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## CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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### FOR DISCUSSION

**Title: Highland 2007 and The Cairngorms Festival**

**Prepared by: John Thorne, Economic Development Officer  
Andrew Harper, Head of Economic and Social Development**

#### **Purpose**

To consider options for the CNPA to support Highland's Year of Culture 2007, including the potential to establish a Cairngorms festival.

#### **Recommendations**

- That the Board discuss the principle of CNPA involvement in Highland 2007 and provide a steer on the option (or options) that should be pursued.

#### **Executive Summary**

To help celebrate the Highland Year of Culture 2007 new funding is being made available by the Scottish Executive for a range of cultural events. With a focus on heritage, the environment, Gaelic, youth, access and inclusiveness, Highland 2007 has many aims in common with the Park. Options for CNPA involvement range from simply supporting appropriate community events via the new Integrated Grant Programme to taking a more pro-active role in facilitating regional or 'core' events. There is potential to work with Highland 2007, EventScotland, and private and public sector partners, to organise events across the Park under the banner of a Cairngorms Festival. More pro-active options may have additional resource implications, particularly taking into account the fact that the Highland 2007 monies would only be available within the Highland part of the Park.

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## Highland 2007 and The Cairngorms Festival - For Discussion

### Background

1. The Highland Year of Culture was announced in 2002 to showcase Highland culture to visitors from across Scotland, UK and overseas. Various national partners, who have signed a concordat with the Scottish Executive (see annex 1), will work together to deliver a variety of exhibitions, events and projects with private partners. The aim is to boost tourism numbers and to increase employment across the area by raising the profile of Highland culture.
2. Highland 2007 have been tasked by The Scottish Executive, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and The Highland Council to deliver a programme of events for the year.
3. **Culture has been defined by Highland 2007 as focusing upon six key areas:**
  - a) Language;
  - b) Arts;
  - c) Science;
  - d) Environment;
  - e) Sports;
  - f) Heritage.
4. **Seven themes run through these:**
  - a) Youth;
  - b) Gaelic;
  - c) Creativity;
  - d) Highland Homecoming;
  - e) Access and Inclusiveness;
  - f) Re-interpretation of Traditional Icons;
  - g) The Highlands as an Inspirational Place.

### H2007 has a number of key programme strands

#### *Community Events Programme*

5. The community programme will provide smaller grants for a range of capital and revenue projects. Within the Badenoch & Strathspey area around £90K of revenue funding and £43K of capital funding is available in 2005/6 with further amounts being released in 2006/7 and 2007/8. This is administered via a local H2007 Management Group, which includes Quentin McLaren, and advises upon how applications are to be encouraged and funding dispersed. To be eligible, applicants must be non-profit, constituted community groups. Fitting with the themes and strands above, applications should build on community skills, compliment other events, show good working between partners & within communities, and leave a lasting legacy and impact beyond 2007.

#### *International and Regional Events*

6. A draft programme of potential international and regional events has been devised and work is underway with EventScotland and event organisers to establish the feasibility of each event within the Highland 2007 programme. An international event has to attract participants and visitors from outside of Scotland, and be something that will attract major media interest, and make a significant impact on Scotland. A regional event will attract people from outside the region, and will draw attention to the Highlands. For the regional events, EventScotland has made available a total of £500K to be matched by partner contributions, with individual grants available of up to £25K.

### ***National agencies and events***

7. Meetings are ongoing with the Concordat Partners and national event organisers such as the Edinburgh International Festival, the Fringe, Celtic Connections and the Edinburgh Tattoo to develop a programme of events celebrating Highland culture across Scotland.

### ***Cultural Pledge***

8. Work is underway on the concept that young people in the Highlands should have access to cultural activity in 2007 and beyond. The Cultural Pledge will be a promise, by a number of agencies, to give young people specific opportunities to participate in cultural activities. Through this pledge, young people will be guaranteed access to cultural and sporting activities.

### **Park Authority Involvement**

9. There is a strong rationale for CNPA involvement in H2007. Its aims fit well with Park aims, particularly with regards the focus on the environment, language and heritage, and the seven cross-cutting themes. There is a strong fit in particular with the CNPA's Corporate Plan themes 1 and 3 (understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities, and sustainable economic and social development). Specific Corporate Plan goals that H2007 activity could support include:
  - a) Wide range of opportunities to experience the special qualities of the Park in a sustainable manner is available to all;
  - b) Stronger and more diverse economic opportunities within the CNP area; and
  - c) An increase in value of sustainable tourism spend.
10. The Highland 2007 theme of access and inclusiveness helps meet our aims under a 'Park for All'.
11. The Sustainable Tourism Strategy includes a number of actions which tie in with the proposed H2007 activities, including
  - a) 4a, Identify and develop a range of venues and events that interpret the Cairngorm's special qualities to visitors
  - b) 6a, Consider establishing a Cairngorms festival

- c) 6b, Explore tourism potential of cultural heritage themes that emerge from the ‘State of the Park’ audit and Engage in relevant national and regional initiatives relating to cultural heritage
  - d) 6f, Encourage and support the development of product and experiences on the theme of learning about the land.
12. A key point to consider is of course the fact that H2007 only covers the Highland Council region. If the CNPA was to actively link in with H2007, it would seem preferable to take a pan-Park approach. This, of course, would have funding implications in so far as the H2007 funding could only be accessed for the Badenoch and Strathspey part of the Park.

## Recommendation

13. *Board members to consider the principle of CNPA involvement in H2007 and whether the focus should be on Badenoch and Strathspey or pan-Park.*

## Options for Involvement

14. If it is agreed that the CNPA should be involved in H2007, there are various options as to which programme strands we should engage with.

### *Community Events Programme*

15. Given the strong links with the ‘Cultural Heritage’ and ‘Marketing and Events’ schemes of the Authority’s Integrated Grant Programme, it should be relatively straightforward to link it with H2007. We could simply flag up the H2007 community programme as a potential additional source of funding for events in Badenoch and Strathspey, or we could go further and actively encourage applications for events linked to H2007.

### *International and Regional Events*

16. There is scope to link the idea of a Cairngorms Festival in to H2007. Due to the geographical nature of the Park, it would be difficult to justify having a Cairngorms Festival situated in one location. It may be better to have several dispersed events taking place under a Cairngorms Festival banner (similar to the way in which the various walking festivals in the Park were promoted this year). Linking H2007 events with a Cairngorms Festival could help provide long-term viability and stability for the events.
17. Assisting several events collectively as a festival would also be likely to reach more residents and visitors to the Park than an individual event would.
18. Timings for such an event (or events) would need to be carefully considered. The focus should almost certainly be on those periods of the year when visitor numbers are lower, to help support the Sustainable Tourism Strategy’s objective of lengthening the tourism season.

19. It would almost certainly be most effective for delivery of such a Cairngorms Festival to be carried out by private sector or community-based organisations within the Park, with the CNPA playing an enabling role.

### ***Cultural Pledge***

20. Work in this area is at an early stage. Again, it is something that fits well with the Park Authority's objectives. There is scope for considering the potential Park links to this in the development of the Youth and Education Strategy, planned for later this year.

### **Consultation**

21. H2007 and EventScotland have been consulted as to the role the CNPA could take. More detailed discussion with community and business groups will take place once the Park Board has given a general steer on this issue. The ViSIT Forum have been given the opportunity to comment on a draft of this paper and it will be discussed in detail at its next meeting on 14 September.

### **Implications**

#### ***Financial Implications***

22. Funding for H2007 community events could be accommodated under the existing Integrated Grant Programme schemes for 'Cultural Heritage' and 'Marketing and Events'.
23. If the Board feel that we should consider the idea of a Cairngorms Festival, this may have additional financial implications but further work is required to assess what these might be and how they would be funded from current operational budgets.
24. The Youth and Education Strategy work would determine financial implications related to the 'Cultural Pledge'.

#### ***Presentational Implications***

25. If events are supported across the Park, it would be important that they could be promoted both within the context of a Cairngorms Festival and H2007, irrespective of where they were located.

### **Implications for Stakeholders**

26. Highland 2007 has widespread support with 28 organisations signed up to provide some of their 2006-7 funding for events. Highland 2007, CNPA and EventScotland funding would not replace existing core funding of events for stakeholders. Clearly a Cairngorms Festival would have implications for a wide variety of partners with regards planning, funding, and delivery. Depending upon the steer given by the Board on the different options presented, more detailed discussions with stakeholders will take place initially via the ViSIT Forum.

## Recommendation

27. *The Board are invited to discuss the various options for participation in H2007 and to give a steer on their favoured option(s).*

## Next Steps

28. Subject to Board agreement that the CNPA should actively engage with H2007, and a steer on the basis on which it should do so, discussions will be held with the ViSIT Forum, Highland 2007 and EventScotland to work up the detail of the favoured options. In due course a Board paper setting out this detail would be prepared, either for decision or information, depending upon whether there are additional funding implications or not.

**John Thorne**  
**Andrew Harper**  
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johnthorne@cairngorms.co.uk  
andrewharper@cairngorms.co.uk

## **Highland 2007 Concordat Signatories**

Scottish Arts Council  
National Galleries of Scotland  
Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland/Scottish Libraries Association  
National Trust for Scotland  
Scottish Natural Heritage  
VisitScotland  
Bòrd na Gàidhlig  
Pròiseact nan Ealan  
Scottish Tourism Forum  
Arts and Business  
Forest Enterprise  
Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland  
Scottish Council for Volunteer Organisations  
Scottish Enterprise  
Scottish Screen  
Sport Scotland  
EventScotland  
British Waterways  
Comunn na Gàidhlig  
Historic Scotland  
British Council  
Scottish Council for Development & Industry  
Scottish Museums Council