

**CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

FOR DECISION

Title: Enhancing the Presence of the National Park in Tourist Information Centres

Prepared by: Murray Ferguson, Head of Visitor Services and Recreation

Purpose

To formally approve commitment of expenditure to the above project.

Recommendations

That the Committee formally approve the expenditure as detailed in the attached Expenditure Justification.

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION

1. Title

Enhancing the presence of the National Park in Tourist Information Centres
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2. Expenditure Category

Operational Plan	✓	Code	Core:7720100	Project	
(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?	£60,000	Existing budget	✓
	£	Additional budget	
	£	New budget	

delete as appropriate

3. Description

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

A programme of modifications and additions to the five VisitScotland (VS) managed Tourist Information Centres (TIC) at Aviemore, Grantown-on-Spey, Braemar, Crathie and Ballater to more clearly position them as information centres serving the National Park. Alterations and additions include:

- CNP leaflet grouping under wooden leaflet holder 'header panels', modelled on the Point of Entry markers
- Maps and panoramas of the National Park printed on 5mm foamex boards
- National Park counter maps
- Advertising A-boards featuring the CNP brand

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

Action 2a in Raising Awareness and Understanding of the Park Priority for Action in the National Park Plan:

“Support the existing Tourist Information Centres, visitor centres and ranger bases as some of the key places to get information about the Park and visibly link these places to the Park in a significant way.”

5. Option Analysis

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

There are possibilities for different interventions, potentially of a larger scale and scope. However, VS are currently planning a re-positioning exercise with their TIC's – intending, for example, to re-name them Visitor Information Centres and develop a programme of refurbishment that will deliver individuality, authenticity and a strong sense of place (ie the National Park).

The programme of interventions listed above has been developed with VS and agreed by both parties to be the most appropriate at this time.

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.

VS re-positioning project is ongoing; to minimise the risk of later refurbishment superseding current proposals the alterations have been developed in partnership with VisitScotland and designed to complement any future works.

There have been difficulties in the past in sourcing a reliable manufacturer for the wooden leaflet header panels. We have been working closely with a local supplier, visiting sites and producing samples and are now confident they can be delivered.

Costs below are estimates based on our previous experience in this area but not on specific quotations. Due to this, an 11% contingency has been built into the costs.

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)

Design of panels, counter maps and A-boards:	£6,000
Design, manufacture and fitting of leaflet header panels:	£4,700
Manufacture of A-boards, panels:	£8,200
Print of counter maps:	£6,000
Installation:	£1,200
Contingency	£2,900
Total	£29,000

We are working closely with VS to position this piece of work as a primer for the larger VS re-positioning project. VS's financial commitment to that bigger project which is ongoing across Scotland is not outlined here, but these works compliment the bigger project and are an important part of the partnership process. In effect the investment in this project at this time strongly influences what VS will do themselves in the future. Early discussions about the project have also been useful to help VS staff at all levels appreciate the change to working styles that they need to make to meet the needs of the National Park

CNPA staff will oversee the design, manufacture and installation of all interventions: estimated time commitment is approximately 15 days.

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 procurement of display materials will be managed by CNPA through our financial processes:-

- Competitive tender of the main design contract
- Competitive tender of the manufacturing contract

Due to the challenges in finding a reliable supplier for branded wooden header panels for leaflet racks we intend to let this element to a local supplier.

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 five TIC's listed receive 312,419 visits per annum (2006 figures). They are a key source of information for visitors about the National Park post arrival. Promoting the CNP in TIC's to date has been somewhat ad-hoc and opportunistic. This work will clearly position the TIC's as centres of National Park information.

Installing co-ordinated leaflet racking, maps and panoramas of the National Park in high profile positions in five TIC's and a degree of zoning of information about the National Park will clearly inform visitors that they are in the Cairngorms National Park and allow them to easily find out more about the CNP.

Regular meetings will be held between VS at both an officer and operational level to gather feedback, which will in turn inform VS's future refurbishment programme.

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).

Competitive tender for the main design contract.

Competitive tender for the manufacturing contract

Printing contract will be awarded following a value for money appraisal of quotes from a number of suppliers.

Design and manufacture of header panels contract will be awarded following an appraisal of value for money, ability to deliver and understanding of the project's requirements based on previous experience gained during the manufacture of leaflet holders (tendered for in 2006) and discussions with local suppliers carried out in 2007/08.

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?

Close partnership working with VS will ensure that alterations and additions will fit with future refurbishment.

Counter maps are currently subsidised by advertising. CNPA input will reduce, but not totally replace, the need for advertising. Long term agreement with VS will be sought to ensure the sustainability of map production.

Ongoing liaison with visitor centre staff and other partners, including ranger services, will be required to ensure that TIC's can provide comprehensive and reliable information about CNP.

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?

The work supports VS's ambitions and proposals for future refurbishments. If CNPA did not invest in modifications at this time, it is likely that VS would deliver some of the proposals as part of their later work. As budgets are not outlined for VS's future work programme it is unclear how much of the alterations would take place, or indeed when it would happen.

Work to encourage both communities and other tourism businesses to provide information to visitors about the National Park is ongoing. The work with TIC's will compliment this work.

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.

The project is a partnership with VS who will continue to operate the TIC's and promote the CNP.

14. Recommendation

It is recommended that up to £29,000 is authorised to design, manufacture and install a series of interventions for the five TIC's that are managed by VisitScotland in the National Park.