

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY  
EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION

1. Title

**COMMUNITY ACTION PLANNING IN BADENOCH & STRATHSPEY  
FROM 2009 – 2012**

2. Expenditure Category

Operational Plan goal	4	Code	4.5	Project	
Roll Out Community Needs Initiative (goal description)				Grant	✓
Project spend		Code		Consultancy	

Is this spend to be funded from an existing budget line, existing line with additional funds or is it a totally new spend?	£ 64,723	Existing budget	✓
	£	Additional budget	
	£	New budget	

delete as appropriate

3. Description

- Brief overview of project/activity
- Specific elements for which support is sought (if not whole project/activity)

Following the success of the 'Our Community.. A Way Forward' pilot project in Granttown on Spey, Cromdale, Dulnain Bridge and Advie, the Badenoch and Strathspey (Community Planning) Partnership now wish to roll out **Community Action Planning (CAP)** across the rest of Badenoch and Strathspey.

The aims of this work are to -

- Create a clear prioritised action plan for each community. This will enable statutory agencies (and the communities themselves) to direct funding and other resources more effectively to each community to address its particular needs.
- Strengthen community confidence, skills and capacity and create a structure for continuing active engagement with communities and voluntary organisations.

The project will also create a picture of the overall needs of the whole of Badenoch and Strathspey area so that more global issues can be effectively identified and addressed.

The proposed project has been developed by Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey (VABS) and is supported by the Badenoch and Strathspey Partnership (B&SP). VABS will manage the work and employ relevant staff, whilst reporting to a steering group comprising members of the B&SP.

The key stages in developing each Community Action Plan are as follows:

- Initial meetings with organisations and individuals representing all sectors of the community, youth, business, families, women etc, to explain the process leading to the formation of a local steering group, and agreement on a timetable and processes to be used;
- A household survey and other information gathering activities to determine key demographic data along with issues of local concern;
- Training support for individuals in the community who will be involved in carrying out the field work and community engagement;
- The core programme of Appreciative Inquiry (an approach that identifies and builds upon the existing strengths of the community), including Community Conversations, other events aimed at involving everyone in the community and identifying core issues and projects.
- Analysis and writing up of the results of the process, and reporting back to the community.
- Support for developing community capacity and progressing the prioritised actions.

#### 4. Rationale and Strategic Fit

- Objectives/intended beneficiaries
- Evidence of need and demand
- Fit with National Park Plan/Corporate Plan/other relevant strategies
- Linkages to other activities/projects

These community action plans will provide a clear local framework for progressing projects that contribute towards delivering Park Plan and the Highland Single Outcome Agreement and will benefit both local residents and visitors to the Park

Within the Park Plan, the work helps deliver the following -

**Guiding Principle No.3 – “People Participating in the Park- A National Park for People** (page 33)

People within and outside the Park should be actively involved in shaping the National Park and its management, building their capacity to do so and encouraging active citizenship. This can be encouraged by:

- a) Operating in an open, transparent and accessible environment where people can easily find any relevant information;
- b) Keeping people with an interest in the Park informed of progress made against the plan and opportunities to get involved;
- c) Developing mechanisms which allow local communities and communities of interest to influence and engage in the decision making process and management of the Park;
- d) Working with young people, people disabilities and those on low incomes. to engage them in shaping the future of the Park;
- e) Supporting local communities to encourage their active involvement in the management of the Park.

**Strategic Objectives for Sustainable Communities** (page 67)

- d) Strengthen the capacity of local communities and encourage community development building on existing networks, expertise and experience.

Communities should be supported in building their confidence, skills, knowledge and resources to encourage development and activity within communities and effective engagement in shaping the National Park and public policy. Communities should be supported in developing effective community councils, associations and enterprises.

- e) Promote community involvement and more inclusive representation in the management of the National Park. Local communities should be able to inform and participate in the management of the National Park and be well-informed about its management. Communities should be able to understand the role of public bodies and how they can contribute to and influence their work. Public bodies should have an understanding of the needs and issues at a community level and of how to engage effectively with communities.

**Making Tourism and Business More Sustainable Priority for Action** (page 108)

Outcome No. vii. Communities will feel that quality of life is improving and that they are able to influence the direction of economic growth within the Park.

The project is also key to helping deliver the CNPA's 2008-11 **Corporate Plan achievement** – 'All communities within the Park have community action plans in place'.

## 5. Option Analysis

- Are there other ways in which the above objectives could be achieved?
- If so, why is this the preferred option?

There were several options considered for delivering this work:

- 1) The communities could be supported/trained to deliver this project themselves;
- 2) The CNPA could undertake the work;
- 3) The work could be tendered;
- 4) VABs could widen the remit of their existing Community Development Officers to include community action planning.

The first option was ruled out as it might place too great a burden on individual communities. Whilst the community organisations involved in the pilot very much wanted to help shape the work and help deliver it, they were keen for it to be managed by an organisation that was appropriately resourced.

The second option was ruled out as it did not fit with our preferred enabling approach and we do not have sufficient staff resources to lead such work.

The fourth option was preferable to the third in that the work has a strong fit with VABS' role as a Council for Voluntary Service, it was logical to build upon their existing community development work and, as they are a member of the B&SP there is a clear link into the local community planning arrangements.

## 6. Risk Assessment

- Are there risks to the CNPA in funding this project/activity?
- Are there risks in the project/activity not being delivered to required timescale/quality?
- Comment on the likelihood of such risks occurring, their potential impact, and (where appropriate) any action that would be taken to mitigate the risks.

The main risk is that the Community Development Officers do not deliver to the required quality or timescales. The Steering Group will meet regularly with the CDOs to manage these risks. Project timescales have been agreed over a three year period and these will be closely monitored to ensure that, if there is slippage in timescales contingencies are put in place. In linking this project with the CDO project we have avoided duplication of effort in community engagement activities.

## 7. Costs and Funding

- Detail the financial costs of the project/activity
- Detail the sources of funding
- Detail any non-monetary costs to the CNPA (such as Member or staff input)

The total cost of the project is £210,903. The proposed contribution from the CNPA is £64,723 over 3 years (30%). This means a commitment of approx £21,500 per annum for the next 3 years. HIE funding will be spent in year 1. Appropriate budget provision for community action planning has been built into the current Corporate Plan and the 2009/10 Operational Plan includes a budget of £40,000 for community action planning.

Project costs are outlined below with greater detail being set out in Appendix 1.

	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Total</b>
Community action Planning	£29,459	£30,083	£31,651	£91,193
Quick Win projects	£ 9,900	£ 9,900	£10,200	£30,000
Project Development Service	£29,232	£ 29,899	£30,579	£89,710
	<b>£68,591</b>	<b>£69,882</b>	<b>£72,430</b>	<b>£210,903</b>

The funding package is as follows:

	<b>%</b>	<b>£</b>	
LEADER & Convergence	41.31	87,125	(approved)
CNPA	30.69	64,723	
VABS	2.37	5,000	(approved)
HIE	4.74	10,000	(approved)
Funder to be agreed	5.1	10,840	
The Highland Council	14.22	30,000	(approved)
In Kind	1.52	3,215	
	<b>100.00</b>	<b>210,903</b>	

The funder to be agreed will be in year three and it is possible that savings can be made to cover this shortfall. Funding from the CNPA is confirmed for the first two years with in principle support for year three given spending review constraints. There will be staff time from Andrew Harper, Claire Ross and Fiona Munro in this project as well as all the time from the community and partners representatives.

## 8. Funding conditions

- Detail the project specific conditions that need to be included in any contract for services or grant offer letter in order that CNPA obtains the intended outcomes and Value for Money.
- In the case of grant offers, our Financial Memorandum requires that SEERAD agree these conditions in advance of the grant offer being made.

The project specific conditions will be agreed with the Finance Manager however quarterly stage payments for each project would seem appropriate with no payments made in advance of need. The grant offer will include the standard conditions and be agreed with VABs in advance of the grant offer being made.

Given that the project extends for a year beyond the current Corporate Plan period, any grant offer would have to make clear that the third year of funding could only been confirmed once our own future grant allocation was confirmed and the 2011-2014 Corporate Plan had been agreed by the Board.

## 9. Deliverables/ Impact Assessment

- What end products/outputs will be delivered?
- How will success be measured?
- How will the project be monitored and what will be the feedback to the CNPA?

The planned outputs of the project are:

- 10 communities supported in identifying local priorities and projects that will advance these.
- 20 existing local community organisations identified and development needs assessed.
- 10 community organisations formed by strengthening existing ones (e.g. by converting from a constituted basis to Company Limited by Guarantee or Social Enterprises.)
- 10 Quick win projects funded and implemented.
- Training conference based on community toolkit

The planned outcomes are:

10 communities better able to engage with community planning partners and thereby play a more effective role in identifying local issues and finding solutions.

600+ community and voluntary organisations in Badenoch and Strathspey identified in an up to date inventory, enabling more effective delivery of development services to them by VABS and others.

20 community and voluntary organisations with positive plans in place for their development and more effective contribution to their members and stakeholders.

Success will be measured by achieving the above, and subsequently by partners supporting communities to deliver their action plans. Fiona Munro and Claire Ross will be giving feedback to the CNPA.

## 10. Value for Money

- In view of the costs, do the deliverables appear to offer value for money? (consider cost of comparable projects, where available).

For the CNPA the costs of the project are approximately £6,000 per community in Badenoch & Strathspey. This is value for money considering the cost of an officer's salary approximately £20,000 per annum and two officers will be involved over the 3 year period in 11 communities. Each community will be involved for approximately 6 months of the year in the action planning from inception to completion of the action plan and implementing the quick wins. With LEADER/Convergence funding of £87,000 (41%) over 3 years and contributions from VABs themselves, Highlands & Islands Enterprise (9%) and the Highland Council (14%); this is a good partnership project with CNPA providing 30.69% of the funding.

## 11. Exit or Continuation Arrangements (where applicable)

- If this is not a discrete, time-limited, project or piece of work, what are the exit/continuation arrangements for when CNPA support ceases?

The work outlined above will all take place from 2009-2012. It is hoped that after 3 years that the project will become embedded in each of the partners core work in community planning. The toolkit was developed in the early stages to assist this to happen led by the communities themselves.

## 12. Additionality

- Does this work/project substitute for or duplicate work being carried out or proposed by others?
- What would be the effects of the CNPA not supporting the project? Would it proceed without CNPA support?

The work/project was carefully designed not to duplicate work being carried out or proposed by others. In fact the work already being carried out by 2 part-time staff of VABS was increased in capacity to include what is an expansion of their role. The project would not proceed without our funding which is being used to lever contributions from other partners.

## 13. Stakeholder Support

- Have the organisations and/or communities that would have an interest in this work/project been involved, and are they supportive?

There was a 'warm up' phase, during which VABS made contact with each of the 11 communities in Badenoch & Strathspey to inform them about what community action planning involves, how their community could benefit and how the process leads on to interactive engagement with the Badenoch & Strathspey Community Planning Partnership and its member agencies. It further aims to identify people from the communities who will take part and lead in the community action planning process. This work is complete with an excellent response from the communities.

**14. Recommendation**

I recommend that a £64,723 contribution to the project be approved for 2009 – 2012, with the third year of this being an in principle approval only.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**15. Decision to Approve or Reject**

**Head of Group**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chief Executive**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Finance Committee**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Board**

Not applicable – below approval limits  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SEERAD**

Not applicable – below approval limits  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_