
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY FINANCE COMMITTEE

FOR DECISION

Title: COMMUNITY ACTION PLANNING IN BADENOCH AND STRATHSPEY (confirmation of funding for year three)

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Purpose

To confirm year three of the funding package for the Badenoch and Strathspey Community Action Project, agreed in principle by the Board (20.03.09). To clarify the detail of the year three funding package, updating of the main outcomes of the project to date.

Recommendations

That the Committee formally approve commitment of £21,500 for the final year of the Community Action Planning (Badenoch and Strathspey) Project (2011/2012).

Executive Summary

1. The Community Action Planning (Badenoch and Strathspey) project is now half way through its second year. To date it has completed community action plans with four communities: Laggan, Dalwhinnie, Newtonmore and Kingussie and currently delivering similar exercises in Aviemore, Rothiemurchus, Glenmore and Kincaig. (should this also refer to those done as part of the pilot in Grantown etc.?)
2. A Board paper "Community Action Planning Update" (20th March 2009) confirmed funding for the project for years one and two (2009/2011) and agreed in principle funding for year three (2011/2012).
3. Following this paper we intend to bring a more detailed "Community Engagement" paper to the Board in January 2011 outlining in detail succession arrangements for the project in the context of the wider engagement and development work of the National Park Plan and the Local Development Plan.

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Background

Community Action Planning Rolled out through the National Park

1. Communities play an active role in delivering the aims of the National Park. It is therefore important to place a strong emphasis on actively engaging communities both within and out with the Park, as well as supporting communities to deliver elements of the Park Plan. With the creation of the Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) it is vital to develop a framework that allows communities and the Community Planning Partnerships to come together to collectively deliver the Scottish Government's strategic objectives.
2. The "Our Community a Way Forward" pilot (2007/2008) has been viewed as an overall success by the communities of Grantown on Spey, Cromdale, Advie and Dulnain Bridge, creating comprehensive action plans for each community, helping to direct agency resources more effectively in meeting community need, and improving community capacity and involvement. The success of the pilot has stimulated interest from other communities within the Park boundary to carry out their own community action planning projects.

Community Action Planning in Badenoch and Strathspey

3. Following the success of the "Our Community a Way Forward" pilot project in Grantown on Spey, Cromdale, Dulnain Bridge and Advie, the Badenoch and Strathspey Community Planning Partnership (B&S CPP) wished to roll out the process across the rest of Badenoch and Strathspey.
4. The aims of the project are to:
 - a) Create a clear prioritised action plan for each community in Badenoch and Strathspey.
 - b) Strengthen community confidence, skills and capacity and create a structure for continuing active engagement with communities and voluntary organisations.
5. The project is also part of establishing a picture of the overall needs of the whole of Badenoch and Strathspey so that more regional issues can be identified and addressed. The project has been delivered through Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey (VABS) and reports back directly to the B&SCPP. VABS have managed and delivered the work reporting to a steering group comprising of key members of the B&SCPP. A more detailed outline of the project is in the original expenditure justification proforma (annex one)

Progress So Far

Our Community a Way Forward...

6. This element of the project is well on track. Laggan, Dalwhinnie, Newtonmore and Kingussie all have completed community action plans using methods recommended

in the “Community Toolkit” developed in the pilot project. These plans have thrown up priority actions “quick wins” that have been funded through The Highland Council, Leader, the CNPA and local community groups (see annex two). Participation levels have been generally very high both from the returns on questionnaires and the number of people attending “community conversations”.

Community Development ...

7. This aspect of the project focuses on community capacity building and has been extremely successful. Since the beginning of the project outcomes include:
 - a) 120 community groups supported by VABS: funding support, businesses planning, governance training, mediation etc.
 - b) Approx £900K funding drawn down into the area through the community development activity from a wide range of funding bodies
 - c) Greater level of volunteer participation in delivering community projects (anecdotal feedback)

Current Funding Package

8. The total cost of the project is £210,903 over three years. The contribution from the CNPA is £64,723 over three years, 30% of the total costs. This means a commitment of approximately £21,500 per annum so we are looking for confirmation on this amount for 2010/2011 (year three) The funding package for year three is as follows (all match funding is confirmed)

9. Table one:

Funding Partner	Amount
Leader and Convergence	29,500
CNPA	21,500
VABS	5,000
THC	10,000
In Kind	1,100
Total	67,100

10. With the original funding package there was a funding gap of £10K this has been filled by VABS increasing their match funding amount for years two and three and savings that have been made on staffing costs.

Consequences of not funding the Community Action Planning in Badenoch and Strathspey

11. This project has already supported eight communities to develop their community action plans, to withdrawn CNPA funding at this point and would mean that the final four communities would not be able to take up this opportunity. This would compromise the ability to create a regional picture of community priorities that is essential for the effective working of the Community Planning Partnership in Badenoch and Strathspey.

12. It would mean a withdrawal of the existing support for project development and funding support that have enabled so many community groups to contribute to the aims of the National Park.
13. Finally, there are clear ties between this project and the development of the National Park Plan and the Local Development Plan, working more closely with communities so they have the capacity to deliver the elements of a world class National Park themselves.

Next Steps

14. The approach to community engagement has proved to be very successful. There is a much greater sense of ownership of the community plans and how they are delivered being taken on by the communities themselves. Therefore it has made sense to deploy this method of consulting communities in developing the new Park Plan and Local Development Plan. Both plans will build on the success of the Our Community a Way Forward model with the community engagement aspects being led on by Community/Voluntary sector agencies (including (VABS)
15. It is intended to bring a more comprehensive “Community Engagement and Development” paper to the CNPA Board in January 2011. Where we will explore in detail how this work should be continued beyond 2012.

Recommendation

16. **It is recommended that Finance Committee approve funding of £21,500 for the final year of the Community Action Planning Badenoch and Strathspey.**

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