

ISSUE PAPER – TEMPLATE

The following is a template for the issue papers. It is intended to guide you through the process. Sentences in italics are examples. They should be written as Board papers, with a clear recommendation.

Introduction 1/3 page

- What is the purpose of the paper?

This issue paper considers what we know about deer management in the National Park, describes the existing policy framework, discusses the issue affecting deer management, and based on an analysis of this information recommends 5 key strategic objectives for the Park.

- Who has been involved in preparing this paper?

This paper has been prepared by the Natural Resources Group. We have discussed it with the following organisations ...through a series of meetings and workshops. They are all broadly in support of its findings / despite lengthy discussions, we could not reach agreement on all issues, and these are discussed later.

Definition 1/3 page

- What is the definition of the topic covered by the paper?

There are many definitions of wild land. Following discussions with partners, we have agreed the following definition. This includes ? and excludes ?.

Description 1-4 pages

- What do we know about this topic?
- What are the facts?
- What don't we know?
- What is its condition?
- What is its value within the local, national and international context?
- What are the trends?
- What factors are affecting its performance?

The key source of data will be the State of the Park Report.

The outcome of this section should be a factual description of all aspects of the topic. It will then form part of the evidence base, along with an analysis of the policy context, to then engage with external stakeholders to identify the issues and agree strategic objectives.

Policy Analysis

2-5 pages

- What existing policies apply to this topic, both directly and indirectly?
- Are there international policies or obligations in force, either at an international (eg Ramsar) or European level (eg Water Framework Directive)?
- Do these have legal force within the UK?
- How are they being applied within the National Park?
- Is the theme or topic a devolved matter to Scotland or is it a Westminster matter?
- What does the current legislation stipulate or define?
- What is the current Government policy?
- How is this interpreted at a local level by our stakeholders?
- What do previous consultations over the past 5 years tell us of our stakeholders' views?
- Are there any policy developments in the pipeline?
- What is the relative importance of existing policy?
- Is there an obvious hierarchy?
- Are there any contradictions, gaps and discrepancies?
- What does this mean for the Park?

Some useful sources are the following:

- ✿ The Policy Cascade by the Cairngorms Partnership (1996) – for pre 1997 information
- ✿ Structure and Local Plans
- ✿ Community Planning
- ✿ Review of powers relevant to Scottish National Parks for SNH (1998)
- ✿ Draft Ministerial guidance on Park Plans (2004) – see Annex 4 to my memo of 24th May
- ✿ Summary of consultation responses to CNP proposal by SNH (Sept 2001)
- ✿ Parliamentary discussions and debate on the CNP draft Designation Order (2002)

We are currently contracting with a consultant to draw out the key messages from the Parliamentary discussions on National Parks and local consultations on the National Park over the last 5 years. This should be available by October 2004.

The outcome of this work should be a full understanding of the policy context, both the constraints and opportunities, within which to develop the strategic objectives for the Park. Ideally, it should be strictly factual at this stage, part of the evidence base to then engage with external stakeholders to identify the issues and agree strategic objectives.

Issues **2-5 pages**

- Based on the facts about the topic, the analysis of the policy context, and discussions with stakeholders, what are the main issues that need to be addressed?
- Why are they important?
- Do they conform to at least one of the Park's aims?

This section is pivotal to the paper. It should discuss the information about the topic set out above, and through presenting a clear discussion of the topic should arrive logically at the strategic objectives. The progression should be clear and robust.

The discussion of issues should acknowledge deficiencies in knowledge, or contradictions in the evidence, but should nonetheless arrive at a recommendation, even if this is a series of options.

The discussion of issues should be set within the context of the overall vision statement for the Park, and vision statements for the three main elements: Communities Living and Working in the Park; Conserving and Enhancing the Park; and Understanding and Enjoying the Park.

Strategic Objectives **1 page**

- What are our strategic objectives for this topic in the short, medium and long term?

To safeguard the extent of wild land in the National Park.

To maintain timber growing and processing as a vibrant industry in the National Park.

These strategic objectives are in effect a sub-set of the Park's 4 aims and should begin "to...". Strategic objectives are distinct from actions. Strategic objectives are about impacts not outputs; they are about what we are trying to achieve not the tool or mechanism that we are using; planting trees is an action to achieve the strategic objective of greater tree coverage.

Recommendation **½ page**

- What are you asking the Board to approve?

The Board is invited to note the information and analysis provided, and approve the strategic objectives above for inclusion in the draft Park Plan.

Bibliography

You should record the main sources used in preparing the paper in an annex.

Nick Halfhide
August 2004