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# CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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## FOR DECISION

**Title:** 2008/09 OPERATIONAL PLAN

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### **Purpose**

This paper presents the recommended 2008/09 Operational Plan and associated financial allocations, developed by the Management Team.

### **Recommendations**

The Board is requested to approve the proposed 2008/09 Operational Plan.

### **Executive Summary**

The proposed Operational Plan for 2008/09 sets out the range of activities and projects through which the Authority intends to begin delivery of the outcomes sought in the Corporate Plan for 2008/11.

The Operational Plan paper is presented to the Board at this time in order to allow members to ensure that the overall direction and scope of activity set out in the organisation's plans for 2008/09 are in keeping with the overarching vision set out in the Authority's Corporate Plan.

The detailed Operational Plan is set out at Annex 1 to this paper. The paper also highlights the key deliverables that are targeted over the course of 2008/09.

Detailed monitoring of the Authority's budgetary position and overall resource utilisation will continue to be undertaken by the Finance Committee.

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## 2008/09 PROPOSED OPERATIONAL PLAN

### Background

1. The Board is asked to consider the draft Corporate Plan for 2008 to 2011 elsewhere on the agenda for the current meeting.
2. This paper sets out the proposed Operational Plan for the first year of that Corporate Plan period, 2008/09, together with the associated financial allocations to activities developed by the Management Team.
3. The Operational Plan sets out the range of activities and projects through which the Authority intends to begin delivery of the outcomes sought in the Corporate Plan. In essence, the Operational Plan sets out the Authority's staff and financial resource "inputs". The Plan represents a key element of the Authority's financial management process, through which activity and project budgets are established and monitored. The Operational Plan also represents a core aspect of the Authority's performance management framework, acting as a key reference document during our staff appraisal process, in which staff targets for the year are established and training and development needs identified.
4. It is the Finance Committee's delegated responsibility to see that the Management Team has control of the finance and staff resource inputs in order to achieve the outputs and outcomes sought within the Corporate Plan. It is intended that the Finance Committee will consider the detail of these Operational Plan proposals at a meeting prior to the Board meeting on 20 March.
5. The Operational Plan paper is presented to the Board at this time in order to allow members to ensure that the overall direction and scope of activity set out in the organisation's plans for 2008/09 are in keeping with the overarching vision set out in the Authority's Corporate Plan.

### Operational Plan 2008/09

6. The detailed Operational Plan is set out at Annex 1 to this paper. The Operational Plan lists a relatively large range of activities which the Authority seeks to undertake over the course of the coming year, 2008/09, and where appropriate highlights proposed financial allocations to support the activities concerned.
7. The Operational Plan activities are structured in line with Part B of the Corporate Plan, setting out the Authority's contribution to the National Park Plan.
8. In many cases, there are no financial allocations identified against activities. Many of the Authority's activities involve staff time in working with other partner organisations and stakeholders.

9. Table One highlights the key deliverables that are targeted over the course of 2008/09 from the range of activities set out in the Operational Plan:

<b>Priority for Action</b>	<b>Key Deliverables in 2008/09</b>
Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Landscapes	Development of Landscape Management Framework Delivery of LBAP and associated biodiversity grants Projects to conserve priority species and habitats
Integrating Public Support for Land Management	Land Management Support Officers working to get the most out of SRDP for the Park Sustainable land management demonstrations Climate change mitigation and knowledge transfer
Sustainable Deer Management	Wild deer tourism project in partnership with WildScotland Review of Socio-economic data affecting deer management decisions Progress towards a more inclusive deer management planning process
Providing High Quality Opportunities for Outdoor Access	An adopted Core Path Plan in place Guidelines produced for managing outdoor access events Guidelines produced for path signage Glenmore off-road route completed
Making Tourism and Business More Sustainable	Voluntary Visitor Contribution Scheme(s): complete research Support programme established for improving business environmental performance New Cairngorms National Park LEADER programme established and funding committed in line with projections
Making Housing More Affordable and Sustainable	Local Plan modifications consulted upon and agreed Policies and allocations in the local plan that reflect the range of housing needed Sustainable design guide prepared and consulted on.
Raising Awareness and Understanding of the National Park	National Park web portal launched and working effectively Angus Glens Ranger Base open First TICs co-branded as National Park Tourist Information Centres Ranger Service using National Park Brand
Strategy and Communications	National Park Plan Annual Report produced Opinion former survey Climate change survey and promotional materials
Planning and Development Management	Local Plan modifications agreed and consulted on. Delivery of development management enforcement service Deliver Development Management determinations

Priority for Action	Key Deliverables in 2008/09
	within 3 months of call-in where necessary information is available
Corporate Services	Reduce carbon emissions from business travel Delivery 2% financial efficiency savings Implement Best Value and Equality Scheme improvements

## Operational Plan Monitoring

10. The Operational Plan for 2008/09 will continue to be monitored under the same processes as established for organisational performance monitoring over the past years. Quarterly updates on progress on the range of activities set out in Annex 1 will be produced. A number of key targets will also be drawn out from the key deliverables and milestones set out in the Corporate Plan monitoring framework for inclusion in the Authority's "balanced scorecard" organisational performance monitoring tool.

## Implications

### *Financial Implications*

11. The recommended Operational Plan for 2007/08 seeks to establish a balance in resource allocation across the Authority's relatively wide range of activities, while recognising that some aspects of delivery are inherently more resource intensive than others. The balance of financial allocation also reflects the anticipated availability of other potential funding partners for various aspects of activity.
12. In line with financial management policy agreed with the Finance Committee, the Operational Plan for 2008/09 is "over-programmed": i.e. the total of financial allocations assigned to activities is in excess of the amounts currently available to the Authority from Scottish Government grant and other income. This practice allows for slippage in the progress of projects with financial implications, which often arise through delays in agreement of multi-partner funding contributions and/or project delivery timescales. The practice also allows for initial financial allocations to be made to projects while third party income levels are uncertain.
13. The financial allocations shown within the Operational Plan do not in themselves give authority to officers to enter into expenditure commitments. This is controlled through the exercise of existing approved financial regulations and the scheme of financial delegation, and allows the budget to be managed over the course of the year in order to seek to maximise the Authority's use of available resources.
14. The key financial implications arising from the Operational Plan will continue to be considered by the Finance Committee.

*Presentational Implications*

15. The 2008/09 Operational Plan represents the first year of the Authority's delivery of the outcomes sought in its 2008 to 2011 Corporate Plan. The Operational Plan sets out the range of activities which the Authority intends to undertake, in conjunction with a wide range of partners and stakeholders, to contribute to achievement of the National Park Plan outcomes and, through that, to assist in the delivery of the Scottish Government's national outcomes.

**David Cameron**

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