

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND DELIVERY COMMITTEE MEETING of

THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

**held at Community Hall, Boat of Garten
on 30th October 2015 at 9am**

PRESENT:

Peter Argyle

Angela Douglas

Kate Howie (Convener)

Eleanor Mackintosh

Gregor Rimell

In Attendance:

Danie Ralph, Finance Manager

Alix Harkness, Clerk to the Board

Brian Wood, CNPA Board Member

Apologies:

Grant Moir, CEO

David Cameron, Director of Corporate Services

Welcome and Introduction

1. The Convener welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes of Last Meeting – Approval

2. The Minutes of the last meeting on 14 August 2015 were approved with no amendments.

Matters Arising

4. There were no matters arising.
5. The Convener provided an update on the Action Points from the previous meeting:
 - a) Action Point at Para. 13i: The Convener agreed to follow this up with David Cameron to see if it had been carried out.
 - b) Action Point at Para. 19a: It was confirmed that Moray Council had confirmed their contribution of £15,000 towards the project and therefore this result

avoided the need to consider a sliding scale of employment of the Development Officer.

- c) Action Point at Para. 19b: The Convener agreed to discuss this with David Cameron.
- d) Action Point at Para. 19c: It was advised that there was to be no hydro scheme application and therefore this action was no longer valid.
- e) Action Point at Para. 26i: Report to come back to the Finance and Delivery Committee on this subject.

6. Gregor Rimell arrived at this point.

Declaration of Interests

7. There were no interests declared.

Finance Monitoring: 6 Months to 30 September 2015 (Paper 1)

- 8. Danie Ralph introduced this Paper which presents a summary review of income and expenditure, including a summary of Operational Plan expenditure, for the 6 months to 30 September 2015, together with the revised outturn forecast to 31 March 2016. He highlighted that they were currently behind plan in spend in with regard to Scenic Routes project and Ranger grants however Ranger grants had started to trickle through.
- 9. The Convener advised that she had aired her concerns to David Cameron around the concern regarding the Authority's position at this stage and had been reassured that robust conversations with Heads of Service had taken place and that funds would be spent by the end of February 2016. Danie confirmed that this process had started.
- 10. In discussion the following points were debated:
 - a) Could the reporting method be changed to ensure more of an even spread of spend throughout the year? Danie advised that he had sent out a profiling spreadsheet to Heads of Service requesting them to profile per month from 2016/17. He advised that next year it was likely that there would be less Grant-in-Aid though funding for 2016/17 and would not be known until at least January. Heads of Service had been advised that they would have to be more accurate in profiling spend going forward.
 - b) Concern regarding the unnecessary pressure at end of year being put on the Finance team, could more be done to help relieve that pressure? Danie advised that due to the nature of the organisation and the drawing down of funds would

remain unchanged and therefore the Finance team were aware of those facts and equipped to deal with it.

- c) Were Heads of Service currently provided with a monthly printout of spending? Danie advised that they were: transaction analysis per code and a budget report per code which shows spend per month compared to budget and budget remaining until the end of the financial year. Danie added that the Finance team do a very good job of putting pressure on Heads of Service to spend in line with profile or to highlight any variances likely to arise as early in their planning processes as possible.
- d) Reassurance was sought as to whether the time critical elements are reflected in the analysis or whether this was a training need to better equip Heads of Service to realise the significance of the time-critical elements? Danie advised that budgeting and profiling would always be challenging given outside factors such as Planning permission and working with multiple project partners in the majority of instances.
- e) The need for the Finance Committee to be more aware of the reduced funding to current priorities in the Operational Plan as a result of agreeing and approving funding for new priorities. Peter Argyle agreed to request a Paper that provides the Finance & Delivery Committee with a steer of the financial implications in the future.
- f) Clarification as to what budget the Heads of Service have been asked to base their 2016-17 draft profiles on. Danie advised that they had been requested to use the current year's budget as a starting point, with revisions being made on discussion with Management Team once the 16/17 Grant-in-Aid was known.
- g) Concern that the Board would be seeking reassurance from the Finance and Delivery Committee at the December Board meeting that the funding being agreed would be affordable and that the Finance & Delivery Committee would be unable to provide this reassurance.

12. The Finance and Delivery Committee agreed to the recommendations as set out in the Paper.

13. Actions:

- a) **Peter Argyle to request a Paper at the Conveners meeting that provides the Finance and Delivery Committee with a steer of the financial implications in the future should funding or increased funding be approved for new and existing priorities.**

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14. A suggestion was made that Board Members on joining the Finance & Delivery Committee are invited to attend a quick induction session with the Finance team. The

Finance & Delivery Committee discussed this and agreed that they would all appreciate this and would welcome some examples to be worked through. It was agreed that the Clerk to the Board circulate to Members possible dates for this.

15. Clarification was requested as to when the Finance & Delivery Committee were going to receive some of the delivery papers rather than focussing on only the monitoring of projects. It had been understood that as part of the Committee's new remit they would be looking for value for money in past projects. The Convener agreed to bring this up at the next Convener's Group meeting.
16. A request was made to have the Finance & Delivery Committee's Terms of Reference circulated to them. The Convener agreed to request this at the next Convener's Group meeting.

17. Actions:

- a) **Suitable date for Finance and Delivery Committee induction session with the Finance team to be found with support from Clerk to the Board.**
- b) **The Convener to raise at the next Convener's group meeting, the need to put forward Papers to the Finance & Delivery Committee that focusses on the delivery of projects rather than just the monitoring of projects.**
- c) **The Convener to request a copy of the Finance & Delivery Committee's Terms of Reference at the Convener's Group meeting next week and circulate it around Members.**

Date of Next Meeting

18. The next Finance and Delivery Committee meeting will take place on Friday 29th January 2016 in the Community Hall, Boat of Garten.
19. The meeting concluded at 9.50am.