

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY FINANCE COMMITTEE

FOR DECISION

Title: CONTINUING CNPA COMMITMENT TO DELIVERY OF A TRAINING ROLE IN THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK.

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Purpose

To give an indicative funding allocation for future years to enable officers to develop a detailed project proposal in negotiation with partners.

Recommendations

That the Committee formally approve commitment of £80,000 per year for the next three years (1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013) to allow development of a training project which delivers the themes and principles agreed by Board and which will be brought back to Board for final approval.

Executive Summary

- a) The current funding package for the Land Based Business Training (LBBT) and Cairngorms Awareness and Pride (CAP) projects is drawing to a close.
 - b) A Board paper (22 January 2010) agreed principles and themes by which a training role may be taken forward subject to the availability of resources.
 - c) A project is outlined in broad terms with the detail to be worked up in line with agreed themes and principles and in discussion with potential match funders and stakeholders.
 - d) CNPA commitment of £80,000 per year for 3 years is sought so that match funders can be approached from a position of certainty on CNPA commitment.
 - e) Following Finance Committee we expect to bring a paper with more on the scope of the project back to Board for formal approval of expenditure (likely May 2010).
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Background

Land Based Business Training project

1. The LBBT was established in 2004 to
 - a) Support land based businesses to grow and operate more sustainably
 - b) To enable those businesses to contribute more effectively to the delivery of the statutory aims of the National Park.

2. Between 2004 and 2008 the LBBT
 - a) Supported training for 3,410 people in and around the National Park
 - b) Invested £950k in training, 45% of that sum from CNPA matched with a variety of funding sources, most recently European Social Fund and LEADER.
 - c) Delivered a large number of public benefit courses (PBC), initiated and delivered by CNPA to address issues and gaps where training was not otherwise delivered, for example a course on Blue Tongue and a Capercaillie conference.

Cairngorms Awareness and Pride Project

3. The CAP was established following a 2005 Board paper to
 - a) Offer training to the wider community that delivers the aims of the Park
 - b) Encourage beneficiaries to learn about the Park

4. In 2007 and 2008 the CAP
 - a) Provided training to 544 people
 - b) Invested £54k (excluding staff costs) in the training, 45% of that sum from CNPA matched with LEADER.

5. The aggregate spend on training by the two training projects now exceeds £1 million, much of which is invested in relatively locally based training companies so giving economic benefits beyond the training received by Land Based Businesses.

6. The projects are currently delivered by a full time Project Manager and a 0.6 full time equivalent, LBBT Support Officer. Multiple project evaluations over the project life time have praised the work of the project and the positive effect it is having in the Park.

7. Amongst previous papers referring to the training projects is the Finance Committee Paper of 16 May 2008 which secured funding for the projects until December 2010.

Current Funding Structure

8. In recent years the CNPA commitment to the project has been approximately £80k per year. The project has used this money to match with other funders to deliver 3

projects, the structure shown in Table 1. Additionally, in all three projects there is contribution from training beneficiaries. The consequence of this structure is that (internally) we run three separate projects with distinct paperwork and processes. This creates an administrative workload, not least in terms of drawing down grant on the different timelines that arise from each funder having different financial year end. We ensure that our stakeholders are not inconvenienced by this structure.

Table 1: Structure of Current Funding.

Project	West (Highland Council area)	East (Rest of Park)
Land Based Business Training Project	ESF CNPA 50% support offered to beneficiaries	LEADER+ CNPA 45% support offered to beneficiaries
Whole Park		
Cairngorms Awareness and Pride	LEADER+ CNPA	

9. Current funding support from LEADER ends December 31st 2010. Current funding support from ESF ends February 28th 2011. For practical purposes we plan a project to commence January 1st 2011, subject to accessing funds.

The Future

10. Any new project must deliver on the National Park aims and the vision and objectives of the National Park Plan. The Board (22 January 2010) agreed that any future training role will be guided by a number of principles and themes. These are annexed for ease of reference.
11. Administratively it would be simpler to manage one project than three. This would save significant staff time especially for the LBBT Support Officer and consequently allow a greater level of contact with project stakeholders including trainers, beneficiaries and others. This implies a preference for one scheme, one funding partner, across the Park, including the area in Highland Perthshire to join the Park.
12. The current European structural funds programme ends December 31st 2013. At this time it is unclear what if any, European resources will be available in the Cairngorms beyond the end of the current programme. For planning purposes, in terms of European funding this gives a maximum three year window.

The Proposed Project (1 Jan 2011 – 31 Dec 2013)

13. The project outlined below is at this stage a proposal built around the themes and working to the principles agreed by Board, January 2010. The size of the project and outcomes delivered will be determined by the money we secure; increased resource will allow increased delivery. In principle we plan the work shown below, detail will be worked up in discussion with potential funders and through completion of the application process.

14. Delivery of training
 - a) We will offer training to businesses and communities around the themes agreed by Board that nobody else is delivering
 - b) We will focus on land based businesses and also broaden the scope to include other businesses in line with the themes agreed by Board.
 - c) We will work with partners so that any training they deliver recognises the Park and contributes to the achievement of the Park aims.
 - d) We will work with partners to trial programmes of training, bringing together subjects and/or audiences that are not traditionally linked eg Continuing Professional Development for outdoor professionals marketed to rangers, outdoor instructors, gamekeepers and ghillies.

15. Coordination of training
 - a) We will continue to support training for land based business, responsive to their needs. This support will match the themes agreed by Board therefore financial support will no longer be available from CNPA for first aid, IT, administration and other generic skills. These are areas where there is a well established network of provision and/or financial support.
 - b) We will bring people from organisations interested in training in the Park together as an occasional group to work toward development of a training culture in the Park.
 - c) We will work with Learning Resource Centres and others to promote Individual Learning Accounts.
 - d) We will work with partners to establish a signposting service for businesses in the Park, enabling them to access the training they seek both by identifying trainers and by indicating potential funding sources.

16. The project to date has effectively secured funding over a number of years and through a number of changes in funding environment. Beyond the end of the current European Structural funds programme that is not secure. So the future project will work toward continuation arrangements which will include
 - a) Investigation of the advantages and disadvantages and potential development of an independent Trust with ability to carry a training role forward. If appropriate, this to be established to allow applications for funding so that work carries on beyond 2013 without a break.
 - b) Creation of a 'Cairngorms training stakeholder group' to advise on the future of training in the Cairngorms.

Future CNPA Commitment

17. CNPA commitment to the LBBT/CAP projects in recent years has been approximately £80,000 per year. This has been matched with other funders to maximise delivery and allowed us to be relatively generous in our financial support for training and pro-active delivery of courses. For example we currently offer 50% support to land managers in the ESF area toward their training costs and a slightly lower 45% support to land managers in other parts of the Park (the different percentages match the percentage support from funders in different areas).

18. In 2008, the last full year for which figures are available, we supported 686 people (190 businesses) through the LBBT an additional 248 people attended 15 CAP

courses. We also delivered 19 public benefit courses, attended by 519 people, topics included ethical enterprise, converting to organic farming and 8 events preparing for launch of the SRDP. In total in 2008 we filled 1,453 training spaces. (Note, some individuals return several times to events).

19. The draft Cairngorms National Park Economic Baseline Review identifies a labour force of 9,000 people in the National Park. The LBBT and CAP projects are offering training opportunities to a significant proportion of the working age population in the Park.
20. Funding below current levels of CNPA support would affect the ability to reach such a large proportion of the working population in the Park and inevitably require further consideration of training priorities and delivery mechanism.

Recommendation

21. It is recommended that Finance Committee approve funding of £80,000 per year for the next 3 years to enable a training role that, subject to securing match funding aims to offer 1,450 training places per year and delivers against the themes and principles agreed by Board.

Next Steps

22. We will work up more detailed project proposals to match any CNPA commitment with other sources which might include
 - a) European funding streams, subject to fit with aims/objectives and ability to meet application requirements and deadlines. Realistically closing dates for applications to European funding sources other than ESF and LEADER, are too soon for satisfactory application in the current year.
 - b) Charitable Trusts, eg Esmee Fairburn Charitable Trust. (Note: CNPA are unlikely to get a grant from the main fund of the Esmee Fairburn Charitable Trust whilst the Rare Plants Project, funded from this source is active ie for the next three years.).
23. In the case of the current funders
 - a) ESF have *informally* indicated a willingness to continue funding the project (LBBT in the West of the Park) without significant change.
 - b) LEADER have suggested that some level of change is required to both funded projects (LBBT in the East of the Park and CAP) to allow access to future funds.
24. After discussion at Finance Committee a paper will be taken back to Board which will include more detail on the proposed project and seek formal approval of the expenditure.

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Annex 1
Principles and Themes for a future training role for CNPA as discussed at Board 22 January 2010.

(Wording as in the paper that went to Board).

Principles

- a) CNPA should focus on adding value to the training activity provided by others linking it more clearly to the priorities for action within the Park Plan and the special management needs of the National Park;
- b) CNPA's role should generally focus on acting as a broker for training, bringing together appropriate expertise and beneficiaries and signposting and promoting training events delivered by others (that contribute to the aims of the National Park) rather than trying to provide training directly.
- c) Where there is a gap existing provision (particularly in the identified themes in **Table 1**) the CNPA should take a proactive lead role in ensuring the appropriate skills development and training is delivered.
- d) There should continue to be significant emphasis in the development of skills and learning on the needs of the land-based businesses in the Park.
- e) CNPA should take steps to develop more effective relationships with public sector agencies involved in training provision: to make best use of resources, minimise duplication and identify gaps in the skills market more effectively.
- f) CNPA should ensure all training is readily available to the groups that can make most impact in delivering actions within the Park Plan, and that proper support measures are put in place to minimise any barriers to uptake (timing, childcare, location, etc.)
- g) CNPA should try to ensure that all training taking place in the National Park is placed in the context of the National Park and that opportunities to deliver key messages about the significance of the Park are highlighted.
- h) Training events should be designed to maximise other more intangible benefits that have proved invaluable in the past: (e.g. networking opportunities, bringing diverse and sometimes conflicting groups together to work on specific challenges, creating ambassadors for the National Park, etc.).

Key Training Theme	Scope	Key Audiences
1. Sustainability and Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Promote adaptation for climate change e.g. new woodlands, habitat connectivity, flood management. b) Waste Management: e.g. composting and recycling. c) Energy efficiency and renewable energy generation e.g. energy mapping and insulation projects. d) Renewable energy e.g. support for supply side accreditation training. e) Low carbon land management. e.g.” Farming for a Better Climate”, renewables and wood fuel. f) Promoting sustainable travel e.g. through path networks and community-based transport schemes g) Improvement of environmental performance for businesses. h) Local food and drink production and allotments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Land based businesses b) Businesses (tourism and non tourism) c) Communities within the Park (geographical, of interest and identity i.e. young people)
2. A Special Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The special qualities of the National Park and their land management requirements e.g. biodiversity, cultural heritage etc. b) Connecting people with place: e.g. the natural environment, iconic wildlife and the cultural heritage. c) Linking businesses, land managers and communities together around the identity of the Park and its special qualities. Developing appropriate leadership and management skills to do that. d) Identifying future research needs and sharing research results with practitioners [potential link to the Knowledge Transfer Partnership currently being led by UHI CMS] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Land based businesses b) Businesses (tourism and non tourism) c) Communities within the Park (geographical ,of interest and identity)
3. Respect the Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Programmes of activity for people interacting with visitors and recreational users to the Park to encourage messages of appropriate and responsible behaviour in relation to land management activities and environmental interests b) Scottish Outdoor Access Code, Leave no trace, etc c) Getting the best out of the Planning system in the Park. d) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) land-based businesses, activity providers and countryside managers b) communities within the Park

4. Park Aware programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) The development of a “Park Aware” programme is already being developed by the Cairngorms Business Partnership, funded by CNPA and others.b) The intention is to pull together the business-focused work on how to maximise the benefits of being part of the National Park. This will review past work such as the Cairngorms Connections courses and customer care training provided for the tourism industry and develop fresh proposals.c) Once available these proposals could form part of future training project to be delivered by and for businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Land based businessesb) Businesses (tourism and non tourism)c) Communities within the Park (geographical, of interest and identity i.e. young people)
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