)

15. Andy Ford, Director of Nature and Climate Change, presented the latest delivery updates on the Bringing Back Beavers Project.

16. The Performance Committee discussed the update and made the following comments and observations:

- a) Director of Nature and Climate Change confirmed that things have moved on since the paper has been published, as the licence application has now been accepted and approved.
- b) There has been a lot of engagement in the last 6-9 months but there are still some people feeling they were not engaged with. As a result, there was a farmer group that formed, and this will provide a good communication route going forward for early engagement..
- c) The Park Authority perhaps relied too heavily on National Farmers' Union Scotland (NFUS) to inform farmers and officers recognise that it is one for them to have a think about moving forward.
- d) The farmers forum will have their first meeting on 15 January, that will look at a lot of issues. Beaver will be the key issue at the first meeting.
- e) The Park Authority will establish a Beaver working group focusing on mitigation, adaptation and this will be land management driven.
- f) The Director of Nature and Climate Change and his team were congratulated by a member to get the licence approved with an exemplary application.
- g) A member noted that there are a lot of lessons to be learnt, not every farmer sits on NFUS as the geographic spread is too wide., In future we need more input from farmers, to build a community of trust and to look forward.

Steve Micklewright left the meeting at 2.09pm.



- h) A member asked if Beaver Blethers was an appropriate name for something that had such a big impact and standing in the consultation process.
- i) Director of Nature and Climate Change noted that the Beaver Blethers were a success and there were also other engagements such as direct communications, site visits and meetings with land managers and stakeholder groups.
- j) A member suggested a leaflet through the door would have been more beneficial as people would have seen the information.
- k) Chief Executive Offers confirmed that the drop-in sessions were well attended and that the cairn magazine to every household did contain information on the beaver consultation and drop-ins but agreed that in future we would be look at a door drop halfway through a consultation.
- l) Members had a full discussion on lessons learned around consultation and engagement.

17. The Committee noted the paper.

18. Action Point Arising: none.

AOCB

19. Director of Corporate Services confirmed that Management Team will think about items to discuss in the next year, and we will be back in touch with a draft schedule.

The meeting closed at 2.19pm