

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

FOR DISCUSSION

Title: CAIRNGORMS LEADER AND CAIRNGORMS TRUST DELIVERY

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Purpose

This paper presents the latest delivery updates on the Cairngorms LEADER Programme and voluntary and charitable giving activities as managed by the Cairngorms LEADER Local Action Group Trust (Cairngorms Trust).

Recommendations

The Performance Committee is asked to review the delivery updates presented with this paper and consider:

- a) **Whether the programmes of activity are making the expected contribution to the Cairngorms NPA's agreed strategic outcomes;**
- b) **Whether the delivery updates suggest any strategically significant impacts on the Cairngorms NPA's agreed performance objectives; and**
- c) **Whether any material impacts on the Cairngorms NPA's strategic risk management and mitigation measures arise from assessment of programme delivery.**

Strategic Background

1. The most recent update to the Board on delivery of the Authority's strategic objectives as set out in the agreed Corporate Plan for 2018 to 2022 was presented at the June 2021 meeting. The Corporate Plan delivery report may be accessed at: [Meeting - Cairngorms National Park Authority](#) The Authority's strategic objectives of relevance to consideration of the delivery of the programme reporting presented with this paper are:
 - a) Successfully conclude the Cairngorms LEADER Programme and consider future funding for community led local development (CLLD); and
 - b) Develop and deliver a visitor giving scheme with partners. This objective has since been refocused as development of a voluntary giving scheme.
2. The latest review of the Strategic Risk Register was considered by the Audit and Risk Committee in September 2021 and may be accessed at: [210910AuCteePaper5AnnexI StrategicRiskRegisterV8.1.pdf \(cairngorms.co.uk\)](#).

Strategic risks of relevance to consideration of performance of the programmes of work considered by this paper are:

- a) A1: Resource risk remedial mitigation: Continuing to support “delivery bodies” such as Cairngorms Nature, Cairngorms Trust in securing inward investment.
 - b) A1.1 Strategic Risk on Resourcing: Role as Lead / Accountable body for major programmes (e.g. LEADER, Landscape Partnership) has risk of significant financial clawback should expenditure prove to be not eligible for funding, while CNPA carries responsibilities as employer for programme staff.
 - c) A1.2 Strategic Risk Resourcing: the end of major programme investments (Tomintoul and Glenlivet, LEADER) requires significant ongoing staffing to manage audit and legacy which the Authority finds difficult to resource.
 - d) A1.2.2 Strategic Risk on Resourcing: future community led local development funding currently delivered through LEADER, together with wider funding previously from EU structural and agricultural sources is lost and creates a significant gap in our capacity to deliver against our development priorities.
 - e) A28 Strategic Risk on Staffing: delivery of key outcomes is impacted by staff turnover, particularly in project teams.
3. The programmes of activity under consideration here also fit with the priorities of the current National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP), the most recent overview of delivery of the NPPP having been presented to the Board at its meeting in September 2021: [Meeting - Cairngorms National Park Authority](#). The relevant elements of the NPPP delivery relating to these programmes are:
- a) Cairngorms Trust taking forward development of voluntary giving scheme to support development of new funding sources supporting public benefits (Landscape scale conservation priority 1i).
 - b) Developing new ways including visitor giving to fund infrastructure investment and maintenance (visitor infrastructure priority 4a).
 - c) Improving visitor transport options (visitor infrastructure priority 4f).
 - d) Targeting people currently living sedentary lifestyles and those with long-term medical conditions (Active Cairngorms priority 5b).
 - e) Improving opportunities for active travel in Aviemore (Active Cairngorms priority 5g).
 - f) Better coordination and promotion of public transport and active travel (Active Cairngorms priority 5f).

Performance Overview: Delivery Against Strategic Expectations

4. Within the above strategic context, generally positive progress has been made despite the impacts of impacts of COVID on delivery since March 2020.
5. The LEADER quarterly report highlights the programme is well advanced to the planned programme closure in December 2021.
6. Development of plans for a replacement to CLLD funding remains in its early stages, while the LAG has secured funds to implement trial of funding community led approaches to climate action and conservation; and to implementation of a youth based grant awarding group. Funding is also in place to secure the LEADER team until

the end of the current financial year, with focus on future years' work hoped to become explicit through the Scottish Government budget process in early December.

7. While relatively small scale, the Cairngorms Trust, in its delivery of a commissioned LEADER projects supplying free use of E-bikes to residents, has made excellent progress in enabling the demonstration of active travel interventions for inactivity and health benefits, and in promoting overall lifestyle change.

Performance Overview: Risks Under Management

8. The Trust continues to work on the delivery of integrated transport signage in Aviemore and supply of an electric minibus to support community transport initiatives. Both these projects have been impacted by procurement and supply issues and are not yet complete with a relatively short time frame remaining until programme closure and loss of available LEADER funding.
9. The Trust's work in the development of a voluntary giving scheme has been significantly interrupted by COVID. Despite this, the work by the Trustees and the Trust Manager as set out in the update does demonstrate the latent potential for partnership with commercial and other organisations to secure new funding streams with worthwhile levels of funding which could be attracted to the objectives of the scheme. While focus on the development of voluntary giving was largely suspended during COVID pandemic response, the Trust has played a valuable part in coordinating and helping delivery of two phases of Green Recovery Grants with the Cairngorms NPA and other partners.
10. The resource levels needed to develop and deliver a voluntary giving scheme of a meaningful scale is a matter under consideration by Trustees in light of the experience of development of such a scheme within the wider needs of charity management and other demands on the Trust Managers limited time. This will be a matter for consideration in potential resource deployment moving forward.

Conclusions: Performance Overview and Matters Meriting Strategic Review

11. There are no matters of strategic significance which merit escalation at this time in the opinion of senior managers leading the Cairngorms NPA's linkage to the areas of activity covered by this paper and associated reports.

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