

Cairngorms Equality Advisory Panel

26th April 2022

5:00pm – 6:30pm - Held virtually

Minutes

Present

Anita Howard	Becca Mayo
Bo Mansell	Donald Ross
Heather Earnshaw	Kevin Hutchens
Liliana Corrieri	Lina Payne
Linda Bamford	Peter Kennedy
Stuart Hall	Vanessa Altweck

Attending

Alan Smith	Anna Ronayne
Fiona McLean (Chair)	Kate Christie
Margo Paterson	Sjoerd Tel
Katherine Willing	Vicky Walker

1. Welcome

1.1. Fiona welcomed the panel, visitors, and speakers to the meeting.

2. Recap and Actions from previous Meeting on 29th March 2022

- 2.1. The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed on the basis that the changes suggested in email correspondence were made prior to them being published on the website.
- 2.2. The action log was reviewed.

3. Item 1: Scottish Youth Hostel Association – Margo Paterson

- 3.1. Margo Paterson, the CEO of the Scottish Youth Hostel Association (SYHA), discussed the challenges the SYHA had face during and following the pandemic. Margo also discussed ways in which the EAP and SYHA can work together in the future.

Panel Response

- 3.2. The panel discussed with Margo whether there were links between the ranger services in the park and the youth hostels. Margo explained that this was done on a local basis with managers of the hostels forming those links but if needed more detailed information could be sent on.
- 3.3. The panel discussed various SYHA properties and future refurbishment plans. Margo explained to the panel some of the challenges of legacy properties for creating more accessible properties but reaffirmed SYHA's commitment to this. The panel also discussed funding that the SYHA may be eligible for and some of examples of good practice. A separate individual meeting was suggested if the panel member felt comfortable with this.
- 3.4. The panel raised concerns that some organisations charge more for accessible accommodation. Margo explained that SYHA are working on making their properties more accessible and the challenges that this presents, however, SYHA are adamant that they will not charge more for these facilities.
- 3.5. The panel asked about affordability, particularly for low income, single bookings. Margo explained that the aim of SYHA is to offer as wide a variety of room options, as well as listen to guest feedback surrounding room configuration.
- 3.6. The panel discussed with Margo whether it would be a possibility to link local businesses to SYHA properties during the quieter seasons to help with accommodation for staff.
- 3.7. The panel also discussed transport to SYHA properties with Margo. Margo explained that they have tried to offer this as a service previously but at present this would be too operationally challenging.
- 3.8. The panel asked whether SYHA are still operating their explorer fund. Margo explained as this is self-funded it has not been advertised over Covid. Margo explained they are working on raising the funding needed for this before advertising this.

4. Item 2 Sustainable Transport Projects Overview for the Equalities Advisory Panel – Anna Ronayne and Sjoerd Tel

- 4.1. A panel member declared a conflict of interest due to funding for the project coming in part from Sustrans so did not contribute to the discussion.
- 4.2. Anna explained the projects and funding structures. Anna also discussed the main parts of the paper provided to the panel. The paper asked the panel the following questions:
 - Sense check of work to date – have we missed anything?
 - What would you recommend we do to deliver best practice in terms of equalities and inclusivity during the development phase?
 - Do you know of any similar projects where best practice has been achieved?
 - How best can we work together?
- 4.3. The panel felt the paper and approach missed:
 - Accessibility and affordability – overall the panel felt the paper, and the project, were lacking details around accessibility and affordability. The panel gave the example of there being no non-standard e-bikes being included.
 - Angus Glens Projects – the panel felt that the Angus Glens projects lacked detail.

- 4.4. The panel suggested several areas of good practice to be adopted:
- Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA's) – the panel explained that best practice is to conduct an EQIA early, prior to developing the scope of the project.
 - Procurement – ensure that the procurement brief outlines the commitment to equality matters and that providers are genuinely committed to accessibility and affordability.
 - Consultation – the panel suggested that good practice is to ensure consultation and involvement is introduced early into the project and that experts by experience are involved in these processes. The panel also asked for further work to be done on how the consultation would present accessibility and equalities issues to the community.
 - Read Previous Minutes – the panel suggested that the sustainable transport officers read the minutes from the 22nd February 2022, on Liz Henderson's section as much of the advice on good practice and links to organisations could be relevant to this project.
- 4.5. The panel suggested similar projects and organisations which may be helpful for the project to reference:
- Guide Dogs Scotland
 - Glasgow Disability Alliance
 - Disability Equality Scotland
 - Deaf Blind Scotland
 - Access Panels – Badenoch and Strathspey
 - Edinburgh City Council – Accessibility Commission
 - CNPA's Equality Outcomes – The more inclusive access to nature evidence section provides reports that may be of help.
- 4.6. The panel suggested how best the project could work with the panel:
- Procurement briefs – the panel asked that procurement briefs are brought to the panel early as getting this right is key to ensuring that everyone involved in the project is focused on equality issues.
 - Bring Documents Early and Ensure they are Detailed – the panel felt it was difficult to comment on the paper as it lacked detail. The panel also felt that they would benefit from seeing documents earlier, such as tender bids, so that they can comment when there is still the ability to make changes.
 - Bring Everything to Main Meetings – Fiona reflected that all documents should be brought to the main meeting where possible and not given to select groups.
- 4.7. The panel reflected that they often give similar advice to multiple projects across the CNPA. The panel suggested creating a guidance or advice document that outlines the basic asks that a project should consider before coming to the panel so that the advice given at panel meetings can be more in-depth. It was agreed that this was an area that needed work and that the EAPs response to the National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) Consultation would be shared with project managers. It was also suggested that a "manifesto" could be produced consisting of six to ten asks of those wishing to gain advice from the panel to be completed before they present to the panel.

5. AOBs

- 5.1. A panel member raised that the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations was coming up and offered to go on behalf of the group. It was agreed that they would speak to Fiona before attending.
- 5.2. Fiona reminded the panel that if any panel member wished to meet for a face-to-face discussion to please contact her to arrange this.
- 5.3. Fiona expressed her thanks on behalf of the panel to Vicky Walker for all the work that they have put in to setting up the panel.

Next Meeting 31st May

End of Meeting