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# CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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## FOR DECISION

**Title: ELECTION PROCESS REVIEW AND ELECTION OF PLANNING COMMITTEE CONVENER**

**Prepared by: DAVID CAMERON, DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES**

### **Purpose**

This paper presents a review of the process used in September 2020 to elect the Deputy Convener, with a number of suggested amendments to resolve points where there was some lack of clarity.

The paper also seeks to initiate the election process for the Planning Committee Convener.

### **Recommendations**

**The Board is requested to:**

- a) **consider the review points on the election process and to determine whether members wish to adapt processes as provided for as “potential amendments” in Annex I;**
- b) **consider whether there are any further points of review from their perspective of the Deputy Convener election which are not drawn out of the internal review process set out in Annex I and which require to be considered prior to subsequent use of the election process;**
- c) **agree to commence the election process for Planning Committee Convener with effect from the date of this Board meeting;**
- d) **subject to decision at point “c”, note the planned election timetable for conduct of the Planning Committee Convener election.**

### **Election Process**

1. The Board agreed an election process at its meeting of 28 August 2020. This process is based on Standing Orders while reflecting current COVID19 business continuity requirements for use in electing the Authority’s Deputy Convener.  
<https://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/28082020/200828CNPABdPaperIAABoardElectionProcessesVI.0.pdf>
2. One amendment was agreed to the process established in this paper: to allow 10 working days (two calendar weeks) for the process of submitting valid nomination to the Proper Officer, as opposed to the 15 working days proposed in paragraph 8 of the paper.

3. The election of the Authority's Deputy Convener was concluded and results announced on 2 October 2020.
4. Following conduct of the Deputy Convener election, a review of the election process used has been undertaken. Areas where lack of clarity were identified by members and potential gaps noted in the process by the Director of Corporate Services are drawn out at Annex I to this paper, with potential resolution to them should members wish to resolve the points in the manner indicated.

### **Decision Point**

5. Members are requested to consider the review points on the election process and to determine whether members wish to adapt processes as provided for as "potential amendments" in Annex I.
6. Members are also requested to consider whether there are any further points of review from their perspective of the Deputy Convener election which are not drawn out of the internal review process set out in Annex I and which require to be considered prior to subsequent use of the election process.

### **Proposed Planning Committee Convener Election Process**

7. The Planning Committee Convener was elected in December 2017 for a three year term commencing 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020.
8. An election for the Planning Committee Convener using the election process agreed on 28 August, as amended following consideration of this paper, is proposed to be initiated from the date of this Board meeting. This will allow for completion of the election process in December 2020, for the elected member to take up the role of Planning Committee Convener with effect from 1 January 2021 until 31 December 2023.

### **Decision Point 2**

9. The Board is requested to agree to commence the election process for Planning Committee Convener with effect from the date of this Board meeting.

### **Election Timetable**

10. Should the Board agree to amend business continuity and standing order processes as set out in this paper, the following represents an illustrative timetable for conduct of the election of the Planning Committee Convener:
  - a) 13 November: Board confirms process for election.
  - b) 27 November 17:00: final date and time for receipt of valid nominations and associated papers. This provides the 10 working days allowed for in the election process approved by the Board on 28 August.

- c) In week commencing 30 November: Issue ballot papers and candidates statement. Target issue of these papers by Wednesday 2 December.
- d) Wednesday 16 December 17:00: target final date and time for receipt of ballots.
- e) By Friday 18 December: target count of ballot and announcement of result, subject to availability of members in the event of any tie break.

11. The Board is requested to note the election timetable at paragraph 10.

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**7 October 2020**

Annex 1: Review of Deputy Convener Election Process and Potential Adjustments to Process

Review Point	Matter for Consideration	Potential Amendments
Allow 10 working days (2 calendar weeks) for nomination process	Timetable agreed by Board on 28 August for use in Deputy Convener election.	No action proposed. Retain arrangements used in Deputy Convener election.
Nominating and seconding a candidate	Current standing orders as drafted do not limit members to making only a single nomination or seconding a single candidate. It is open for members to nominate or second multiple candidates.	Add to [4a] and as para 9e of election process as set out in 28 August paper: A member may nominate or second a single candidate only in any election process.
Publication of names of members who have nominated and seconded a candidate.	There is no provision in the standing orders, nor the agreed election process, to publish the names of members who have nominated and seconded candidates. There was considerable correspondence during the Deputy Convener election process to publish this information which required consent of all members concerned. Members involved cited the fact that members nominating and seconding candidates previously in meetings would be clearly know. However, this provision had not been retained in Standing Orders revised by the Board in June 2019.	Add to [4b] and para 10 of election process as set out in 28 August paper: The Proper Officer will validate nominations and publish a list of members nominated along with names of members nominating and seconding each nominated candidate.
Anonymity of process	There was a suggestion that post office franking on envelopes used to return ballots would represent a breach of anonymous voting processes. Ballot papers were separated from envelopes on opening for the vote count and there is no sense from the Proper Officer from conduct of the Deputy Convener election that there was any lack of anonymity in the process.	No action proposed. Retain arrangements used in Deputy Convener election.

Note: references in square brackets are to agreed Standing Orders:

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/14062019/190614CNPABdPaper4Annex1BoardStandingOrders.pdf>

References to paragraph numbers are to the election process paper presented to the Board on 28 August 2020.