

**MINUTES of MEETING of the  
FINANCE COMMITTEE of**

**THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY  
held at Duke of Gordon Hotel, Kingussie  
on 19 February 2010 at 9.00am**

**Present:**

Eleanor Mackintosh (Chair)	Mary McCafferty
Dave Fallows	Richard Stroud
David Green	

**In Attendance:**

Jane Hope, Chief Executive  
David Cameron, Head of Corporate Services  
Alistair Highet, Finance Manager  
Claire Ross, Education and Inclusion Manager  
Hamish Trench, Head of Heritage and Land Management

**Apologies**

None

**Welcome and Apologies**

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Minutes of Meeting 30 October 2009**

2. The minutes of the meeting were agreed without amendment.

**Matters Arising**

3. None.

**Cairngorms Business Partnership – Progress Report (Paper 1)**

4. Hamish Trench introduced the paper which reported to the Finance Committee on the development of the Cairngorms Business Partnership, the delivery of 2009/10 projects and funding, and an outline of an Operational Plan for 2010/11. Alan Rankin and Sandra Middleton gave a presentation on behalf of the Cairngorms Business Partnership setting out the progress made on delivery during the current year.
5. The Committee noted the changes to the funding packet as originally conceived due to changes in the CBP Partners and Funders. They noted that no additional funding from the CNPA was required, but that priorities had been reordered to ensure that the

marketing strategy and visitor website would be delivered within the current year. The business barometer, business conference, and customer feedback were all ongoing or delivered; the Park Aware programme was delayed until 2010/11.

6. The Committee also noted that the Marketing Strategy would be delayed slightly in order to align its timing with the development of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy which was required for the renewal of the Sustainable Tourism Charter for the Park. The intention was to have the Marketing Strategy completed by autumn 2010. The web portal was essential and would be delivered by the spring of 2010.
7. The Committee noted at paragraphs 16, 17 and 18 that there were likely to be a number of priority areas in which the CNPA would seek to deliver outcomes in the National Park Plan through the CBP, and to which funding could be directed. The CNPA would continue to support the development of the CBP through the loan of a member of staff for at least the first half of the following financial year. Further discussions were taking place on the detail of what the CBP would deliver. The Finance Committee were therefore asked to approve the broad principles for 2010/11 funding rather than take a decision on specific outputs or value at this stage.
8. **The Finance Committee noted with approval the development of the Cairngorms Business Partnership to date; delivery of 2009/10 projects; and the broad principles for funding in 2010/11. It also noted that a paper would be brought to the Board in March for approval of funding for 2010/11, and the continuing partnership with the CBP.**

### **Continuing CNPA Commitment to Delivery of a Training Role in the Cairngorms National Park (Paper 2)**

9. Claire Ross introduced the paper which followed the Board paper of 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2010 seeking agreement to the principles and themes under which a training role would be taken forward subject to the availability of resources. The current paper before the Committee sought approval for commitment of £80,000 per year for the next three years (1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013) to allow staff scope to secure partnership funding for a training programme within the Cairngorms National Park, building on the highly successful Land Based Business Training Project for which current funding arrangements were about to draw to a close. The intention was that the funding would be used shrewdly to maximise the funding that could be attracted into the project; final approval would be sought when the complete package had been put together.
10. **The Committee gave approval for staff to negotiate the complete funding package on the basis of CNPA funding of £80,000 per year for three years so that match funders could be approached from a position of certainty on CNPA commitment. A paper would be brought back to the full Board in May with a fully worked up proposal.**

### **2010/11 Budget and Operational Plan (Paper 3)**

11. David Cameron introduced the paper which sought approval to budget figures for the 2010/11 budget and operational plan prior to submission of the Authority's Operational Plan for the coming year to the Board in March 2010. It was noted that the paper assumed a standstill total income, but this was still to be confirmed from the Scottish Government around March. The plan showed efficiency savings from core costs which enabled the Operational Plan spend to go up slightly compared with 2009/10.
12. Several points were noted in discussion:
- a) An electric pool car was being purchased with additional capital offered at the yearend by the Scottish Government;
  - b) It was noted there would be some additional costs of the incorporation of Perth and Kinross into the National Park on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October. The one-off costs, as well as the recurring costs, had been notified to the Scottish Government previously, and this would be reiterated.
  - c) In the Operational Plan work on affordable housing was brigaded with the work on the Local Plan. As a result, this presentation made it appear as if the CNPA had greatly reduced its effort on affordable housing in 2010/11, whereas in practice this simply reflected the huge amount of expenditure on the Local Plan work in 2009/10. It was agreed this presentation would be reconsidered prior to a paper going to the Board in March.
  - d) A paper on sharing services with Loch Lomond and the Trossachs had been presented to the Board the previous May. A further paper would be brought forward on an annual basis.
  - e) The practice of over programming for the Operational Plan had now decreased as the organisation became more experienced in planning and spending its budget.

#### **National Park Authority's Joint Working: Memorandum of Understanding (Paper 4)**

13. David Cameron presented the paper which sought the approval of the Finance Committee to a Memorandum of Understanding with the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority covering the programme of development and delivery of joint services and policies between the two authorities. The paper fulfilled the previous undertaking, following the Board's approval to further work on sharing services with the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Park Authority in May 2009. It was noted that the main effort concentrated on the sharing of Corporate Services; if there were to be shared work on policy areas, approval of the Board would be sought.

#### **Approval of Expenditure of Deeside/Donside Development Project 2010/2013: Community Action Planning (Paper 5)**

14. Claire Ross introduced the paper which sought approval to commit CNPA expenditure for the Deeside/Donside Development Project. The commitment was for £15,000 per annum for each of the years 2010/11 to 2012/13. The Mar area within the Park wished to build on the success of their Community Actions Plan "Ballater: One Voice Our Future" and had submitted a three year project proposal to leader that brought

together resources from the voluntary and community sector: Ballater Royal Deeside Ltd, Mar Area Partnership, the CNPA, LEADER, and Aberdeenshire Council.

15. It was noted this type of project was an important way of delivering on the Scottish Government Outcome No 11. It was noted that the project had no partnership funding from NHS or Scottish Enterprise. The point was made that individual projects that emerged from this development project could still engage NHS and Scottish Enterprise funds. It was agreed these partners should be approached accordingly.
16. **The Finance Committee approved the expenditure as proposed in the paper.**

### **Review of Ten Months Operational Plan 2009/2010 (Paper 6)**

17. Alistair Hight introduced the paper which presented a summary review of income and expenditure for the ten months of the Operational Plan to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2010, and a projection of the financial outcome for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. The projected outcome for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 was a small surplus of £13,000 which represented a positive variance of £59,000 against the revised budget for the year.
18. **The Finance Committee noted the paper with approval.**

### **Ratification of Expenditure Proposal: Glenlivet Mountain Bike Trail (Paper 7)**

19. David Cameron introduced the paper which sought ratification of the decision taken by the Finance Committee on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2010 to support the Glenlivet Mountain Bike Trail Project. The item had been considered on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2009, and Members were broadly content subject to two concerns on which further clarification was sought. This was given in writing by Bob Grant and oral confirmation sought on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January that Members of the Finance Committee were content. A note of that discussion was included in the papers for the meeting. The Committee duly ratified the decision to approve the expenditure as set out in paper 7.

### **Any Other Business**

20. David Cameron and Dave Fallows declared an interest in this item as Members of the Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust (COAT). The Finance Team sought approval from the Committee to make provision for up to £50,000 support to COAT if this were needed by the COAT at the end of the financial year, and if this was feasible as part of the cash flow management of the CNPA. Any such support to the COAT would be deducted off the following year's financial support and therefore would not represent any increase in total financial support from the CNPA.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

21. 14<sup>th</sup> May 2010, Grant Arms Hotel, Grantown-on-Spey.