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# CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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## FOR DISCUSSION

**Title: DRAFT PRIORITIES - CORPORATE PLAN 2015 - 2018**

**Prepared by: Grant Moir, CEO**

### **Purpose**

This paper gives an indication of the strategic priorities for the Cairngorms National Park Authority from 2015 – 2018. This paper builds on board, staff and stakeholder discussions during 2014. The finalised Corporate Plan will be brought for decision to the March 2015 Board meeting.

### **Recommendations**

#### **That the Board:**

- a) **Consider the draft priorities highlighted in the paper and provide a strategic steer for Management Team on developing the final document.**

## DRAFT PRIORITIES - CORPORATE PLAN 2015 – 2018 – FOR DISCUSSION

### Strategic Context

1. Scotland's National Parks are set up as models of sustainable development; they have four aims set out by the Scottish Parliament.
  - To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area;
  - To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area;
  - To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public;
  - To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.
2. The purpose of a National Park Authority is also set out by the Scottish Parliament as being to ensure the 'collective and coordinated delivery' of these four aims.
3. In doing so, we will be contributing directly to the Scottish Government's Outcomes, and its central purpose 'to focus the Government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth'.
4. The CNPA will contribute especially to the following National Outcomes in Scotland Performs

1	We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe
6	We live longer, healthier lives
10	We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need
11	We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others
12	We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations
16	Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

5. The recently announced Programme for Government 2014-15 will be on the following themes:
  - Creating More, Better Paid Jobs in a Strong, Sustainable Economy.
  - Building a Fairer Scotland and Tackling Inequality.
  - Passing Power to People and Communities.
6. The Scottish Government has also set out the basis for public sector reform in Scotland. The diagram below shows the four pillars of reform – prevention, partnership, people and performance.

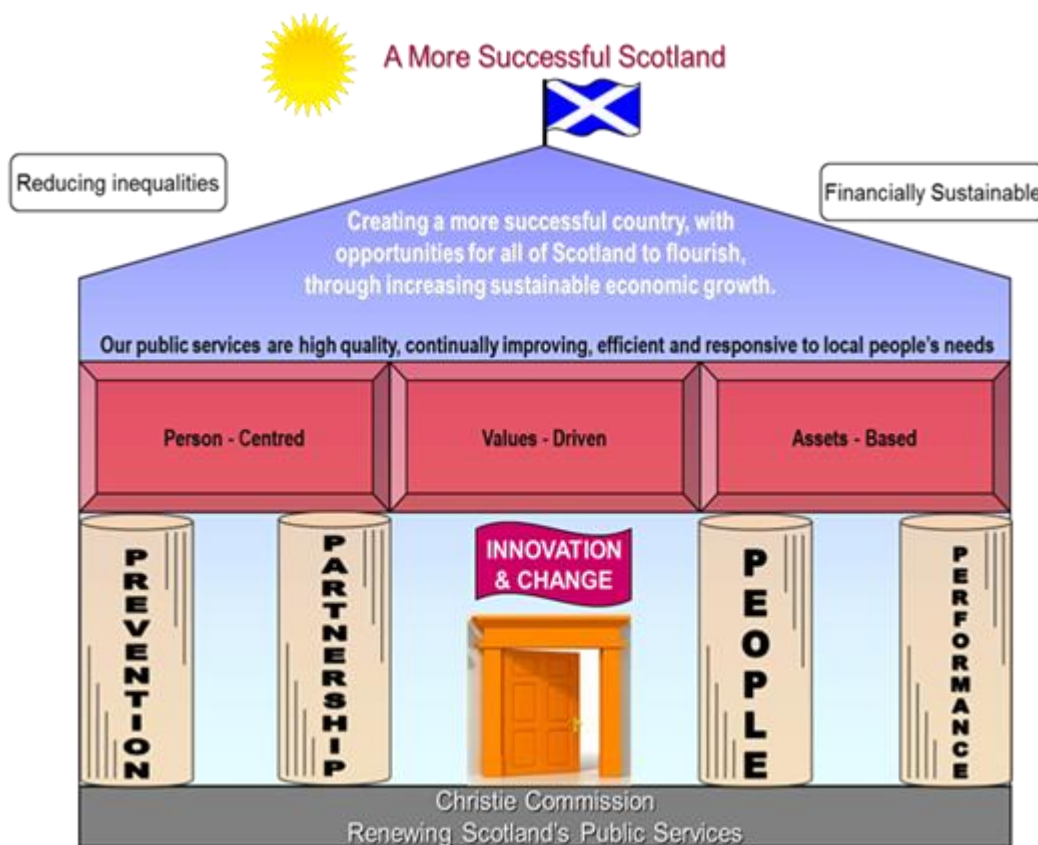


Fig 1 – Christie Commission – Renewing Scotland’s Public Services

7. There are also a number of key drivers at a policy level that influence where resources should be directed. These include:
  - a) 2020 Challenge for Scotland’s Biodiversity;
  - b) Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill & Community Planning Partnerships;
  - c) River Basin management Planning;
  - d) A Land Use Strategy for Scotland;
  - e) National Planning Framework 3 & Scottish Planning Policy;
  - f) Tourism Scotland 2020
  - g) National Walking Strategy
8. There are also potential other challenges and opportunities that the CNPA will need to take into account in delivering the next corporate plan. These include the availability of partner funding, legislative/policy changes and the overall level of public sector finance.

## Park Context

9. The shared vision for the Cairngorms National Park is set out in the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-17.
10. The Corporate Plan will explain the contribution the CNPA will make over the next 3 years to the implementation of that Plan, using our grant-in-aid from the Scottish

Government and other funding sources. The formal approach to Corporate Planning is set out in Section 4 of the Management Statement for the CNPA.

11. An operational plan will also be published annually showing in detail how the CNPA intend to deliver activity to meet its corporate objectives. At the end of each year we will also publish an Annual Report on what we have done.
12. There is a need to ensure that the CNPA focuses its resources on the major issues within the Cairngorms. The National Park Partnership Plan sets out 3 long term outcomes for the Park. These have been used as the basis for developing the Corporate Plan;
  - a. A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced;
  - b. People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences;
  - c. A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities.
13. There are also a number of strategies that cover the National Park and provide the detail and context for the NPPP.

## Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan



Fig 2 – Key Strategies

14. These plans provide the evidence and context for the priorities outlined below. The CNPA Corporate Plan will set out the key priorities the CNPA is going to take forward to help deliver the plans and strategies outlined in Fig 2.

### Proposed Corporate Plan Structure & Ethos

15. It is proposed to construct the Corporate Plan around 3 themes that are short hand for the 3 long term outcomes – Conservation, Visitor Experience and Rural Development. This is already how the CNPA is organised internally. The document, as well as setting out the priorities, will also set out the key partners that will contribute to helping deliver the priorities and the key indicators through which we will measure success. The final Corporate Plan will also set out corporate services and communications priorities. Finally, it will include an indicative financial breakdown against conservation, visitor experience, rural development, corporate services and communications.
16. The CNPA has been successful in adopting new approaches to issues in the Park and being innovative in seeking out solutions. The CNPA has also been very successful in working with partners to leverage funding against its core budget. Examples in the

past 6 months include 2 HLF bids, Commonwealth Legacy Funding, Sustrans Funding and Green Deal Stimulus Funding that will add up to over £10million of investment over the next few years. This commitment to innovation and leverage against staff resource and funding will continue in this new Corporate Plan period.

17. Working in partnership is at the core of the CNPA. We cannot deliver the outcomes looked for in the NPPP unless we work with a range of public, private and charitable partners. Our role is to provide leadership and drive to deliver for the area and for the people of Scotland.

### **Draft Key Priorities - Conservation**

18. The Cairngorms National Park is one of the premier areas in the UK for nature conservation. Home to some of our most extensive and internationally important montane, woodland, river and wetland habitats, our role is to bring partners together to deliver conservation at a landscape scale.

- Priority 1      Deliver priority species conservation, particularly securing for the long term Scotland's remaining stronghold for Capercaillie.
- Priority 2      Support expansion of native and montane woodland on a connected landscape scale.
- Priority 3      Address issues of sustainable moorland management to deliver greater habitat diversity, landscape enhancement and peatland restoration.
- Priority 4      Support catchment management collaboration to reduce flooding, improve water quality and improve wetland and river habitats.

### **Draft Key Priorities – Visitor Experience**

19. The Cairngorms National Park is an internationally renowned visitor destination with an outstanding range of outdoor recreation opportunities. Our role is to ensure the quality of visitor experience matches the quality of environment by co-ordinating investment in the core infrastructure and to ensure people of all ages and abilities are able to experience and enjoy the National Park.

- Priority 1      Develop and help implement the long term strategy for Cairngorm and Glenmore.
- Priority 2      Deliver key access infrastructure including completion of Speyside Way extension, delivery of upland paths project, core paths and start the Deeside Way extension.
- Priority 3      Increase participation and use of the Park's access infrastructure through the development and implementation of the Active Cairngorms strategy.
- Priority 4      Develop the National Park as a tourism destination through investment in the quality of the core product and visitor experience.

## **Draft Key Priorities – Rural Development**

20. Delivery of our priorities within the National Park can only come through close joint working with the people who live and work in the communities of the Park. Our role is to deliver a Planning Service to guide the right development to the right place, to promote investment in a diversified economy, and to help communities plan and achieve their own visions.

- Priority 1      Develop comprehensive approach to conservation and development as part of the preparation for the NPPP 2017 and LDP 2019.
- Priority 2      Co-ordinate delivery of the Cairngorms Economic Strategy and work with partners on delivery of key actions with specific focus on tourism.
- Priority 3      Support the regeneration and enhancement of Tomintoul and Glenlivet.
- Priority 4      Support communities through capacity building specifically focussing on the most fragile communities to deliver transformational change.

## **Draft Key Priorities – Corporate Services**

21. Our role is to deliver effective, efficient and sustainable services and promote the highest standards of governance, to support delivery of the Corporate Plan and NPPP by the Authority and our community and charity partners.

- Priority 1      Implement and embed the Organisational Development Strategy
- Priority 2      Implement the facilities and accommodation review to deliver ‘fit for purpose’ accommodation for staff and board.
- Priority 3      Deliver ongoing service improvement, including appropriate shared service development and operation, to the Authority and the community and charitable organisations we support.
- Priority 4      Promote and support the highest standards of governance and management within the Authority and the community and charitable organisations we support.

## **Draft Key Priorities – Communications**

22. Communicating with visitors, communities and stakeholders is vital for the work of the Cairngorms National Park Authority. Our role is to raise the profile of the Park and create a connection and commitment to care for it with identified audiences so they actively support the Park and benefit from doing so.

- Priority 1      Increase awareness of the Park, what makes it special and the contribution it makes to deliver the Scottish Governments strategic objectives

- Priority 2      Develop a sense of ‘closeness’ (win hearts and minds) with identified audiences;
- Priority 3      Increase the sense of responsibility and ownership to get involved and make a contribution to the Park.
- Priority 4      Ensure high quality internal communications that help to deliver the key priorities of the Corporate Plan

## **Mechanisms and Partnerships**

23. The CNPA works closely in partnership with a range of organisations. There are a number of formal partnerships that exist that will help the CNPA to deliver its corporate priorities and more importantly the NPPP.

### Key Partnerships

National Park Plan Partnership & Strategic Delivery Group  
Cairngorms Nature Partnership  
Catchment Partnerships  
Land Management Forum, Farmers Forum and Cairngorms Deer Advisory Group  
Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership  
Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum  
Cairngorms Economic Forum  
Cairngorms Tourism Partnership  
Cairngorms Local Action Group  
Community Planning Partnerships  
Association of Cairngorms Communities  
Glenmore/Cairngorm Partnership

24. The CNPA also have a number of mechanisms to help deliver the proposed priorities. The CNPA has 2 formal statutory functions as well as a number of duties, such as, biodiversity duty, climate change duty, soon to be community planning duty etc. All of the mechanisms are cross-cutting.

### Key Mechanisms

Planning Service – statutory function  
Access management – statutory function  
Ranger Services  
Community Action Planning  
LEADER  
Land Management Support & SRDP  
Outdoor Learning and Outreach  
Volunteering  
Communications and Engagement

## **Next Steps**

25. There are a number of processes that the Management Team will undertake following the board meeting;

- a) Discuss draft priorities with SG Sponsor Division;
- b) Discuss draft priorities with key partners and look to ensure closer corporate alignment. Specific role with ENFOR organisations.
- c) Finalise Corporate Plan for discussion and agreement at March Board meeting.

### **Implications for CNPA-led work**

26. There are a number of areas of work that will change to reflect the proposed corporate priorities. A communications plan around our priorities and what this means for communities, partners etc will be prepared.

### **Strategic Risk Management**

27. The Strategic Risk Register for the CNPA will be updated to reflect the new Corporate Plan and will be discussed and agreed by the Audit Committee. The main strategic risks around the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2015 – 2018 are:
  - a) Funding
  - b) Staff capacity
  - c) Stakeholder buy-in
28. There is one other area that is worth highlighting and that is that areas of work that previously received funding may not fit with the new corporate priorities. These will be discussed with relevant organisations over the next 3 months.

### **Success Measures**

19. A suit of indicators (maximum 4 per area i.e. Conservation) will be developed to ensure that we can measure the contribution the CNPA is making to the delivery of the NPPP. The Corporate indicators will be based on the current balanced scorecard.

### **Grant Moir**

24<sup>th</sup> November 2014

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### **Appendix I- Rocket Diagram**