



## Minutes of the Performance Committee

Held at Cairngorms National Park Authority office, Grantown on Spey

Hybrid

8 March 2024 at 1.00pm

### Present

Kenny Deans (Convener)

Sandy Bremner

Steve Micklewright

Ann Ross

Chris Beattie

John Kirk

Eleanor Mackintosh

### In Attendance

Grant Moir, CEO

David Cameron, Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services

David Clyne, Head of Cairngorms 2030

Andy Ford, Director for Nature and Climate Change

Colin Simpson, Head of Visitor Services

Gavin Miles, Director of Planning and Place

Sarah Henshall, Head of Conservation

Karen Johnstone, Clerk to Board

### Apologies

None

### Welcome and introduction

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Performance Committee.

### Minutes of Previous Meetings

2. The minutes of the previous meeting, 26 April 2024 were approved with no amendments.



## **Matters Arising**

3. Action points arising from previous meetings:
  - a) 11 February 2022
    - i. Item 3.13a1 an accurate record of Visit Scotland funding 2023 / 24 will be brought to the Performance Committee in due course as external auditors are still working through records.

## **Declarations of interest**

4. None

13.02pm Ann Ross joined the meeting.

## **Bring back beaver's project (Paper 1)**

4. Sarah Henshall, Head of Conservation, introduced the paper which presents the latest delivery updates on the Bringing back beaver's project.
5. The Performance Committee discussed the update and made the following comments and observations:
  - a) Board members questioned how often the board and public were getting updates on the beavers' movements. Sarah Henshall, Head of Conservation reassured the committee that there was a monitoring group in place to monitor when beavers are moving, and the Beaver Project Manager would inform landowners immediately if beavers were on their land.
  - b) Questions were raised about the impact of staff time and costs for this project and how this is being managed. The committee were reassured that this has only been flagged as a potential risk in the future, however, rangers, volunteers and future release site partners will help.
  - c) A board member questioned the longer-term plan for beavers. The Head of Conservation noted that they have a five-year license, solely focused on the Spey catchment.
  - d) Board members questioned what the beaver population is likely to reach and how this would be managed. The Head of Conservation confirmed that it was hard to give a fixed number, however, NatureScot have carried out modelling framework to try and establish how the population is likely to grow over time, based on established territories.



e) A board member asked if beavers leave the National Park, who would be responsible for them. Head of Conservation highlighted that we want the beaver population to expand within the catchment. There is a National Beaver Management and Mitigation framework that NatureScot implement that sets out how beaver's will be managed out with the boundaries of the National Park.

6. The Committee noted the paper.

7. Action Point Arising: none.

### **Cairngorms 2030: Q1 2024 (Jan – Mar) (Paper 2)**

8. David Clyne, Head of Cairngorms 2030, introduced the paper which updates the Park Authority Performance Committee on the risks under management within the Cairngorms 2030 programme. This paper presents the period from January to March 2024 and the planned work to the end of June 2024.

9. The Performance Committee discussed the update and made the following comments and observations:

- a) Grant Moir, CEO, added a comment related to the transport aspect; he will be meeting with Bettina Sizeland, Director in Transport Scotland and Dave Signorini, Director of Environment and Forestry, Scottish Government (SG) on 27 June to discuss Cairngorms 2030 funding.
- b) A board member questioned the connectivity of cycle paths between locations in Badenoch and Strathspey asking when these will be going ahead. The CEO stated that routes and costings are in place, we are waiting for confirmation on a start date. Colin Simpson, Head of Visitor Service, stated that Dulnain Bridge and Grantown on Spey are community led projects, currently at stage four, the Park Authority will pick up from stage five.
- c) Comments were made on the information that has been reported, with members feeling it was dated. The CEO stated that Cairngorms 2030 has been divided into three themes to come to committee in rotation: Transport, Community and Nature themes will be presented which will provide a forward look of plans within each theme. Board members highlighted that due to public perception, they would need to have an insight into what's coming up. The CEO responded to say that they will share a forward look with the board, giving members more of an insight. The Deputy CEO emphasised the importance of scrutiny of programme delivery, which formed the basis of the terms of reference for the Committee and ensured



appropriate scrutiny was given to programme management, risk and resource implications, and delivery. the Chair noted that a meeting had been arranged with the Deputy CEO and Head of Cairngorms 2030 Programme to agree the future coverage of the programme by this Committee. Members supported this action.

- d) A board member raised a question regarding budget that was approved but deferred for a year. The CEO stated that SG has the same amount of active travel budget between Transport Scotland and Sustrans: it's who administers this budget and allocation processes that have changed. However, the Park Authority is looking to secure funds for this year for the design phase of the project. This will be discussed at the meeting on 27 June with Transport Scotland referred to earlier.

10. The Committee noted the paper.

11. Action Point Arising:

- i. Chair of Performance Committee and Deputy CEO to discuss and make a plan for how best to share with the Board Members the forward look document to allow them to see what's coming up.

### **Delivery of statutory duties as conferred by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (Paper 3)**

12. Colin Simpson, Head of Visitor Services and Active Travel presented the paper which updates members on delivery of the Park Authorities statutory duties under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. While activity is delivered by officers with some reporting to the Local Outdoor Access Forum, as a statutory function it is also considered appropriate that there is an element of Board oversight and scrutiny of related casework.

13. The Performance Committee discussed the update and made the following comments and observations:

- a) A board member raised a question of whether committee gets sight of caseloads and issues on an annual basis. Colin Simpson, Head of Visitor Services noted that they plan to bring overview information to the committee such as numerical analysis of cases and summaries of types of cases dealt with.



- b) Head of Visitor Services gave the committee an update on the access to the area of the Spey, and the report they had undertaken in Autumn. This has now been reconsidered and will go back out to gather more information over the coming weeks.

14. The Committee noted the paper.

15. Action Point Arising: none

### **Cairngorms and Glenmore Strategy 2016 (Paper 4)**

16. Colin Simpson, Head of Visitor Services and Active Travel presented the paper which updates members on delivery of the actions contained in the 2016 strategy and to consider the role the Park Authority should take to lead on coordinated delivery of actions in the Cairngorm and Glenmore area in future.

17. The Performance Committee discussed the update and made the following comments and observations:

- a) A board member questioned the slow progress on parking management between The Highland Council (THC) and Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS). Colin Simpson, Head of Visitor Services and Active Travel stated that they would use a holistic solution such as barriers and parking facilities. There has been discussion about clarifying legal and management responsibilities on the matter and the legal timescales for resolution of questions has slowed the process down.

18. The Committee noted the paper.

19. Action Point Arising: none

### **Cairngorms Capercaillie Project (Paper 5)**

20. Andy Ford, Director of Nature and Climate Change presented the paper which presents the final report on the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project.

21. The Performance Committee discussed the update and made the following comments and observations:

- a) A board member commented on the project receiving criticism due to lack of signage for those with dogs not on leads and having received comments from people who ended up being approached by the police. Andy Ford, Director of



Nature and Climate Change noted that the police may have stopped people regarding the Lek it Be campaign as they supported this in the early mornings to stop people disturbing the Leks. There was also Peer to Peer working in the dog walking community, and this is possibly where the conflict or miscommunication comes from.

- b) Board members felt there are higher numbers of ticks in the area. Director of Nature and Climate Change, responded by stating that ticks and predators have been discussed as part of this project and this goes into the Legacy Plan. Grant Moir, CEO mentioned that we need to continue to inform the public on tick risks, so they are aware how to check themselves and what to look out for.
- c) Board members raised questions about the capacity to keep the Capercaillie message out there and what is included in the Legacy Plan. Director of Nature and Climate Change stated that the Legacy Plan is the Capercaillie Emergency Plan, this will be distributed at the Formal Board in June.
- d) A board member mentioned that they feel there has been a lot of money spent on Capercaillie with little result. Director of Nature and Climate Change noted that funding strategy is laid out in the emergency plan, there is a significant price tag, but they put public money into those actions with multiple benefits and long-term benefits.

22. The Committee noted the paper.

23. Action Point Arising: None

## **AOCB**

17. Date of net meeting 20 September 2024

The meeting closed at 14.19pm



Performance Committee Action Points:

ACTION	Status
<b>Draft Minutes – 14 June 2024</b>	
<b>Action points arising from previous meetings</b>	
11 February 2022 ii. Item 3.13a1 an accurate record of Visit Scotland funding 2023 / 24 will be brought to the Performance Committee in due course as external auditors are still working through records.	In hand
<b>Paper 2 - Cairngorms 2030: Q1 2024 (Jan – Mar)</b>	
At para 9c i. Chair of Performance Committee, Kenny Deans and Deputy CEO, David Cameron to discuss and make a plan for how best to share with the Board Members the forward look document to allow them to see what's coming up.	