
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

FOR DISCUSSION

Title: SUPPORTING BOARD AND COMMITTEE PROCESSES

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Purpose

1. This paper sets out the processes to be adopted in the development of Board and Committee agendas and papers.
2. The paper also sets out the respective roles and responsibilities of Board Convener, Committee Chairs and lead officers.
3. The paper covers strategic governance considerations on:
 - a) Board induction: members' understanding of roles and responsibilities;
 - b) Governance responsibilities: members' understanding of governance and the Governance Responsibility Framework;
 - c) Addressing independent audit recommendations: previous internal audit work has highlighted governance improvements to be implemented around understanding of roles and responsibilities, while the 2020/21 external audit report approved by the Audit and Risk Committee on 9 September highlights "key aspect for CNPA is ensuring the Board and committee business continues to retain a focus on the Authority's key strategic priorities, enabling Management to focus on the delivery of these."
4. Ensuring agendas cover appropriate items of business while supporting papers address matters at an appropriate level is a key point in covering these strategic governance considerations.

Process for Developing Meeting Agenda

5. A draft agenda will be drawn up by lead officers and circulated at least four weeks prior to the meeting date to the appropriate Convener or Chair of the meeting. Draft agendas will be copied to the Board Convener and Deputy Convener for their awareness and to support their wider board management responsibilities.
6. Where additional agenda items are requested for inclusion in the agenda which have not been suggested by officers, the Convener or Chair should make clear, in writing:

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- a) the purpose of the item, the relevant strategic matters (corporate outcomes or strategic risks) to be covered by the item and any key matters for consideration;
 - b) expectation of whether a written paper is required or whether the item may be covered by a discussion without any written papers;
7. Where a Convener / Chair believes a proposed items of business suggested in the outline agenda should not be covered at the meeting in question, they will make clear, in writing, their rationale for suggesting excluding that item from the agenda.
8. The meeting agenda will be finalised between the Convener or Chair of the meeting in question and Lead Officer at least three weeks prior to the meeting date.

Preparation of Papers

9. Where papers are required to support items of business, outline papers will be prepared by officers and will be provided to the Convener / Chair of meetings three weeks prior to the meeting date. These documents will set out the core information to be set out in the final papers, such as:
- a) Purpose of Paper;
 - b) Strategic issue(s) considered by the paper;
 - c) Draft recommendations;
 - d) Expected likely direction / outcome of the paper in a draft Executive summary;
 - e) Key relevant information and points of interest.
10. The outline papers will not be near final drafts and will not contain all the detail of the final content. These outline papers will be working documents which will provide sufficient information to the Convener / Chair to allow them to understand the direction of the paper and business item.
11. Provision of the outline papers allows the Convener / Chair the opportunity to comment on the suitability of structure and expected content to address the strategic matters covered by the item of business in question, and to consider any matters around handling of the meeting around the item of business in question. The Convener / Chair will respond within one week of receipt of these outline papers with any observations on the scope of the papers.
12. Officers will continue to develop papers following provision of the outline to the Convener / Chair, and consider any adaptations necessary on receipt of observations from the Convener / Chair. Officers will provide a near final draft of the full paper to the Convener / Chair at an appropriate time for their information, to allow some time to familiarise themselves with content prior to all members having sight of the final document. This will give the Convener / Chair an awareness of any content that may give rise to comment from members. Provision of these near final drafts is not for comment or with any expectation of changes to papers being made prior to issue, with the overall strategic direction of papers already having been considered at an earlier stage in development.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board and Members

13. The role of the board as a whole, and individual members in their role as a member of the board and its Committees, is to provide leadership, direction, support and guidance to ensure the Cairngorms NPA delivers and is committed to delivering its strategic objectives effectively and efficiently and in accordance with the aims, policies and priorities of the Scottish Ministers.

The Convener

14. The Convener is specifically responsible for ensuring that the Cairngorms NPA's policies and actions support the Scottish Ministers' wider strategic policies and that its affairs are conducted with probity. The Convener's role in contributing to board agendas and papers is therefore to ensure that the Cairngorms NPA's business as conducted at board meetings remains focused on the Authority's key strategic priorities as established through its agreed Corporate Plan objectives and any supplementary strategies agreed by the board and / or as set out in any strategic direction set out by Scottish Ministers. The Convener is responsible for ensuring that the board's discussions, based on agenda and papers provided, remains focused on the board's remit.

Committee Chairs

15. Committee Chairs are responsible for ensuring that their Committee operates within the terms of reference agreed for the Committee by the board. The Chairs' contribution to agenda and paper development seeks to ensure that Committee business over time covers the expected areas of business set out in the terms of reference. The Chair is responsible for ensuring that their Committee's discussions, based on agenda and papers provided, remains focused on the Committee's remit and that any matters of business which require to be considered through other Committees within their remits or escalated to full board is identified for action by lead officers.

Chief Executive Officer

16. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the board's principal adviser on the discharge of its functions and is accountable to the board. Their role is to provide operational leadership to the Cairngorms NPA and ensure that the board's aims and objectives are met, and the NDPB's functions are delivered and targets met through effective and properly controlled executive action. With regard to meeting agendas and papers, the CEO is responsible for ensuring that the staff group act to bring together appropriate agendas and supporting papers focused at supporting members in their duties of ensuring the Authority delivers its strategic objectives effectively and efficiently and in accordance with the aims, policies and priorities of the Scottish Ministers. The CEO, with the support of the Authority's Standards Officer, will seek to ensure that the key governance considerations set out at the start of this paper drive the organisation and support of the Board's and its Committees' business through ensuring the Board and

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committee business continues to retain a focus on the Authority's key strategic priorities, enabling Management to focus on the delivery of these priorities.

Version Control

Initial draft DFC, 20 Sep, not numbered

VI.0 Amendments following GM and KC consideration