

NOTE OF DISCUSSION TO CLARIFY DECISION ON EJ FOR GLENLIVET MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL 22 January 2010

1. This item was considered on 13 November 2009, and Members were broadly content subject to two concerns on which further clarification/confirmation was sought:
 - a) whether or not the funding being sought from CNPA was to fund the Hub, which was a commercial operation;
 - b) extent of community support.
2. This clarification/confirmation was given in writing by Bob Grant, and oral confirmation sought on 22 January that Members of the Finance Committee were content with this.
3. On the first of the issues, it was reported that the total fund of £717k excluded the hub. The whole business case hinged on securing a commercial operator for the hub, and the income stream from this lease was intrinsic to the viability of the proposal from Crown Estate.
4. On the second, the Crown Estate had produced a report on the community consultation – 13 of 24 responses were supportive, and while numerically true to claim there was community support, the numbers were not entirely convincing. Local Member knowledge suggested there remained concern about whether the village would derive any benefit if the hub was located several miles up a poor road away from the village. It was noted the location of the hub was still to be determined, but economic viability would undoubtedly be a factor in that decision.
5. It was noted that the hub was unlikely to compete with local businesses such as cafes, as the experience elsewhere suggested that they were each dealing with slightly different market segments. It was possible that local businesses would gain some spin off benefits – clearly these could not be guaranteed, but again, experience elsewhere (notably Laggan Wolftrax) suggested this was the case.
6. Agreement to the CNPA funding of £50k was agreed subject to the following conditions:
 - a) In seeking an operator for the hub, local businesses were made aware and were given the opportunity to bid for the franchise.
 - b) A business plan is in place.
 - c) The hub includes some interpretation of the local area, and information of what is available in the village.
 - d) The rest of the funding package is secured.

{note: This decision will need to be ratified in the minutes of the next Finance Cttee).