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# CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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## MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING held at The Richmond Memorial Hall, Tomintoul on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2007 at 11.30am

### PRESENT

Eric Baird	Eleanor Mackintosh
Stuart Black	Anne MacLean
Geva Blackett	Alastair MacLennan
Duncan Bryden	William McKenna
Nonie Coulthard	Sandy Park
Basil Dunlop	Andrew Rafferty
Angus Gordon	David Selfridge
Lucy Grant	Sheena Slimon
David Green	Richard Stroud
Marcus Humphrey	Susan Walker
Bob Kinnaird	Ross Watson
Mary McCafferty	Bob Wilson

### In Attendance:

David Cameron	Elspeth Grant
Fiona Chalmers	Jane Hope
Pete Crane	Fran Scott
Murray Ferguson	Francoise van Buuren
Bob Grant	

### Apologies:

Bruce Luffman

### Minutes of Last Meeting – approval

1. Minute of the meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2007 were approved with one minor amendment:
  - a) Paragraph 10 should record the presence of Sally Dowden at the discussion as Chair of the Brand Management Group.The Minutes of the meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2007 were approved with one minor amendment:

- a) The recommendation at Paragraph 13 should say “by October 1<sup>st</sup>”.

## **Matters Arising**

2. Matters arising from the minutes of the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2007:
  - a) At paragraph 13 recording next steps with the Cairngorms Brand, it was noted that the future paper would be brought to the June meeting of the CNPA Board (15<sup>th</sup> June)
  - b) Paragraph 7d noted that the future Board involvement in climate change issues might most conveniently be done through the existing Audit Committee, which already included greening issues in its remit. The point was made that this involvement was done through the Audit Committee, but not as part of it, so that other members could attend if they wished.
3. Matters arising from the minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> March:
  - a) Paragraph 9r stated that the Local Outdoor Access Forum had “seen the strategy three times”. In response to a query it was noted that this referred to involvement at 3 different stages.
  - b) Paragraph 14 referred to the recent election of local Members. The conduct of the elections remained a matter for the Highland Council and they would review the process in due course. In the meantime, members were requested to send any observations about the elections to Jane Hope who would forward these on to the Returning Officer.
  - c) Paragraph 5e referred to further discussions with SNH to bring the Ranger Function at Mar Lodge into the same set of arrangements for the rest of the National Park. That discussion had been arranged for the 30<sup>th</sup> April, after the SNH consideration of the Management Agreement with NTS; it was felt that the issue of the Rangers could be dealt with separately.

## **Declarations of Interest**

4. Marcus Humphrey declared an interest in Paper 3 given his involvement with UDAT and concluded he should withdraw from this item. Eric Baird also declared an interest in part of the discussion on Paper 3 and concluded that he should withdraw from the discussion on the third recommendation of the paper. Bob Kinnaird declared an interest in Paper 1 as an employee of Cairngorm Mountain Ltd, but given that this was simply a discussion he concluded that he did not need to withdraw for this item.

## **The Role of the Cairngorms National Park Authority in Tackling Climate Change (Paper 1)**

5. Jane Hope introduced the session by explaining it would take the form of a number of short presentations by contributors from the private, public and voluntary sector followed by a discussion on those presentations and the issues raised in the paper presented by Fiona Chalmers. The Board had previously had a very brief discussion about the importance of climate change at its meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February in the context

of the following year's operational plan, and at that meeting a further discussion had been planned for the 23<sup>rd</sup> March. However, this had not been possible and today's discussion was arranged in its place. It was felt to be important that the Board had the opportunity to have this discussion and to hear background information from a range of experts before making any decisions on what might be the appropriate role and resource allocation for the Park Authority in respect of climate change matters.

6. The presentations given were as follows. The details are attached as an annex to these minutes, but in summary the presentations covered the following:

**Climate Change and the Natural Heritage of the Cairngorms (Debbie Greene, SNH)**

- a) By the 2020s North East Scotland is expected to be 1<sup>o</sup>C warmer with wetter winters and dryer summers. The 2050s will be 1.5<sup>o</sup>-2<sup>o</sup> warmer with correspondingly even wetter winters and dryer summers. These changes had been predicted for North East Scotland as a result of modelling work done by the UK Climate Impact Programme. The presentation set out some of the changes that might happen in the Cairngorms National Park as a result of this predicted climate change. For example, Scots Pine might be expected to "move" uphill; heather and red grouse likewise; more forest fires; more erosion of peat bogs; and the disappearance of iconic montane species such as snow bunting, mountain hares etc. In terms of a response to these likely changes to the natural heritage a number of things were suggested: the importance of providing good habitat networks to enable mobile species to adapt to changes; the importance of ensuring habitats and species are in good condition and robust to change; natural floodplain management.

**Carbon Foot printing (Alex Walker, Michael Shaw, Ecovillage Institute)**

- b) The next presentation considered the meaning of "carbon foot-printing". Currently observed changes in the climate are widely seen as being a result of increasing carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. Much of this results from the burning of fossil fuels. The term "carbon neutrality" refers to the act of making sure that we minimise the amount of carbon dioxide being released; in practice this means either using no fossil fuels, or increasing activities which offsets the production of carbon dioxide (in other words absorb carbon dioxide through planting trees for example). The current rough estimate of the carbon footprint of the Cairngorms National Park was the production of 160,000 tons of carbon dioxide per year (this excluded visitors). The recently published Stern Report had looked at how much of a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions was required in order to stabilise the atmosphere. It predicted a 55% reduction over the next twenty five years as a credible and plausible target to ameliorate climate change. To do this would require a reduction in energy usage, a reduction in use of fossil fuels, use of local organically produced food, and an increase in offsetting measures to absorb carbon dioxide. Heating, electricity, and transport were the major sources of CO<sub>2</sub> emission. The good news for the Cairngorms National Park area was that low average energy use was already feasible, and high levels of energy production through renewable sources was possible. There was interest in local food production. The challenges could be summed up as follows: heritage versus renewables; tourism versus travel; high heating costs; high transport costs;

and resistance to change. The strategy should be to establish a vision; conduct research on new technologies etc; analyse detailed energy usage within the Park (to see where the 55% reduction in carbon dioxide emission would come from); decide on practical actions and delivery vehicles; monitor and revise targets.

- c) If the vision for the Cairngorms National Park was a 55% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2030 (equivalent to the Stern Report), this could be achieved by the following:
  - i) 15% savings on heating emissions;
  - ii) 19% savings through delivering carbon neutral electricity generation;
  - iii) 13% savings on road and food transport;
  - iv) 8% other savings.

#### **Local Authorities Taking Action and Potential for Partnership Working (Roddie Mathieson, Aberdeenshire Council)**

- d) Roddie Mathieson was unfortunately unavailable but had forwarded a presentation which explained the finding of the scrutiny and audit committee of Aberdeenshire Council which had done an in-depth study on climate change and its implications for the area. There were two main conclusions:
  - i) Aberdeenshire Council undertook to work to becoming a carbon neutral authority by 2030; and
  - ii) Undertook to work with partners so that Aberdeenshire Council could become a carbon neutral area.
  - iii) The approach was very much about setting ambitious targets in order to unlock clever solutions; this was seen as a more effective approach than setting out detailed strategies. Aberdeenshire Council saw plenty of opportunity for working with partners including the CNPA. For example: on planning; the use of building standards and guidance; supporting community heating schemes by setting up examples of how one could get the supply side of this right; partnering research projects; setting targets and monitoring progress.

#### **Research and Policy – Climate Change Unit (Bill Slee, Macaulay Institute)**

- e) Much of the work of the Macaulay Institute was driven by the objectives of SEERAD who were encouraging work to find local solutions for global problems. There was now wide awareness of the issue of climate change, and what was needed was clear adaptive and mitigating actions given that no one was quite sure what to do in response to the current high profile being given to climate change. The Macaulay Institute were developing an approach based on the human dimension and the necessity to change behaviour as a response to climate change. The Institute was currently conducting a baseline study on the carbon footprint of the Cairngorms which would provide a baseline set of information as a basis for deciding on an approach to adapting to and mitigating climate change effects. The suggestion was that the Park Authority could reduce its carbon footprint as an organisation, as well as encouraging, cajoling and guiding the residents of the Park to do the same. A route map was needed to help people through the maze of possible responses to climate change and leadership was essential.

### **Inspiring Individual Action (Alan Smith, John Muir Award)**

- f) Picking up the theme of the previous presentation about the need to change people's behaviour, this presentation focused on techniques for doing this. The point was made that in order to change people's behaviour one needed to engage with them on an emotional level; it was not sufficient to simply rely on factual evidence. The role of the CNPA might well be to inspire people about the Cairngorms and encourage them to care for it; give people information on what they can do to help; and most importantly educate the young.

### **The Role of the CNPA (Fiona Chalmers)**

- g) Paper 1 highlighted the growing range, complexity and diversity of initiatives currently happening on the subject of climate change. It posed the question of whether the CNPA should play a role in aiming to harness, pull together, or coordinate those initiatives. The paper then proposed some ideas for new initiatives not currently specified in the National Park Plan. Finally it flagged up that if the CNPA was intending to play a greater role in respect of climate change and sustainable living, the question arose as to how much resource should it devote to this.

### 7. In discussion the following points were made:

- a) There was some discussion about the lack of clear information about the causes of the observed changes in climate. One of the presentations suggested there was no good information about wind speed in the Cairngorms despite this having been monitored for a number of decades. The suggestion that muirburn might be contributing to the build up of greenhouse gases (GHGs) was acknowledged as speculation. It was suggested that in the outside world there remained two distinct points of view as to the causes of the changing climate: those that felt Man was the cause, and those who felt that Man had relatively little impact compared with other causes.
- b) An increase in tick populations was suggested as a possible consequence of the changing climate.
- c) There were many new ideas for living more sustainably (e.g. wood fuel) but there remained a concern about whether or not these had been properly costed. The approach proposed by the Macaulay Institute was welcomed, based as it was on sound research.
- d) In changing people's behaviour it was important to look at the private sector and learn from the marketing and promotional techniques demonstrated there.
- e) It was important to focus on a clear set of practical actions for adaptation and mitigation, rather than continuing to produce strategies. The challenge was to get people to adopt more sustainable practices – this was about sensible good practice and good housekeeping, and did not require more and more results from more and more research.
- f) There were some contradictions – emissions from livestock had been identified as contributing to GHGs, but the same livestock were crucial to local food production.
- g) There was a bewildering array of possible actions and advice being given but when individuals wished to take practical action (for example replacing an oil-

fired boiler) clear unbiased advice was almost impossible to find. A one-stop-shop for advice was a priority.

- h) The suggestion on page 8 of the CNPA Paper no 1 was welcomed: this was the provision of a “portal” or “one-stop-shop” for communication and advice on climate change.
- i) The emphasis on young people and getting them actively engaged was important.
- j) People’s food buying behaviour tended to be to buy the cheapest. In changing people’s behaviour towards buying local produce it was important that this could be produced at a competitive price.
- k) Data was needed specifically for upland areas so that climate change could be monitored.
- l) It was important that the CNPA showed a lead beyond research and started to put practical actions in place. There were a number of strands to this:
  - i) Delivering the actions in the National Park Plan;
  - ii) Getting our own organisation in order;
  - iii) Beyond this making sure that information was made available;
  - iv) Being proactive in terms of what we expect from planning applications in terms of sustainable design;
  - v) A simple top ten list on how to live sustainably.
- m) There were some lessons to be learned from older buildings which tended to be positioned to take advantage of the weather (for example solar gain).
- n) It was important to look at the whole picture, and in particular to do a life cycle analysis when looking at minimising carbon footprint. For example food that was produced locally but was transported out of the area for processing and then brought back into the region was clearly contributing to a much higher footprint than at first might be concluded from the heading “locally produced food”.
- o) Tourists presented a huge opportunity, given that they were generally interested in the quality of the environment (the main reason given for them visiting the Cairngorms). As the climate changed, the mountains would become an even more important area and it was a huge responsibility to look after them.
- p) The key to changing attitudes and behaviour was money. The message needed to be conveyed that one can save money in the long term by adopting some of the ideas on more sustainable living. It was particularly important that builders received good and up to date information on what was possible so that they could then advise their clients. A one-stop-shop approach would be most welcome.
- q) Taking the long term view, it was educating young people that mattered. It was not money but education that changed behaviour and attitude. The opportunity was there to draw information together at a local level and build that knowledge into the curriculum at schools.
- r) Some difficult decisions would undoubtedly arise and a balanced view needed to be taken. Wind farms and the siting of these were a good example. Another local example was the possibility of a biomass plant – while this might sound superficially attractive, it would mean a lorry every 20 minutes 7 days a week on the local roads.
- s) A strong degree of realism was necessary in terms of what the CNPA could achieve given its small budget. Many things were already being done through

the National Park Plan and by partners; the implications for staff resources needed careful thought.

- t) Youth groups and farms were a good target for information on climate change. People running B&Bs and hotels also were potentially very influential for tourists.
8. In summing up the Convener noted that everyone had to take some responsibility for the National Park. He summarised four main points emerging from the discussion:
    - a) A one-stop-shop providing better and more accessible information;
    - b) Educating young people;
    - c) Making the business case for more sustainable practices;
    - d) Making clear in advance of planning applications what we as a Planning Authority expected in terms of sustainable design.
  9. The Convener thanked everyone for their contributions. He noted that in taking this important area of work forward it was important that organisations did not duplicate each other and that the substantial work already in hand with local authorities and others was recognised.

## **Action**

- 10. A further paper for decision would be brought to the CNPA Board in June with the proposal for the CNPA's role in respect of climate change.**

## **Developing Equality Schemes for the CNPA (Paper 2)**

11. Claire Ross, Elspeth Grant, and Fran Scott introduced the paper which highlighted the CNPA's statutory obligations to prepare equality schemes for disability, race and gender. It was noted that in recent years there had been a shift towards inequality issues becoming the responsibility of organisations. Schemes were required to be revised every three years and entailed considerable work. But they had to be living documents. The paper in front of the Board was a combined effort of various groups of staff across the organisation as well as Board Members and the inclusive Cairngorms Group. It was recommended that the Board agree in due course that the CNPA should produce one generic equalities document, covering all equality strands. In the meantime it was recommended that the Board endorse the CNPA's Disability Equality Scheme and agree that in future the Staffing and Recruitment Committee should consider the detail of draft scheme(s) before they are presented to the Board for final endorsement.
12. In discussion the following points were made:
  - a) The paper was commended – it represented a lot of work and a very thorough scheme as the end point.
  - b) Annex 1 included a number of actions. It was noted there were a number of references in these to staff, and that these should also include a reference to Board Members.
  - c) It was important that the organisations the CNPA worked with were also signed up to similar equality schemes and actions. The Highland Council were

commended for making sure that during the recent National Park elections provision was made for blind voters.

- d) Aim 5 had a number of actions which flowed from the National Standards for Community Engagement. These carried cost implications. The scheme should not promise that it would deliver if the full costs would be unreasonably high and therefore unlikely to be met. It would be more realistic to modify some of the wording to say “as far as possible within financial constraints”.
- e) It was noted that the first draft of the current scheme was produced in December following consultation. There had been little assistance as to what the scheme should look like and CNPA was now revising the scheme that had been prepared in December.
- f) The financial implications of developing, implementing and reviewing the equality scheme was set out at paragraph 25 and were noted. One way of reducing the resource input might be to work more closely with local authorities and other public bodies to ensure a degree of uniformity as well as reducing duplication of effort. It was noted in this respect that the CNPA was required to have its own scheme even though it could properly liaise with local authorities and others in its preparation.
- g) The wording of Aim 6 of the annex was noted as being “...even when that involves disabled people more favourably than others.” It was clarified that this was not encouraging overt positive discrimination which was not legal. It was conveying the notion that if in order to allow someone to work for you, you have to do more to facilitate that, then that was what was required. The wording was in any event part of the legislation.
- h) The unified Equalities document was sensible. It was noted that the CNPA was quite well advanced on disability awareness; all members had been given disability awareness training, and the Park Authority took its meetings around the area to the people rather than vice versa.

**13. The Board agreed the recommendations of the paper as follows:**

- a) **Agreed that, in due course, the CNPA produce one generic equalities document covering all equality strands, with each section distinct and specific covering all parts of the CNPA’s statutory duties.**
- b) **Noted the actions required, including impact assessment and monitoring of the scheme(s), and endorse the CNPA’s Disability Equality Scheme.**
- c) **Agreed that the Staffing and Recruitment Committee consider the detail of the draft Scheme(s) before they are presented to the Board for final endorsement.**

**Developing a Park-Wide Trust for the National Park (Paper 3)**

*Marcus Humphrey left the meeting.*

- 14. Bob Grant, David Cameron, and Murray Ferguson introduced the paper which sought approval in principle for the development of a Trust for the National Park which would in its first few years carry forward a programme of work focussed on providing opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoor environment and the special qualities of the National Park. As an interim measure the paper also sought approval for funding a programme of work in the Eastern Cairngorms which would be delivered by the Upper



Deeside Access Trust. It was noted that previous discussions with the Board had indicated that a park-wide trust appeared to be the best vehicle for delivering elements of the Outdoor Access Strategy and the National Park Plan. Unfortunately a meeting with partners (referred to in Paragraph 3 of the paper) had been postponed to the 30<sup>th</sup> April so the paper was not able to indicate the degree of partner support and views for the Trust proposal. So the paper before the Board was seeking approval in principle for the establishment of a Park-wide Trust subject to the expression of sufficient partnership support and submission of a detailed business case.

15. In discussion on recommendations a) and b) the following points were made:

- a) It was eminently sensible to have the option of working with community based initiatives as this allowed ideas to develop locally. There was some discussion about the governance of the Trust and private sector involvement. The detail on governance and membership would come out of partner discussions still to be held. Funding was likely to come from the public sector but there may well be projects on private estates and it would make sense to have representatives of the private landowners on the board. On powers the advice was that the Articles of Association should be made as wide as possible at the start so that trustees could consider in due course whether or not it was appropriate to use these. For example, it may be that powers included the ability to hold assets but it would be for Trustees to decide whether that power was ever used. There was general agreement that the openness and accessibility which had been a driving principle of the CNPA should be carried through to the Trust.
- b) The CNPA Board would expect to have a number of trustees nominated by the Board but these would be in the minority if the Trust were to be a Charity Limited by Guarantee. They would be full members with voting rights. The Articles of Association would set out what the organisation was able to do and would set the broad parameters. In practice these would be influenced by existing strategies and policies, for example, linkages and references to the National Park Plan, Outdoor Access Strategy, and the Core Path Plan. Even with the Trust acting remotely from the CNPA, the CNPA would still have significant influence via the allocation of resources to the Trust. In practice the working relationship would be through a combination of the Articles of Association, references to existing strategies, and agreement to offer funding for specific programmes of work. It had to be accepted that the overall management of the Trust would be a matter for the Trustees and not the CNPA.
- c) The Articles of Association would set out how the Trust would operate. For example, one would expect to build in that the Trust would have due regard for best value etc. in procuring the specific projects set out in its work plan. The Trust would be expected to develop a work plan and a business plan and then come to funding partners seeking funding. The procurement of services would therefore be by the Trust, not by the CNPA.
- d) While the focus of the Trust would be inevitably on the Park area there might need to be some flexibility in terms of working just outside the Park. Sometimes this would be advantageous but care would be needed to ensure that the focus of the Trust was not lost through too wide an area remit. Soundings on this matter would be taken from partners at the meeting to be held later in April.

- e) Before building paths, it was important to have a maintenance programme in place. While sound in theory, in practice this was quite difficult. No public agency had funding guaranteed beyond three years and it would always be difficult to get a commitment a long way ahead. In reality one could usually only gain a capital commitment to build a path and providing for the maintenance had to be done separately. The advantage of developing a Park-wide Trust was that this gave greater flexibility to raise and hold funds for precisely this sort of long term maintenance. The aspiration of putting in place maintenance programmes along side capital funding was a good one but there was no easy way forward.
- f) The CNPA would expect all its funding for paths to be channelled through the Trust. The only item outside of that would be support to the Speyside Way. A discussion was still to be held with partners, but if the scope of the Trust was drawn too tightly there would be no point in the Trust as the CNPA would be the only organisation with an interest. Therefore, the Trust needed to be broad enough in scope for a wide range of organisations to want to be part of it.
- g) The intention was to come back to the Board with a more detailed proposal following discussion with partners. While there was a limit as to how much detail this could go into, it would provide a skeleton of the Articles of Association and the expected composition of the Trust.
- h) The cooperation of the public sector and land managers was essential. Significant resources were potentially needed for the path network in the Park. There should be an expectation of funding from the CNPA diminishing over time with money increasingly coming from a wide range of funders.

16. Discussion moved on to recommendation c) and Eric Baird left the room for this part of the discussion which considered the CNPA funding contribution of £90,000 towards a work programme for 2007-08 of access improvements in and around the Upper Deeside Area.

17. In discussion the following points were made:

- a) It was noted that the contribution was in absolute terms almost the same as the previous year but as a percentage had increased. This was because ECAP was in its final year in 06-07 and a large amount of external funding was therefore contributing to path work in the Eastern Cairngorms – this had now finished. Projects had been scaled back because of the absence of Objective 3 funding; in addition there was no funding from Scottish Enterprise Grampian. This was disappointing and it was noted that Scottish Enterprise Grampian had recently announced one million pounds in the area for tourism development. Paths were a major contributor to the tourism experience. The Convener agreed that the message should be conveyed to Scottish Enterprise Grampian that the CNPA was disappointed with the decision to not invest further money into path work. A meeting with all the Enterprise Companies in the Park was taking place in May.
- b) In response to a question it was noted that the path work in question was undertaken by contractors who were well familiar with the requirements of all abilities paths. The majority of contractors were working to Paths for All standards. Members of the Local Outdoor Access Forum had recently expressed

interest in building closer links with Inclusive Cairngorms. It would be good to draw on collective experience of both groups in moving the work forwards.

- c) The work of UDAT was commended as playing an important contribution towards implementation of the National Park Plan.

**18. The Board agreed the recommendation of the paper as follows:**

- a) **Noted progress with the collection and analysis of the technical information required to develop and set up a Trust;**
- b) **Approved in principle the establishment of a Park-wide Trust, subject to the expression of sufficient partnership support and submission of a detailed business case; and**
- c) **Approved the CNPA funding contribution of £90,000 towards a work programme for 2007/08 of access improvements in and around the Upper Deeside area.**

**Action**

- 19. Further paper seeking a decision on establishment of a park-wide Trust, to be brought to the Board before end 2007**

**The John Muir Award in the Cairngorms National Park (Paper 4)**

20. Pete Crane and Claire Ross introduced the paper which summarised and reviewed the work undertaken in delivering the John Muir Award in the Cairngorms and made recommendations for the future delivery of the award. It was pointed out that the award had enabled a large number of children to engage with the environment who did not normally have that opportunity. It was suggested that the John Muir Award could help deliver two key outcomes in the National Park Plan: more opportunities for people to become practically involved in caring for the Park and its special qualities; and more opportunities to learn about and enjoy the Park and its special qualities especially for young people, people with disabilities and people on low incomes. The paper therefore recommended that the project should be continued subject to gaining financial support from partners.

21. In discussion the following points were made:

- a) The achievements of the project were recognised and applauded. The value of the project was not in doubt, but it was noted (as with the previous paper) that the contribution from the CNPA was increasing. Part of the answer was that as with many other projects, European Funding had dried up. In reality, the longer a project continued if it was successful, the more difficult it was to get additional support. But given that the project appeared to meet a lot of other organisations' agendas, it ought to follow that partners would co-fund the project. Ultimately for the project to be sustainable it needed to be embedded in other organisations as a good educational tool.
- b) This project had a vast range of potential clients and so far it had only scratched the surface so it was important to have an officer dedicated to working on this over a number of years. Having said that the intention should be to embed the award as a tool into the work of local authorities. Further discussion would be an

important element of the work of the post in order to achieve this. It was suggested therefore that support should be continued (in financial terms) in the medium term but not in perpetuity.

- c) It was noted that after three years reference to the John Muir Award was appearing in a job description for a local school's post.
- d) It was important when looking at the cost of the post and the project to recognise that the award was primarily delivered by partners and that these contributions did not appear in the funding figures. In other words the post had a high gearing effect.
- e) The junior rangers scheme proposed is a new area of development for the project that is intended to encourage young people to become ambassadors for the National Park. Linking the John Muir Award to a junior ranger scheme is an area of innovative work with young people. The potential for this development to attract additional funding should be further investigated.

**22. The Board agreed the recommendations of the paper as follows:**

- a) **Noted the achievements of the John Muir Award project to date in promoting experiences of wildness in the Cairngorms and connecting people to the National Park; and**
- b) **Approved in principle an extension to the project, as described in Option 2 (explicitly linking Award activity to actions in the National Park Plan and the development of Junior Rangers), subject to sufficient financial support from partners and detailed approval of spending plans by the Finance Committee.**

**National Park Plan Adoption and Implementation (Paper 5)**

*Eric Baird returned; Nonie Coulthard and Lucy Grant left the meeting.*

23. Jane Hope and Francoise van Buuren introduced the paper which sought the formal adoption of the Cairngorms National Park Plan and sought agreement for the proposed implementation mechanisms and next steps.

24. In discussion the following points were made:

- a) It was noted that the strategy group comprised all the public sector partners and the annual meeting was likely to contain an element of each public sector organisation accounting to their peers for delivery.
- b) The idea that the Advisory Forums would look across all the priorities for action was welcome – that sort of read-across was essential. It was noted that a template had been prepared for reporting back; work was still continuing with the Macaulay Institute to develop the Health Indicators for monitoring real change. These would be taken to the strategy group later in the year.
- c) The delivery teams were to be focused on “getting things done”. They needed to be flexible and recognise that one may need different people for different teams at different times.
- d) The delivery teams needed to ensure they delivered some “quick wins”.
- e) The Advisory Forums that currently existed would evolve into the new forums. Members who were interested in sitting on the new forums should let Jane Hope

know so that the Board can see the overall picture. The suggestion was that advisory forums should elect their own Chair on an annual basis.

**25. The Board agreed the recommendations of the paper as follows:**

- a) **Formally adopted the Park Plan, noting that the Park Authority is required to review the Park Plan by 2012, and that Scottish Ministers and public bodies must, in exercising functions so far as affecting a National Park, have regard to the National Park Plan as adopted.**
- b) **Agreed the arrangements for focusing the collective efforts of all partners on the delivery of the Plan (paragraphs 9 to 24), and enabling the CNPA to exercise its role of ensuring the collective and coordinated delivery of the Park's aims.**

**Action**

- 26. Members to let Jane Hope know if they wished to sit on a particular Advisory Forum.**

**AOCB**

27. Andrew Harper reported that the current Leader + programme was due to end at the end of calendar year 2007. For a while SEERAD had looked at basing future Leader funding on Community Planning Partnership boundaries but had now accepted the case in principle for the National Park to continue to act as a Leader + area in its own right. The timescale for getting the new arrangement up and running was tight, and as a result officials might need to submit proposals without Board approval. It was proposed, and accepted that these should be agreed with the Convener prior to submission to SEERAD. It was also noted that the current Chair of the Cairngorms LAG (Peter MacKay) was stepping down and on an interim basis the Board noted that it was content for Andrew Harper to continue to chair the meetings. It was noted that Peter MacKay had put in a terrific amount of work and been very supportive to the LAG and the notion that this should continue on a Cairngorms National Park basis.

**Date of Next Meeting**

28. 15<sup>th</sup> June 2007 in the Panmure Arms Hotel, Edzell.