

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DISCUSSION

**Title: NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2017-2022:
REVIEW OF OUTCOMES**

**Prepared by: DAVID CAMERON, DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE
AND DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES**

Purpose

This paper presents a review of the outcomes of the work to coordinate and deliver the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- a) Review the update on outcomes and achievements against the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022 as set out in this paper.**
 - b) Highlight any achievements or exceptions which, from a strategic leadership perspective, Board members believe are of particular significance to the delivery of the Authority's strategic objectives and may need particular attention in delivery of the new Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan for 2022 to 2027.**
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Strategic Context

- 1) The Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) for 2017-2022 was approved by Scottish Ministers in 2017 as the management plan for the Cairngorms National Park. It sets out how all those with a responsibility for the Cairngorms National Park will co-ordinate their work to tackle the most important issues. This current NPPP is the third such 5-year plan coordinating work in the Cairngorms.
- 2) The Cairngorms NPPP provides strategic direction for five key strategies and plans which support its delivery and are also supported by close partnership working with different sectors:
 - a) Active Cairngorms: the outdoor access strategy for the National Park;
 - b) Cairngorms Nature: setting out the National Park's conservation priorities;
 - c) Economic Action Plan: sets out the economic priorities for the National Park;
 - d) Local Development Plan: sets out the policies for land use planning within the National Park; and
 - e) Local Development Strategy: sets out the priorities for promoting Community Led Local Development (CLLD) to support a sustainable rural economy in the National Park.

Strategic Policy Considerations

- 3) The Cairngorms NPPP:
 - a) Sets out the vision and overarching strategy for managing the Park;
 - b) Guides the work of public bodies and all other partners to deliver the aims of the Park;
 - c) Provides the strategic context for the Local Development Plan;
 - d) Sets out the regional land use framework for the Park;
 - e) Provides the strategic context for managing the Park as a sustainable tourism destination; and
 - f) Shows how the Park will contribute to the Scottish Government's core purpose and national outcomes.

Strategic Risk Management

- 4) The National Park Authority is responsible for leading various partnerships and stakeholder groups with interests and responsibilities for delivering services within the Cairngorms, to ensure priorities established in the approved NPPP are achieved and that various stakeholders each make their expected contributions.
- 5) This update sets out the review of delivery of the NPPP for 2017 to 2022 and the outcomes achieved. This review therefore represents the culmination of the Park Authority's work in developing partnerships, coordinating NPPP delivery and overseeing strategic risk management of the NPPP processes.

Partnership

- 6) The table set out in Appendix I shows the breadth of work undertaken in the Cairngorms National Park in seeking to deliver the NPPP outcomes across a range of partnerships and through a large number of partner organisations.

Success Measures

- 7) The 5-year outcomes set out within the NPPP approved by Scottish Ministers establish the success measures against which delivery of the NPPP has been assessed in this final review of outcomes.

Supporting Information:

National Park Partnership Plan 2017/2022 Outcome Assessment

- 8) A summary of the Authority's assessment of the outcome of the 2017 to 2022 NPPP delivery is presented in Appendix I.
- 9) Key Highlights and exceptions identified in reporting on NPPP outcomes over the course of the last NPPP period are presented in the following sections of this paper.

Impact of Covid-19

- 10) The impact of Covid-19 impacted across every area of the NPPP over the course of the period, with significant restrictions in all organisations' operations in place for large parts of 2020 and 2021. Despite these restrictions, the great majority of the NPPP is assessed as either having been achieved or having had good positive progress made against agreed objectives.
- 11) The Park Authority itself led on a number of different areas of work during Covid including chairing the Tourism Emergency Response Group, The Managing for Visitors Group and the delivery of the Green Recovery Plan that included significant support for businesses and groups across the Park.

Delivery

- 12) There has been significant success across the partnership in delivering the NPPP from 2017 – 2022. As with many of the issues that face the Cairngorms there is a need for ongoing focus on many of the areas highlighted in this plan and they have been captured in the new NPPP 2022 – 2027.
- 13) The section below tries to capture where significant progress has been made and also areas where we need to continue to make further efforts.

Conservation

Significant Highlights

- a) 5195ha of new woodland were approved by Scottish forestry within the CNP during this Plan period. This is above the plan target of 5000ha.
- b) Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership was delivered.
- c) Cairngorms Nature Partnership has been delivering significantly on the Nature Action Plan.
- d) Cairngorms Connect and East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership have been making significant progress as landscape-scale cooperation between landowners to deliver ecosystem restoration.
- e) Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group has been established
- f) CNPA was successful its bid to the Heritage Horizons Fund and attracted £12.5 million to the Cairngorms National Park.

Exceptions

- a) Wildlife crime continued to be a prominent feature within the Cairngorms over the course of the last five year period.
- b) Peatland work whilst making significant progress has been below the targeted level over the 5 year period.

Visitor Experience

Significant Highlights

- a) The Park Authority has taken forward the development of a permanent CNPA Ranger Service supplemented by seasonal rangers, and increasing grant in aid to partner ranger services.
- b) Improvements to visitor infrastructure across the National Park with CNPA investment in facilities (Linn of Dee, Glenmore, Dinnet etc), national investment through RTIF and private sector investment.
- c) Secured agreement from Transport Scotland for an NMU route from Aviemore to Carrbridge.
- d) Volunteering Project has trained 38 Volunteer rangers with most re-engaging post Covid-19 with potential for a wider range of work supporting CNPA rangers.
- e) Cairngorms Equalities Advisory Forum established.

Exceptions

- a) Approach to visitor giving has been affected by Covid-19 and there is a need to look at how this can be bolstered going forward.

Rural Development

Significant Highlights

- a) The Local Development Plan was approved in March 2021 and includes a number of measures to support affordable housing including a requirement for 45% affordable housing in new development in Aviemore, Ballater, Braemar and Blair Atholl, and 25% in other communities.
- b) The CNPA granted detailed planning permission for 216 affordable units during 2017-2022 and 175 affordable units were completed.
- c) Badenoch Great Place Scheme has been delivered.
- d) Community Housing projects at Tomintoul in is construction and another at Braemar has gained planning permission. A number of other potential community housing projects are in feasibility stages.
- e) Community Action Planning still a significant and ongoing benefit across the National Park.

Exceptions

- a) There is still significant work to do to increase affordable housing provision in the park and this is highlighted in the new NPPP.

Conclusion

- 14) There has been significant delivery of the NPPP over the past 5 years. There has been significant moves to achieving the long term outcomes and vision for the National Park. There has been great work done across the Partnership from public, private and voluntary organisations and the new NPPP builds upon this solid foundation.