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## CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

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**Title:** Reviewing the membership of the Forum

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### **Purpose**

To review the Forum membership after two years and if necessary, put plans in place to recruit new members.

### **Recommendations**

- a.** The Forum are invited to agree the proposal to undertake a full review of the Forum at the meeting in March 2007.
- b.** Members of the Forum are invited to consider their own term of membership and notify the Secretariat of their desired future length of term no later than 31 January 2007.
- c.** The Forum is invited to give the Park Authority their thoughts on the proposal for recruitment by public advertisement and a convened selection panel.
- d.** The Forum is invited to advise the Park Authority on the merits of the two options for dealing with in-year resignations.

### **Background**

1. The Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum will have been operational for two years in April 2007. The Operating Principles indicate that a *full review of the operation of the Forum will take place two years from March 2005*. To ensure a full and comprehensive review of the two preceding years it is proposed that the Forum should take this full review as an agenda item at their meeting in March 2007.
  - a.** The Forum are invited to agree the proposal to undertake a full review of the Forum at the meeting in March 2007
2. This paper considers the future membership of the Forum with the aim of positioning new members in the Forum as from April 2007.

### **The Operating Principles**

3. The Operating Principles state the following:

*The Cairngorms Local Access Forum is established under section 25 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. It will have a maximum of 21 members and include one CNPA Board member. The Forum will comprise of members appointed to it by the Cairngorms National Park Authority. The CNPA and the Forum itself will keep membership of the Forum under review, including a review of the public agency involvement.*

4. Paragraph 3 of the Operating Principles addresses the length of term for Forum members as follows:
- *The Forum consists of such persons as are appointed to it by the Park Authority but in line with good practice shall include representation from the following key sectors: Land Managers; Community Interests; Recreational Users; and Public Agencies.*
  - *The Forum shall select a Convenor and Vice Convenor **to serve a term of three years.***
  - *Forum members are appointed for a **two-year** period. After this duration, Forum members will be invited to extend their membership for either one or two years, by self-selection initially, but organised so as to achieve a balance of three-year memberships and four-year memberships, while maintaining a balance across the four sectors.*
  - *Future appointments will be made for a term of three years. No member shall serve more than six continuous years on the Forum.*

### **The Objective of reviewing membership**

5. The Park Authority will ensure that the Forum is a fully functioning and effective Forum which is dynamic, responsive to change and, on a continual basis, seeks to bring in fresh skills and experience from new members whilst retaining and valuing the existing member resource. It will also ensure the retention of the balance of interests – community, land management and recreation - and an equitable split between the three.

### **Current Forum members' length of term**

6. Current Forum members were given terms of membership for two years. It is anticipated that members will express interest in remaining on the Forum for *diverse* periods of time and this will be welcomed, as the staggered ingress of new members and egress of old will assist the effectiveness of the Forum. There is also an opportunity for the Park Authority to consider individual places on the Forum with a view to ensuring that proper representation of interests are being met.
7. Current Forum members are invited to indicate their preference for one of *three* options:
- a) To **stand down** with effect from 1 April 2007
  - b) To extend their membership for **one** year – to 1 April 2008
  - c) To extend their membership for **two** years – to 1 April 2009
8. In order to give current Forum members the opportunity to remain on the Forum for the maximum number of years (up to 6) those that choose to remain on for a further two years will be presented again with the same option once their two year term is up.
- b. Members of the Forum are invited to consider their own term of membership and notify the Secretariat of their desired future length of term no later than 31 January 2007**

### **Future Forum members' length of term**

9. Future members will be given a term of offer of three years on initial appointment. After this time they will be asked to indicate their preference for one of *four* options:
  - a) To **stand down** with immediate effect
  - b) To extend their membership for **one** year
  - c) To extend their membership for **two** years
  - d) To extend their membership for **three** years
10. Regardless of the month of the year a member is appointed in, any term of membership will run from April to April over the appropriate number of years.

### **The process of selecting new members**

11. Members for the Forum were selected on the basis of direct appointment. Prospective members were invited to apply by filling out an application form and their applications were assessed by a selection panel of 6, comprising of 2 CNPA outdoor access staff, 2 CNPA Board members and 2 independent persons. Forum membership was ratified by the Convener of the Park Authority.
12. This method of direct appointment was agreed by the CNPA Board as being the fairest way to ensure that a Forum could be created combining the right mix of skills, experience, interest representation and geographic spread. It has resulted in a Forum of the highest calibre which is attracting acclaim and respect across Scotland.
13. Therefore it is suggested that this method is employed again, but that a smaller panel is convened as the next and subsequent rounds of appointment are likely to be considerably less onerous than the initial trawl for 17 members. It is suggested therefore that adverts are placed in the local press as before inviting applications for the vacant posts.

### **The timing of selecting new members**

14. New members should be in place by April 2007 and the first meeting they will be eligible to attend will be in June.
15. In the New Year, adverts will be placed in the local press and interested parties will be invited to apply. A small selection panel consisting of one member of access staff; the CNPA Board representative on the Forum and the Convenor of the Forum will select the next members according to the criteria that were worked up for the first recruitment drive.

### **c. The Forum is invited to give the Park Authority their thoughts on the proposal for recruitment by public advertisement and a convened selection panel**

### **In year resignations**

16. When a Forum member resigns or leaves before their term is up, a vacancy is left within the Forum. There are two options available regarding further recruitment:
  - a) that the vacancy is carried forward until the next annual round of recruitment is done
  - b) that the vacancy is recruited for immediately by reconvening the selection panel to look afresh at existing applicants

**d. The Forum is invited to advise the Park Authority on the merits of the two options for dealing with in-year resignations**

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