
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

FOR DISCUSSION

Title: CAIRGORMS LEADER AND CAIRNGORMS TRUST DELIVERY

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Purpose

This paper presents the latest delivery updates on the Cairngorms LEADER Programme and voluntary and charitable giving activities as managed by the Cairngorms LEADER Local Action Group Trust (Cairngorms Trust).

Recommendations

The Performance Committee is asked to review the delivery updates presented with this paper and consider:

- a) whether the programmes of activity are making the expected contribution to the Cairngorms NPA's agreed strategic outcomes;**
- b) whether the delivery updates suggest any strategically significant impacts on the Cairngorms NPA's agreed performance objectives;**
- c) whether any material impacts on the Cairngorms NPA's strategic risk management and mitigation measures arise from assessment of programme delivery.**

Performance Dashboard

Performance Measure	Rating	Commentary
Finance: Deliver Cairngorms LEADER Programme, maximising use of resources made available	Blue (Complete)	Programme concluded 31 December 2021, with final project LEADER spend at 95% of allocation and total project expenditure at 168% of allocation after accounting for match funding levered into projects.
Audit: clean closure of LEADER Programme including monitoring and evaluation of performance indicators	Green	All project records finalised. Currently responding to Scottish Government LEADER Delivery Team coordinated response to EU audit points.
Policy: secure future Community Led Local Development (CLLD)	Amber	Testing change funding of £50,000 secured in 2021/22. Initial indication

Performance Measure	Rating	Commentary
of equivalent value to LEADER Programme allocation		of national allocation of £7 million for 2022/23. No long term or multi-year commitment in place.
Policy: Develop and implement voluntary giving mechanisms through Cairngorms Trust	Amber	Evolution of voluntary giving schemes has stalled during two years of COVID interruptions. Funding secured to reinvigorate this work over coming year.
Finance: increase voluntary giving returns within Trust's future funding profile to a level which sustain costs of infrastructure and return meaningful surpluses for investment.	Red	Current level of returns over period of COVID restrictions well below targeted levels, while receipts of around £1,000 per quarter from various voluntary donation sources continue to demonstrate viability of approaches.
Policy: operation of charitable mechanism an effective element of NPPP priority delivery	Green	The capacity to work in partnership with an independent charity covering the Cairngorms has been a crucial element in successful delivery of Green Recovery Funding; in securing resource for CLLD made available over the last two years; and in community engagement in delivering local priorities.

Strategic Background

1. The most recent update to the Board on delivery of the Authority's strategic objectives as set out in the agreed Corporate Plan for 2018 to 2022 was presented at the June 2021 meeting. The Corporate Plan delivery report may be accessed at: [Meeting - Cairngorms National Park Authority](#) The Authority's strategic objectives of relevance to consideration of the delivery of the programme reporting presented with this paper are:
 - a) Successfully conclude the Cairngorms LEADER Programme and consider future funding for community led local development (CLLD);
 - b) Develop and deliver a visitor giving scheme with partners. This objective has since been refocused as development of a voluntary giving scheme.

2. The latest review of the Strategic Risk Register was considered by the Board in March 2022 and may be accessed at: [Meeting - Cairngorms National Park Authority](#). Strategic risks of relevance to consideration of performance of the programmes of work considered by this paper are:
 - a) AI: Resource risk remedial mitigation: Continuing to support "delivery bodies" such as Cairngorms Nature, Cairngorms Trust in securing inward investment.
 - b) AI.I Strategic Risk on Resourcing: Role as Lead / Accountable body for major programmes (e.g. LEADER, Landscape Partnership) has risk of significant financial

- clawback should expenditure prove to be not eligible for funding, while CNPA carries responsibilities as employer for programme staff.
- c) A11.2 Strategic Risk Resourcing: the end of major programme investments (Tomintoul and Glenlivet, LEADER) requires significant ongoing staffing to manage audit and legacy which the Authority finds difficult to resource.
 - d) A12.2 Strategic Risk on Resourcing: future community led local development funding currently delivered through LEADER, together with wider funding previously from EU structural and agricultural sources is lost and creates a significant gap in our capacity to deliver against our development priorities.
 - e) A28 Strategic Risk on Staffing: delivery of key outcomes is impacted by staff turnover, particularly in project teams.
3. The programmes of activity under consideration here also fit with the priorities of the current National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP), the most recent overview of delivery of the NPPP having been presented to the Board at its meeting in September 2021: [Meeting - Cairngorms National Park Authority](#). The relevant elements of the NPPP delivery relating to these programmes are:
- a) Cairngorms Trust taking forward development of voluntary giving scheme to support development of new funding sources supporting public benefits (Landscape scale conservation priority 1i).
 - b) Developing new ways including visitor giving to fund infrastructure investment and maintenance (visitor infrastructure priority 4a).
 - c) Improving visitor transport options (visitor infrastructure priority 4f).
 - d) Targeting people currently living sedentary lifestyles and those with long-term medical conditions (Active Cairngorms priority 5b).
 - e) Improving opportunities for active travel in Aviemore (Active Cairngorms priority 5g).
 - f) Better coordination and promotion of public transport and active travel (Active Cairngorms priority 5f)

Performance Overview: Delivery Against Strategic Expectations

4. The Cairngorms Trust / Cairngorms Local Action Group's quarterly reports received on the delivery of charitable and LEADER activities respectively are presented with this paper at Annexes 1 and 2.
5. The LEADER Programme is now closed. Supply chain and COVID restrictions prevented the supply of an electric minibus to the Badenoch and Strathspey Community Transport Company and therefore resulted in a shortfall in planned expenditure, which was compounded by small underspends in a number of co-operation projects under the management of other LEADER areas. However, final commitment of 95% of LEADER grant allocation with total investment of 168% of grant allocation when additional match funding is accounted for is considered a good result for a £3 million programme impacted over 2 years of delivery by COVID restrictions.
6. The £50,000 "Testing Change" fund made available in 2021/22 to test new CLLD approaches has also successfully completed, with delivery of a Youth Local Action Group with grant awarding powers, and a Green Change Fund providing community

grants. This work also allows the Heritage Horizons approach to community grant schemes to be “live” developed and tested.

7. The Trust continues to receive small value voluntary donations each quarter. Funding has been made available to the Trust to reinvigorate the voluntary giving scheme over the course of 2022/23 with an objective of establishing whether there is potential for such an initiative to generate a level of return in the medium to long term which would become self-sustaining and provide meaningful levels of investment in the Trust’s charitable objectives.

Performance Overview: Risks Under Management

8. Trustees and staff involved in supporting the work of the Cairngorms Trust continue to engage in development of national policy around the future of CLLD funding in Scotland. There is an increasingly positive outlook on this subject, with a further £7 million to be made available through Local Action Group (LAG) networks in 2022/23 from a total of over £11 million allocation for CLLD activity in the year.
9. Availability of additional resource for the Trust in 2022/23 will allow further action on the evolution of voluntary giving and address current risks identified in this area around the limitations arising from limited capacity and COVID restrictions over the last 2 years.

Conclusions: Performance Overview and Matters Meriting Strategic Review

10. There are no matters of strategic significance which merit escalation at this time in the opinion of senior managers leading the Cairngorms NPA’s linkage to the areas of activity covered by this paper and associated reports.

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