CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
FINANCE COMMITTEE

FOR DECISION

Title: Cairngorms Explorer 2010

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Purpose

To seek agreement from the committee to change the format of, and reduce expenditure on, the Cairngorms Explorer.

This paper has been brought to the committee as to continue the Explorer as it is (not recommended) would be around £35k for 2010/11. If we were to go for this option a decision should be taken by end of October to allow for tendering and collation of the publication.

Summary

Since 2005 the Cairngorms Explorer brochure has helped deliver Park messages and timetable information to the travelling public, meeting several PfAs in the National Park Plan. Research has shown it is both well known and well used with 35,000 copies being picked up annually, but it is unknown how much it changes transport behaviour.

Since its first publication, the way people obtain travel information has changed. The Internet is now the best way to find timetables which are liable to constant modification, and partners deliver this information better, for example at www.travelinescotland.com, with whom we are working to create a Park branded version of their search engine. Access to the Internet has become available on mobile phones, in libraries, workplaces and in most homes.

For those without access to the internet paper timetables that cover parts of the National Park are also produced for each local authority area. These are updated as timetables change.

In short, the same information is therefore easily available on commonly used websites and timetables. Therefore there is less need to publish all timetables in a single paper format, and it is difficult to justify the £35k cost to duplicate information available elsewhere. In the first three years we obtained funding from Hitrans and nestrans, the Regional Transport Partnerships, but their funding has been reallocated and lost.

There remains a useful 'added value' role that can be provided by some form of publication, which highlights the availability of this information and signposts people to it, using a map to set it in a clear National Park context.

Given the priority given to connecting the public transport network, particularly in relation to outdoor access and tourism in the National Park Plan, and the significantly increased driver of climate change mitigation following the Climate Change (Scotland) Act, some form of promotion of the public transport routes and information availability remains desirable.

A leaflet similar to the Park Welcome leaflet, or inclusion of the information in another publication such as Parki, could deliver key messages on access, social inclusion, walking festivals, local produce etc. that the Explorer does at present. This would highlight online timetabling information, and promote walking, cycling and public transport. There are options to also do nothing, leaving simply the existing web-based and timetable information to stand alone.

The advantages and disadvantages of the potential new format against the existing format are shown in the table overleaf.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to agree that the existing Explorer format at a cost of £35k no longer represents good value for money and should therefore not proceed for 2010/11.

Instead, the committee is asked to endorse the investigation of alternative formats that we anticipate will reduce the cost to approximately £10k. Officers will continue discussions with partners on these options.

Existing Cairngorms Explorer
A5, 72 page booklet comprising detailed timetables that are accurate as of January of the year of publication. 35,000 copies produced and distributed to 300+ outlets in and around the Park

Advantages	**Disadvantages**
Single Public Transport Timetable for CNP	Very Expensive (c £35K)
Well known and widely distributed	Challenging to see how it is sustained with future budgets
Large editorial for information about accessing the CNP	No partnership support
	Duplicates Existing Timetables both in print and web.
	Needs significant updates and amendments every year
	Quickly outdated
	Complicated to use

New Explorer
1/3 A4 fold large map of the National Park showing bus routes, rail links, stations, national cycle routes, long distance paths, community path networks and visitor information centres. Also Cairngorms on a Shoestring and other partner's work such as walking festivals, ski areas etc. Information about who to obtain up to date timetables on web and in print. 50,000 copies produced and distributed to 300+ locations.

Advantages	**Disadvantages**
Moderately expensive (£10k)	Loss of single timetable source
Sustainable in current budgets	Reliance on users being able to find the correct timetable or access the web.
Some potential for partner support (in early discussions with FCS)	The publication is a change and this will need to be presented carefully to partners and users.
Information does not date quickly and leaflet is easily updated	
Does not duplicate existing information	
Clear presentation of public transport options and sources of information	
Still present Park messages	
The reverse side of the map will still provide ample space for information about accessing the CNP	