

# CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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## FOR INFORMATION

**Title:** OPERATIONAL PLAN 2006/07, QUARTER 1

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### **Purpose**

To present a review of progress on the 2006/07 Operational Plan over the first quarter 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 quarter of the year, and in particular that:

- a) Progress on 16 of 20 goals remains broadly in line with intentions set out in the Operational Plan.
- b) Two of the five goals highlighted in previous reports as at increased risk to delivery of intended outcomes have now been brought back into line with plans.
- c) Delivery on all Priority 1 goals is now in line with Operational Plans.
- d) Four goals are now each been identified as affected by some changes to the timetable and/or intended delivery plans, which pose some risk to delivery of intended outcomes.
- e) Overall, year-end review of the 2005/06 Operational Plan continues to present generally successful work and resource investment in delivering operational and, ultimately, corporate plan objectives.

### **Executive Summary**

The Operational Plan sets out a range of actions, and milestones associated with these actions, which contribute over the course of 2005/06 to the ultimate delivery of the 20 Corporate Plan goals over the next few years. The Management Team's review of the 2005/06 Operational Plan 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 classes as green, amber or red depending on the level of risk attached to delivery of intended outcomes.

The monitoring process has highlighted that two of five goals previously assessed with an increased risk of non-delivery (amber) have now been brought back into line with plans over the final quarter of 2005/06. The review indicates that progress on 16 of 20 goals is broadly in line with intentions set out in the Operational Plan. Progress on four goals is now classed as amber as a consequence of delays in a number of associated activities. Officers will continue to seek to bring those actions back on track where possible as we move into the second year of the three-year Corporate Plan period.

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## OPERATIONAL PLAN 2006/07, QUARTER 1 – 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 Corporate Plan sets out 20 goals identifying the outcomes to which the Authority will direct its resources over the three years to 2008. The goals will not all be completed over the course of the current three year corporate planning period: progress will be made on all goals over this time and further direction will be given by the National Park Plan. Of the 20 goals, 7 have been identified as taking priority given that they are statutory duties and/or in most cases will provide the strategic framework which will guide activities within the Park for the next 10 years or so.
3. The Operational Plan sets out a range of actions which contribute over the course of 2006/07 to the ultimate delivery of the 20 Corporate Plan goals over the next few years.
4. The Management Team has now undertaken a first review of the operational plan for 2006/07, considering progress made against the plan over the course of the year and achievements in the year. This review 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.
5. The results of the previous reviews of the 2005/06 Operational Plan were reported to the Board quarterly over the course of the year. This paper follows broadly the same format as last year's quarterly reports.

### 2006/07 Operational Plan Review Process

6. 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.
7. Other than this change, the reporting format follows that used last year. In reviewing the status of delivery of operational plan actions, 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.
8. Following from the review of the status of actions, the status of the goals to which the actions contribute have also been categorised as green, amber or red. This is intended to provide an indication of progress being made on three-year Corporate Plan goals through delivery of 2005/06 operational plans.
9. Assessing the delivery status of goals also attempts to take some account of the fact that not all actions will make an equal contribution to the achievement of goals. Rather, some actions will be of lower priority, and it may be appropriate as the year progresses to halt delivery of the outcomes intended by those actions in order to prioritise others and ensure overall contribution to delivery of goals is maximised.

### Results of Review Process

10. 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 quarter of the year.

### *Changes Since End of 2005/06*

11. The report to the Board in May indicated that, by the end of 2005/06, satisfactory progress had been made on all seven priority 1 goals and each of these were accordingly graded as "green". Four of the thirteen priority 2 goals were highlighted as amber at the end of 2005/06, following some delays in delivery within these areas:
  - a) Wide range of opportunities to experience the special qualities of the Park in a sustainable manner is available to all;
  - b) Good communication and consultation by land managers on objective setting for public benefits;
  - c) Stronger and more diverse economic opportunities within the CNP area;
  - d) Good understanding and appreciation by young people of the CNP, and appreciation of its importance
12. The review of activity over the first quarter of the new year, 2006/07, indicates increased concern over delivery of one of the 7 top priority goals: **adoption of a Local Plan for the Park by Spring 2007** is highlighted as amber. All activities under this goal in 2006/07 have been highlighted as amber as a consequence of potential slippage in timetable for putting a draft Local Plan on deposit. This is covered in detail in a separate paper to the Board.
13. 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 as at the end of 2005/06.
14. Of the four Priority 2 goals classed as amber at the end of last year identified in paragraph 11, where some increased risk to achievement of intended outcomes

existing coming into the current Operational Plan year, one remains classed as amber at the end of this quarter.

15. **Good communication and consultation by land managers on objective setting for public benefits (Priority 2).** Comments under this goal at the end of 2005/06 highlighted a refocusing of activities, reflecting a review of staff resources available. Progress has continued to be made in some areas, with a programme of meetings for the Integrated Land Management Forum established and a Cairngorms Deer Advisory Group set up, while recruitment has also been progressed for Integrated Land Management Officers over the first quarter of 2006/07. However, this goal remains highlighted as amber pending development of a wider evidence base of progress made.
16. At this stage, all 18 other goals are, therefore, categorised as green and progressing broadly in line with the operational plan's intentions.
17. 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.

### **Balanced Scorecard Assessment of Organisational Health**

18. The Management Team are in the process of developing a "Balanced Scorecard" model with which to assess the organisation's health. It is intended that this will complement the quarterly review of Operational Plan activities by also presenting wider summary information on the Authority's financial performance; its staffing and recruitment position; management of strategic risks and governance measures; and progress made on delivering priority three-year Corporate Plan outcomes.
19. It is also intended that the balanced scorecard model will help integrate the work of the Board's Committee's within overall activity monitoring. The Board's Finance Committee will be asked to review and agree the set of performance measures to be adopted in monitoring financial health within the model. Similarly, the Staffing and Recruitment and Audit Committees will be asked to review the measures to be adopted in monitoring the health of the personnel and governance aspects of the Authority.
20. Once measures have been completed, we will present the Balanced Scorecard to Board quarterly, along with the Operational Plan review, in order to present a wider view of the health of the organisation and its governance in addition to the more traditional review of operational delivery.

## Implications

### *Financial Implications*

21. 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.
22. 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*

23. 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.
24. 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*

25. 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

26. 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.
27. 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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