

**CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

FOR DECISION

**Title: APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE PREVIOUSLY
PRESENTED TO THE CNPA BOARD
(John Muir Award)**

Prepared by: Denby Pettitt, Finance Manager

Purpose

To formally approve commitment of expenditure, on the John Muir Award project, for the 2008/09 and 2009/10 Financial Years.

Recommendations

- a) That the Committee approve the expenditure proposal.

Executive Summary

- a) At its April 2007 meeting, the CNPA Board approved, in principle, an extension to the project, explicitly linking Award activity to actions in the National Park Plan and the development of Junior Rangers, subject to sufficient financial support from partners and detailed approval of spending plans by the Finance Committee.
 - b) The attached Expenditure Justification Form sets out details of the project.
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**APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED TO THE
CNPA BOARD (John Muir Award project)
FOR DECISION**

Discussion

1. The Finance Committee is invited to review the attached Expenditure Justification (Annex 1) and approve it if they see fit.
2. The Scottish Government have recently increased the levels at which we need to get final approval for spend from £10,000 to £50,000. Therefore, since the new spend is £40,000 there is no need to gain further approval.

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19 November 2007

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CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION

1. Title

John Muir Award Project

2. Expenditure Category

Operational Plan	11	Code	8111001	Project	✓
Special qualities of the Park(goal description)				Grant	
Core or Project spend		Code		Consultancy	

Is this spend to be funded from an existing budget line, existing line with additional funds or is it a totally new spend?	£ 20,000	Existing budget	✓
	£	Additional	
	£ 40,000	New budget *	✓

* Current year's Operational Plan has provision for up to £20,000. The budget for future years has not been established since we are waiting for the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

3. Description

- Brief overview of project/activity including cost summary
- Specific elements for which support is sought (if not whole project/activity)

The development of a project to engage people in the discovery, exploration and conservation of wild places in the Cairngorms, using the John Muir Award ('JMA'), was undertaken in the early 2003 by the Cairngorms Partnership, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), and John Muir Trust. The Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) agreed at its first ever Board meeting in April 2003 to support the project.

This project has already run for three years to October 2006 and an extension to October 2007 was granted last year.

The present gross costs of the project to support the work of the John Muir Award manager in the Cairngorms are just over £40,000 per annum, see Section 7 below.

Funders to date have included SNH, CNPA and LEADER+, fuller details are given in Section 7.

LEADER+ funding ceased in October 2007 with the ending of the current phase of EU funding and SNH funding of the Cairngorms JMA has reduced to 25% since they are also contributing nationally to the JMA.

There are already funds in the current year's Operational Plan to fund the project to March 2008 and, at present, the project manager's contract runs to December 2007. The cost to the Park of continuing the project for two years to March 2010 is a minimum of £40,000 although this could rise to £65,000 if we are unsuccessful in raising external funding to replace LEADER+ funding and the reduced SNH contribution.

4. Rationale and Strategic Fit

- Objectives/intended beneficiaries
- Evidence of need and demand
- Fit with National Park Plan/Corporate Plan/other relevant strategies
- Linkages to other activities/projects

The project helps to deliver delivers the following actions in the National Park Plan:-

Extend the use of the John Muir Award to encourage more people to experience a sense of wildness in the Park and to share their experiences.

Develop a programme of practical volunteering opportunities that link people to the special qualities of the Park.

Develop a programme of activity to encourage people to become ambassadors for the Park, promoting messages about care, active enjoyment and wise use.

5. Option Analysis

- Are there other ways in which the above objectives could be achieved?
- If so, why is this the preferred option?

A paper was presented to the CNPA Board in April 2007 which gave a number of options.

The Board agreed, in principle, an extension to the project linking the Award activity to Actions in the National Park Plan and the development of Junior Rangers subject to sufficient financial support from partners and detailed approval of the spending plans by the Finance Committee.

6. Risk Assessment

- Are there risks to the CNPA in funding this project/activity?
- Are there risks in the project/activity not being delivered to required timescale/quality?
- Comment on the likelihood of such risks occurring, their potential impact, and (where appropriate) any action that would be taken to mitigate the risks.

The project is now in its fourth year so the risks associated with this activity are well known. The main risks are likely to be presentational:-

- The risk of not funding it will be seen as the CNPA withdrawing from a highly successful project that encourages young people to understand the CNP and become directly involved in conservation activity in and around the National Park.
- The risk of continued funding is that increasingly the burden of funding will fall to the CNPA.

We are attempting to reduce this latter risk by actively seeking new funding partners but this is not proving to be an easy task.

7. Costs and Funding

- Detail the financial costs of the project/activity
- Detail the sources of funding
- Justification also needs to be given if the CNPA is the major funder
- Detail any non-monetary costs to the CNPA (such as Member or staff input)

Costs of the project are around £40,000 per annum with three –quarters of this being salary and related costs and the remaining quarter being publicity, promotion and management costs.

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Costs	18,049	31,046	35,159	40,838	40,000	42,000	43,000
CNPA	3,609	(2,362)	7,134	18,496	17,000	20,000	20,000
SNH	8,122	13,768	15,822	15,152	14,000	10,000	10,000
LEADER	7,738	17,770	12,203	7,190	4,000	-	-
Other	-	450	-	-	5,000	12,000	13,000
Funding	19,469	29,626	35,159	40,838	40,000	42,000	43,000

SNH have reached a National funding agreement with the John Muir Trust and are therefore only prepared to locally (within the Cairngorms) fund the Award Project at a rate of 25%. This position is quite unusual because national agreements by default usually supersede any local funding.

It is of note that the leader's time in delivering 1,500 awards collectively account for 3 to 4 full time equivalent staff working throughout the area directly connecting young people to the special qualities of the National Park.

At present, we are looking to raise money from other sources to cover the loss of LEADER+ income and reduced SNH funding. Our current year's JMA budget is £20,000 which would enable us to meet most of the shortfall this year.

Enquiries/applications have been made to the following sources of funding:-

Youth Opportunities Fund Esmee Fairburn Trust

Sutton Trust Rayne Foundation

Dulverton Trust McRobert Trust

Lloyds TSB

These have all been **unsuccessful** because the project was not a charity (a requirement of some funders) or because the request was perceived as being for continuation funding i.e. funding an already established activity.

An application has been made to the Heritage Lottery Fund to meet the shortfall but the outcome will not be known until March 2008.

The project has the potential to meet the requirements of any Environmental Volunteers Grants or New Leader+ funding but the criteria for both these has yet to be announced and will not be available before spring 2008 at the earliest.

However, it should be noted that the John Muir Award Project has been extremely successful in encouraging partners to fund both leaders delivering the award and the cost of young people undertaking the Award. Partners appear to see their input as having direct benefit here and do not see it as their role to fund the Award Manager.

This is reflected in ongoing discussions with William Grant and Sons (Dufftown) and Scottish Youth Hostels Association where both organisations are considering making funds available to encourage young people to undertake the Award in the Cairngorms. Such funding is likely to be targeted toward transport; accommodation and hire of equipment that directly help young people achieve a John Muir Award.

8. Funding conditions

- Detail the project specific conditions that need to be included in any contract for services or grant offer letter in order that CNPA obtains the intended outcomes and Value for Money
- In the case of grant offers, our Financial Memorandum requires that SEERAD agree these conditions in advance of the grant offer being made

The project is currently managed by a partnership comprising officers of CNPA, SNH and John Muir Trust who will continue to ensure that an annual management plan is written and delivered. Day to day management of the Project Manager rests with CNPA.

CNPA requirements are set out in the April 2007 Board Paper and Section 9 below.

9. Deliverables/ Impact Assessment

- What end products/outputs will be delivered?
- How will success be measured?
- How will the project be monitored and what will be the feedback to the CNPA?

The main outputs will be:-

- 1,500 John Muir Awards 2007/08
- 35 Active Providers (equivalent to 3-4 FTE staff)
- Outline development of Junior Ranger Scheme
- 1,800 John Muir Awards in 2008/9
- First Junior Rangers 2008
- 2,000 John Muir Awards in 2009/10
- Continuation/exit strategy developed

10. Value for Money

- In view of the costs, do the deliverables appear to offer value for money? (consider cost of comparable projects, where available).

Project costs are comparable with previous years.

11. Exit or Continuation Arrangements (where applicable)

- If this is not a discrete, time-limited, project or piece of work, what are the exit/continuation arrangements for when CNPA support ceases?

The project is time limited to March 2010.

It is unlikely that SNH funding will continue beyond March 2010 and it is proving extremely challenging to find additional funding. Realistically, we do not see the project as able to continue in its current form beyond March 2010. There appear to be three broad options beyond this point:-

- Absorb the role of the John Muir Award Manager into the existing work of the CNPA – this would require some activity by existing staff to be dropped and would inevitably result in reduced time and focus being spent on the Award.
- Encourage partners to continue the Award without providing dedicated staff time to support this activity. In East Scotland the temporary loss of the Award manager lead to a decline in Awards of 50% in the first year.
- CNPA appoint a new member of staff with the main role of continuing to promote the John Muir Award and develop associated activity.

It is essential that these options are more fully developed in advance of March 2010.

12. Additionality

- Does this work/project substitute for or duplicate work being carried out or proposed by others?
- What would be the effects of the CNPA not supporting the project? Would it proceed without CNPA support?

No duplication.

The Award Manager would not continue without the support of the CNPA. Evidence from East Scotland indicates that the Award would continue to be delivered without a manager but numbers would decline by 50% in the first year and there would be no consistent link with the National Park.

13. Stakeholder Support

- Have the organisations and/or communities that would have an interest in this work/project been involved, and are they supportive?
- If supporter are also not funders an explanation may be required.

Independent work on Social Inclusion by Pirnie Ltd demonstrated **extremely strong stakeholder support** in the Cairngorms and this is further evidenced by the staff time put in by partners delivering the John Muir Award 'on the ground'. Partners consider that the Award is a very positive way of connecting young people, using 'real' experiences to the special qualities of the National Park. The Award is also very effective at encouraging young people to look at issues of sustainable living and climate change

14. Recommendation

It is recommended that £22,000 is authorised to support the work of the John Muir Award Project in the Cairngorms until March 2008 and up to £33,000 per annum in the two subsequent financial years.

We will continue to seek external funding to reduce the CNPA input over the life of the project.

Name: Pete Crane

Signature: _____

Date: 05/11/07

15. Decision to Approve or Reject

Head of Group

Name: Murray Ferguson	Signature:	Date: 05/11/07

Chief Executive

Name:	Signature:	Date:

Management Team

Name:	Signature:	Date:

Finance Committee

Name:	Signature:	Date:

Board

Not applicable – below approval limits.		
Name:	Signature:	Date:

Sponsoring Directorate

Not applicable – below approval limits.		
Name:	Signature:	Date: