

# CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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## FOR DECISION

**Title:** ORGANISATIONAL GREENING POLICY AND  
INDICATIVE TARGETS FOR ACTION

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### **Purpose**

The purpose of this paper is to seek Members' formal approval for an organisational greening policy. This will underpin a co-ordinated approach to increasing the environmental sustainability of the Park Authority's working operations. This policy will then be submitted to the Environment Minister and will be published on the CNPA website.

### **Recommendations**

That the Board:

- Agree the Organisational Greening Policy for submission to the Environment Minister;
- Approve the indicative action plan for refinement and finalisation by the Management Team.

### **Executive Summary**

The Environment Minister is due to write to all public bodies in the very near future to ask them to submit a formally agreed greening policy to underpin actions to improve the environmental impact of their corporate undertakings. The accompanying action plan is to include challenging but realistic and timetabled targets to push forward real progress against baseline situations. The agreement of the policy will formalise the basis for delivery of a number of existing greening initiatives and provide a challenge to deliver more on a co-ordinated and prioritised manner. The policy and finalised action plan will apply to staff and Board, and will be used as a measure against which to monitor and report progress. They will also assist our work with others in achieving the four Aims of the Park, and enable the CNPA to fulfil its greening responsibilities and act as a positive example to other parties.

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## ORGANISATIONAL GREENING POLICY AND INDICATIVE ACTION PLAN – FOR DECISION

### Background

1. The CNPA's first initiative towards the identification of greening opportunities involved the commissioning of a General Environmental Review of the Park's business activities in 2004. The purpose of the review was to identify opportunities for improved resource efficiency, potential cost savings and to highlight opportunities for further investigation. The review looked at electricity use, oil use, water use, and waste for the Grantown and Ballater Offices. The review was considered by the Audit Committee who encouraged progression with the initiative. A greening committee was established amongst interested staff in spring 2005. Informed by the review, the greening committee introduced a number of practical measures to help to reduce resource consumption. These have included: refurbishment of an outhouse at the Grantown Office to provide a cycle shed for those cycling to work; display of Carbon Trust posters in all rooms reminding staff to switch off lights and equipment; purchase of telecommunication facilities to allow distance meetings between offices; approaches to the office landlords to install water meters to help to promote water savings; investigation of tap and cistern attachments to reduce water flow rates; web outlook facility to allow access to work e-mails from home; recycling of paper and tins; organic waste bins and promotion of home composting bins.
2. While these initiatives are undoubtedly beneficial, they have not had the advantage of being guided by a more comprehensive and coherent policy that has been adopted and promoted more formally throughout the Park Authority. Furthermore, the CNPA will very shortly receive a letter from the Environment Minister requesting the submission of a formally agreed Greening Policy. In order to provide the Minister with the assurance of a high level of support for the policy and subsequent action plans, the draft policy is being submitted to the Board for formal agreement. While the agreement of the policy will meet the requirements of the Minister, it will also provide a basis for formalising, expanding and prioritising the greening initiatives already under way. It will thus give more impetus to the already established commitment to improving our environmental performance.

### The Policy

3. The draft policy for Board approval is attached as Annex 1. It takes an holistic view of the work practices of the CNPA including office resource use, travel, procurement, performance indicators, assessments, influencing others by example and through our operational functions, and encouragement of staff involvement. Some of the policies will be easier to deliver than others. For example water use reduction can be achieved by the centralised fitting of water saving devices to office water systems. Others will require raising awareness to achieve disciplined attention by individuals to switching off equipment when not in use. Some will be more challenging such as

reduction of resource use overall, and reduction of emission production as the result of travel. With the active approval of Board, Management Team and staff, the policies will enable a set of challenging but realistic priorities for action to be developed.. As they apply to all members of the CNPA, they will give each individual the confidence that what they are doing will make a real difference when added to the actions of colleagues. The commitment of management and staff will also ensure that staff time and finances as appropriate are deployed to make things happen in practice.

### **The Draft Action Plan**

4. Policies without action will make no difference. The draft action plan attached at Annex 2 sets out initial thinking on the way ahead. This will need to be refined as more baseline information is gathered and performance indicators and timed targets are set and agreed. In gaining baseline information, the CNPA will make use of Scottish Executive advice and guidance arising from the Sustainable Development Branch. We shall also take advantage of consultancies contracted by the Scottish Executive who are giving "free to user" advice on waste and energy consumption, and this advice will help with the revision and updating of the General Environmental Review of CNPA report of October 2004. Once this has been done, we shall have baseline information from which to identify improvements that need to be made, measures that can be adopted to achieve improvements, the degree of improvement that is achievable in practice to be used as a target, and identify how improvements can be measured and reported upon. Advice will also be gained from sister agencies who have more experience over a longer period of time so that we can learn from best practice elsewhere. The CNPA will also consider membership of various sustainability forums to keep abreast of new ideas and opportunities for action.
5. It will not be possible to achieve everything immediately, so it will be necessary to set realistic targets and priorities over sensible timescales. Some things can be started immediately, and other actions will require reinvigoration and reinforcement of existing initiatives to gain more effective achievements. The establishment of the agreed policy framework will allow the target setting to have coherence and focus, so that priorities will be agreed without losing sight of lower priorities which can be tackled later.

### **Delivery**

6. The delivery of the action plan will depend on active participation of all members of the Authority. High level endorsement by Board and Management Team will ensure that staff time and other resources can be identified and deployed to make the targets happen. The staff greening committee that was established in 2005 will be reconvened. Their first task will be to gain the advice available from the Scottish Executive consultancies and use this information to refine the action plan and identify realistic timetables for delivery of agreed priorities. It will be beneficial to identify individuals who will take a special responsibility for pressing forward with

the deliver of targets. Much will depend on sections within Corporate Services, but representatives of all groups will be sought to gain widespread ownership and commitment.

7. In the coming financial year it is anticipated that most of the gains will be delivered through changing the way in which we currently do things. This may affect the way in which allocated budgets are spent rather than require new finances to be made available. In future years, priorities for action may require new budgets to be allocated to achieve sound actions and improvements.

## **Policy Context**

### ***Delivering Sustainability***

8. The development of a greening policy and action plan for CNPA is clearly a part of delivering sustainability. It makes no sense to be promoting sustainable development and use of resources through the Park Aims if the Authority is not aiming to attain the best environmental impact in our own operations. The Minister also requires all public bodies to take this approach and will be holding us to account for our progress.

### ***Delivering a Park for All***

9. The implementation of an organisational greening policy will set a positive example for other organisations and individuals within the Park. It will also establish the CNPA's credibility when requiring sustainability to be incorporated in a wide range of activities for which we have a responsibility. This will include the finalisation of policies in the Park and Local Plans, and the exercising of our planning control functions.

### ***Delivering Economy, Effectiveness and Efficiency***

10. Good environmental efficiency underpins the delivery of economy, effectiveness and efficiency as it takes into account the environmental cost of actions as well as financial.

## **Implications**

### ***Financial Implications***

11. At this stage, it is anticipated that the policy and action plan will have no significant additional financial implications for the Authority for the coming financial year (2006/07). In the operational plan for 2006/07, there is an allocation of staff time to progress the action plan. There could also be changes in how some existing budget allocations are spent to improve environmental performance. The analysis of baselines for energy use and travel and the establishment of targets to reduce resource use in the medium to long term may, however, require new finances to be identified in future years. These will be assessed and agreed through normal budget and operational planning processes.

***Presentational Implications***

12. The delivery of the policies and action plan will be of interest to a wide variety of partners, not just the Minister. Accordingly, we shall need to publicise our policy and action plan, initially on the web site. Progress against targets will become a regular part of the Management Team agenda (2 or 3 times per annum), with reports to the Audit Committee following. Annual progress will be reported as part of the CNPA Annual Report with any explanatory text as necessary.

***Implications for Stakeholders***

13. The delivery of our operations to ensure achievement of the four aims will be informed by our own greening actions. The CNPA will become a practical example to partners and will carry out its operations in a way that encourages and where possible, requires others to meet high environmental standards.

**Next Steps**

14. The Board's endorsement of the Policy, with or without amendments will enable us to send the Policy to the Minister in response to his request. The greening committee will then be re-established as part of the Support Services Users Group to finalise and start to drive forward the action plan against agreed measurable targets. Report on progress will be made to the Board on an agreed cycle.

**David Bale****March 2006**

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