

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DISCUSSION

**Title: NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2017-2022
DELIVERY UPDATE FOR 2019/20**

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Purpose

This paper presents an update on delivery against the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022 for the year 2019/20.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- a) **Review the update on delivery against the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022 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.**
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NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2017-2022 DELIVERY UPDATE – FOR DISCUSSION

Strategic Context

1. The Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) for 2017-2022 is 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 is for year 19/20 and so does not take account of the current COVID emergency. The CNPA will be looking at the impacts on the delivery of the NPPP in due course and will consider this in more detail at the Sept/Dec board meeting. There is no doubt that delivery in 2020/21 will be affected by the current issues being faced by the country.

Partnership

6. The table set out in appendix I has been discussed with key public sector partners to ensure that it captures delivery across the Park.
7. The table shows the breadth of work that is ongoing in the National Park and also that the vast majority of the work is on target. Again this is before the impact of COVID and this will need to be reassessed later in the year to see the impact on NPPP delivery in the Park.

Success Measures

8. The 5-year outcomes set out within the NPPP approved by Scottish Ministers establish the success measures against which delivery of the NPPP will be assessed.
9. Milestones have been established to identify, where appropriate, interim outputs or points expected in the work toward successful delivery of these outcomes. While the outcomes will be static over the period of the Cairngorms NPPP, milestones will be reviewed by the Authority and partners and may be modified and adapted to fit with changing circumstances.

Supporting Information: National Park Partnership Plan 2017/2022 Delivery Update

1. A summary of the Authority's NPPP delivery and monitoring information is presented in Annex 1. More information on the highlights and issues arising over the course of 2019/20, the first year of delivery of the NPPP, is presented in the following sections of this paper.

Conservation

Significant Highlights 19/20

2. Woodland expansion and peatland restoration continues across the Cairngorms National Park. Since 2017, 3000ha of woodland expansion and 1800 ha of peatland restoration has been achieved. Woodland is at the NPPP target while peatland is slightly lower than planned but nevertheless very significant in a national context.
3. The Stage 2 bid for the Capercaillie project was submitted to NLHF in March 2020. Over the last 2 years, the project received £500,000 to investigate and develop plans for 5 main strands of work: habitat improvement; improving monitoring; genetic diversity of Capercaillie; raising awareness; a community-led approach to Capercaillie conservation in Carrbridge. These now form the basis of the delivery phase application, totalling a further £2.5 million for work until 2023. We will hear the outcome in June 2020.
4. CNPA invited by NLHF to put in a bid to the Heritage Horizons Fund for Feb 2021. A project team has been set up to develop the bid with partners. Three key themes are being developed – Active Travel; Land Use and Communities; Park for All
5. Biodiversity Challenge Fund applications within the Park were successful from a range of organisations and land managers. Projects are focussed on delivery of the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan. Work includes river restoration and riparian planting, aspen planting and protection, management for farmland waders and action for Cairngorms Nature priority species including fresh water pearl mussel and pine hoverfly.
6. The Climate Change Conference (March 2020) attracted 180 delegates and was well attended by all key stakeholders (including the Cabinet Secretary). It provided a good start point for net zero ambitions for the next NPPP, which will take a long term outlook to 2045.

Visitor Experience

Significant Highlights 19/20

7. RTIF funding from VisitScotland secured for construction Glenmore multiuse path and for improvements to Muir of Dinnet National Nature Reserve car park. Muir of Dinnet work complete with Glenmore now scheduled for autumn 2020.

8. Increase in the number of volunteer rangers to 38 trained, and supporting the work of professional rangers and communities in their work providing quality visitor experiences at key countryside sites
9. Establishment of the Cairngorms Youth Action Team to develop better ways to engage with and support young people living & working in and around the National Park.
10. Shared Stories – A Year in the Cairngorms Project came to an end in November 2019 after a very successful year of encouraging people to celebrate and share what the love about Cairngorms.
11. Visitor Survey; the fourth, five yearly, Park wide visitor survey was completed March 2020 with information to be shared summer 2020. This work will combine with current smaller local & national surveys to give excellent information in the likely changes in visitor behaviour and need post Corona virus.

Rural Development

Significant Highlights 19/20

12. The Local Development Plan was submitted to Reporters in Autumn 2019. There was a significant public consultation and the materials developed for this were very positively received.
13. Economic Action Plan was adopted by CNPA Board in December 2019. The first meetings of the group to help deliver this plan have taken place and much of the work will be part of the recovery from COVID.
14. A number of Community Housing Projects were progressed across the National Park, with feasibility studies funded by the Rural Housing Fund completed for Braemar and Tomintoul.
15. Badenoch Great Place continued to develop projects and ran the successful Badenoch Festival of culture and heritage in September 2019. This was a great success and will be repeated in 2021.
16. Cairngorms LEADER fully committed its funding during 2019/20 with an additional 3% in funding allocated secured from unused funds in other areas – total programme allocation now £3.043m with added £1.8m match funding.