

Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum

Minute of the fifty first meeting

The Deeside Inn, Ballater

Tuesday the 21st of November 2018

I. Welcome

- 1.1. EB welcomed everyone to the meeting and to Ballater as it has been a while since the LOAF met in Deeside.

Forum Members in Attendance

Eric Baird (Convenor)	Eleanor Mackintosh
John Grierson	Eilidh Scobbie
Trevor Thornley	

Others in attendance

Pete Crane (CNPA)	Adam Streeter-Smith (CNPA)
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2. Apologies

- 2.1. EB noted the following apologies:

Ruaridh Ormiston	Peter Mackay
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- 2.2 The following apologies were otherwise received:

Anne-Marie Nuttall	Nick Cole
Lynda Dodd	Neil Wilson

3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

- 3.1. The minutes were checked for accuracy with the following needing to be checked and amended:

- Paragraphs 15 & 22 appear to be incomplete:
- Eleanor Mackintosh to be recorded as Forum member not an “other”:
- Minutes need page numbers:
- Paragraph 29 needs a specific action point to be carried over to the next meeting.

- 3.2. AQSS raised that paragraph 30 implied further action on what is being done to promote core paths in the Park. Both PC and AQSS highlighted that core paths and rights of way are promoted through the means of the seventeen community path leaflets, two routes with easy access guides, e-route guides and the new Hill Tracks leaflet and the publications by partners such as Forestry Commission Scotland. All of which are available on the web. They stressed that the promotion of core paths isn't a top down approach being dictated by the Park Authority but driven by local need and by the need to meet the main visitor requirements of well promoted short walks. The wider path network is also promoted by private sector partners such as Walk Highlands. The CNPA are aware of the need to share more widely the information available but not create new leaflets or websites.
- 3.3. It is recognised that improvements could be made to the Park Authority webpages to promote the wider variety of path in and around the Park.
- 3.4. PC updated members on the Active Aviemore project stating that the next stage of the project is being developed which includes detailed designs and costings for improving active travel in and around the new hospital site.
- 3.5. PC also reported that funding had been secured subject to planning consent for short section of footway in Glenmore to link the beach area to the hayfield and also address the parking issues alongside the road.
- 3.6. PC reported that the CNPA Board had approved taking forward a “*visitor giving*” scheme. To start the work and test the model two bridge projects in Deeside and Strathspey, on private ground, are being proposed. PC highlighted that this is a challenging piece of work and not a remedy to the issue of long term funding for paths. He drew attention to the recent fundraising activities of the Mountains and People Project for Beinn a' Ghlo which only managed to raise £8000 despite UK national media coverage.
- 3.7. Finally PC thanked everyone who had been involved in the EuroParc Conference for all their hard work.

4. National Access Forum

- 4.1. EB highlighted that mountain biking has been discussed quite widely by the NAF at recent meetings and welcomed the national guidance which has now been written.

5. A9 Dualling Update- Project 11 Dalraddy to Slochd

- 5.1. PC introduced this item highlighting that since the last LOAF meeting a lot has happened. In summary both the CNPA, the communities affected and The Highland Council have objected to the proposals for the section and are awaiting a formal response from Transport Scotland. He thanked LOAF members for their input which was invaluable.

6. Format of CLOAF 2019 and beyond

- 6.1. PC introduced this item stating that recent experience has demonstrated that two meetings a year are about right and that a membership of 12 would seem to be the ideal amount, 12 would include a CNPA Board Member. Going forward it is proposed the spring meeting takes in a substantive site visit/external presentation element. There would also be tweaks to procedures such as the posting of minutes to make sure members are kept up to date.
- 6.2. EB thanked members for their involvement. As he was standing down it was agreed the EM stand in for a short period until a new chair is appointed.

7. Tread Lightly

- 7.1. AQSS introduced this paper highlighting that the exceptional hot and dry summer coupled with increasing visitor numbers and changes in recreational activities has necessitated the need to look at the “Tread Lightly” messages to ensure they remain relevant, engaging and informative whilst continuing to address the principle challenges faced in protecting the Parks special qualities. He highlighted that discussions with rangers have shown there is need to adopt the right tone and get the overarching message right which can then be related to site specific circumstances. He stated that dogs and fires should remain a key theme but sought advice from members on what other themes might be important.
- 7.2. In the discussion that followed it was highlighted that risk that ‘out of control dogs’ posed to livestock and sensitive species should not be played down and is a critical part of awareness raising. It was also agreed that the wider “leave no trace” style ethos needed to be incorporated into the messaging. It was also highlighted that many of the issues are seasonal so the messaging and campaign needs to be flexible enough to address these issues.

8. Casework Update

- 8.1. AQSS introduced this item drawing attention to cases that have been closed and those that are ongoing.
- 8.2. Members expressed an interest in the work being done to streamline to process around casework and asked that they be consulted when cases had been on the books so to speak for a period of 2 years or more.

9. Update and Forward Look

- 9.1. AQSS highlighted in this update the success of the Volunteer Ranger Project, especially the recent award given to two Volunteer Rangers for their work in saving a man's life.
- 9.2 AQSS also highlighted the success of Wee Walks Week and the desire to see it run again in 2019.

10.AOCB

- 10.1 PC thanked EB for his excellent work as CLOAF Convener and wished him well in his future endeavours.

11.Date of next meeting

- 11.1 TBC - DS to arrange dates with members.