

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND DELIVERY COMMITTEE MEETING of

THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

held via Lifesize Video Conferencing,
on 28 August 2020 at 9.15am

PRESENT

William Munro (Chair)

John Kirk

Ian McLaren (Vice-Chair)

Anne Rae Macdonald

Eleanor Mackintosh

Xander McDade

In Attendance:

Grant Moir, CEO

David Cameron, Director of Corporate Services

Danie Ralph, Finance Manager

Apologies: None

Welcome and Apologies

1. Everyone was welcomed to the meeting.

Minutes of Last Meeting – Approval

2. The draft Minutes of the meetings on 22 May 2020 were approved with no amendments.

Matters Arising

3. The Chair provided an update on the Action Points from the previous meeting including:
 - a) **At Para 5i) – In Hand** – Director of Corporate Service to circulate the staff pay structure to the Committee. Noted that structure had been circulated. Request made for further information on the levels of staff at each grade. Director of Corporate Services agreed to circulate that information.
 - b) **At Para 14i) – In Hand** - Crown Estate summary to be created and circulated. CEO advised that he has a meeting with Crown estate and NatureScot the following Tuesday and would circulate more information after that meeting.

- c) **At Para 14ii) – Closed** - Background to the observatory project was prepared detailing why this should be prioritised on this project rather than allocating the funds to other(s).
 - d) **At Para 17i) – Open** - Lessons learned from TGLP project when available, to be brought to the Finance & Delivery Committee in a confidential session. CEO advised that the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Landscape Partnership ends the beginning next year and this action would be picked up in the first half of 2021.
6. The following matters arising was raised:
- a) Noted a requirement to consider approaches to Board member induction with regard to understanding large scale, multi-phase, externally funded projects and the status of such projects. CEO agreed with this sentiment and agreed to give that some thought.
 - b) Linked to the action on TGLP Project and lessons learned, members suggested that the action should be expanded to included lessons learned from the first phase of the Capercaillie project. The CEO highlighted the divergence in timeframe of both these projects, with Capercaillie project now moving into the Delivery phase and suggested that lessons learned on this project and ongoing delivery should be fed into regular delivery updates through the Committee rather than potentially over-complicating timelines with the TGLP. The CEO noted we would of course draw on Capercaillie project knowledge when also building the lessons learned information from TGLP. The Board Convener noted that this information would also be worthwhile reflecting in the evolution of the Heritage Horizons bid.

Action:

- i. **CEO to give some thought into the process for bringing new Board members up to speed with the Authority’s large scale projects.**

Declaration of Interests

7. There were no interests declared.

Finance Monitoring: 4 Months to 31 July 2020 (Paper I)

8. Danie Ralph, Finance Manager introduced Paper I which presents a summary overview of income and expenditure for the 4 months to 31 July, 2020.
9. The Finance & Delivery Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments and observations:

- a) At Para 18, other board and staff costs, members asked whether steps could have been taken to reduce motor vehicle insurance costs and think forward to next Spring as next likely deployment of some vehicles? Finance Manager reported that savings were being made on variable costs such as travel for staff / board, on fixed costs there are £37k savings at the moment and at the end of September they will be able to see them. Director of Corporate Services added that the pool fleet has been used to support the volunteer effort as part of the covid community response supporting staff to help with food deliveries to those that are shielding and the building was still being used for core staff. He explained that fixed costs remained irrespective of activity levels.
- b) With reference to paragraphs 34 members sought clarification on the claims processes to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). Finance Manager advised that the claim for the Great Place Badenoch project was small as total spend on that project was £55k. For the TGLP project they were putting together a claim on Agri schemes which would be submitted the following week. This would increase the claim substantially by another £100k.
- c) Reassurance was sought that there was no impending deadline in NLHF claims resulting in a risk of missing the deadline and lost income? Finance Manager provided that reassurance.
- d) With reference to paragraph 39 what did the first claim of the development phase of the capercaillie project entail? The CEO advised that these were mainly staff costs.
- e) Were there any plans for the Board cost savings? CEO advised that that money had already been reallocated through the seasonal rangers and into the Green Recovery Fund.
- f) With reference to paragraphs 13 and 14 the recovery of legal fees and planning fees, members sought clarification on which legal fees needed to be recovered? Finance Manager explained that the recovery of legal fees refers to Section 75's agreed with applicants, where it is the applicants' responsibility to cover the Authority's costs.
- g) Last Autumn a training session for Audit & Risk Committee members and open to all Board members had taken place which was well delivered. Could something like that be organised on the financial side especially given as the Authority are embarking on large projects? It was agreed that a conversation take place to discuss what the training should look like so that it can be organised.

10. The Finance & Delivery Committee noted the outturn for the 4 months to 31 July, 2020.

11. Action:

- i. **Discussion on Finance Training session specification to take place toward an aim of Spring 2021 for the training session to be held.**

AOCB

12. There were no items presented.

Date of Next Meeting

13. The next scheduled Finance and Delivery Committee meeting will take place on Friday 13 November 2020.
14. The meeting finished at 9.40 hours.