

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING
held in the Community Centre, Nethy Bridge
on Friday 28 June 2019 at 9.30am

PRESENT

Peter Argyle
Carolyn Caddick
Deirdre Falconer
Pippa Hadley
Janet Hunter
John Kirk
John Latham
Douglas McAdam
Eleanor Mackintosh

Xander McDade (Convener)
Willie McKenna
Ian McLaren
Dr Fiona McLean
William Munro
Dr Gaener Rodger
Derek Ross
Judith Webb

In Attendance:

Grant Moir, Chief Executive,
David Cameron, Director of Corporate Services,
Alix Harkness, Clerk to the Board

Apologies: Geva Blackett Anne Rae Macdonald

Welcome and Introduction

1. Xander McDade, the Convener, welcomed everyone to the meeting in Nethy Bridge.
2. Apologies were noted from Geva Blackett and Anne Rae Macdonald. John Kirk was expected to arrive late.

Matters Arising

3. There were no matters arising.
4. **Action Point Arising:** **None**

Board Fees Review Recommendation (Paper I)

5. Xander McDade the Convener introduced Paper I which highlights the recommendation of adopting option B as set out in the paper, as recommended to the Board by the Staffing & Recruitment Committee. He made the following points:
 - a) The intention was always to review the policy a couple of years after implementation.
 - b) Three key principles were drafted at the start of the review: 1. to review the effectiveness of the current policy; 2. To ensure Board Members remuneration closely aligned to the time spent performing the role; 3. That the policy complied with the agreements Board Members have with the Scottish Government which set out a minimum of 2 days a month and maximum of 3 days a month.
 - c) The results of the first round of consultation were a surprise, however, these were used to guide the rest of the consultation process.
 - d) The process involved two rounds of consultation with the initial views being used to scope two options, A and B. These options were then consulted on in the second round.
 - e) The proposals were developed following careful analysis of Board/ Committee meetings, reading papers, and other core duties.
 - f) There had been strong board support during the second round of consultation for option B with 85% (12 people) of respondents supporting it and this was subsequently recommended by the Staffing & Recruitment Committee.
6. Carolyn Caddick, Chair of the Staffing and Recruitment Committee added the following points:
 - a) Trying to retain some of good bits of existing policy.
 - b) Deductions to fees had been perceived as negative by a lot of Board Members.
 - c) Many Board Members put in more than 36 days.
 - d) Contracts with the Scottish Government are 2-3 days/ month.
 - e) Good compromise now presented by proposals.
7. Xander McDade referred to the proposed changes to the meeting calendar and the general consensus was that Members were content with these proposals.
8. John Kirk arrived at this point.
9. The Board considered the detail in the Paper and discussions took place around the following:

- a) A comment made that the consultation process had been positive, transparent and would support Option B.
- b) Concern raised on how the reduced value of 50% for attendance at Community Council meetings would work for Board Members who have a dual mandate of also being a Local Councillor. Concern that it could be seen as double funding. The Convener explained that initially the proposal had been not to pay Board Members with a dual mandate for their attendance at community council meetings as it was viewed that on balance this would be part of their Councillor role, however following feedback from two members this additional recommendation incorporated of 50% value was a compromise. Director of Corporate Services confirmed the validity of this concern and advised that it could be seen externally as double funding as it could be perceived that a councillor already had that particular responsibility. He went on to advise that some justification for recognising Community Council attendance is through the Board standards and Code of Conduct, which specifies that a member of the Board is always perceived as a member and the inability to choose to wear one hat or another. He urged Board members to consider this risk of potential perception of double funding and, should the proposal go ahead, be clear in adopted policy that the recognition of attendance at such meetings reflects that Board members must represent and support the Authority irrespective of other representative or elected roles they may have.
- c) Board Member commented the issue of dual mandates had never previously arisen and they felt members with a dual mandate should receive the same remuneration for attendance as other Board Members. Member commented that they viewed Option B as too complicated, and that the Board Groups/ Committee's membership list should be revisited. The Board Member raised that some Board Members were not on any outside bodies/ groups and that they felt it was not appropriate for the Convener to decide who attends specific events and meetings when this attendance affected what gets the Board Member paid. The member suggested that every Board Member should get paid for 36 days per year with no deductions and once a year Board Member attendance is published, so that if a Board Member it is evident if a Board member attends 28 or 42 meetings that year. Recommendation made that the system could be simple, that there was no need for financial deductions and recognition that as a public body the authority are responsible to tax payers and have a duty to be open and transparent. The Convener advised that they had expected a 36 day flat rate to come out as a preferred way forward at the consultation stage but it had not. The Convener added that annual Board attendance at meeting is already published in the final accounts.
- d) A suggestion was made to look at the nominees on the Board Committees/ Groups again to ensure that there would 114 days available to allow all Board Members an equal opportunity to accessing them. In addition the need for a list

of conferences and for the Board as a group to decide who attends as opposed to the Board Convener taking that decision. The Convener advised that most Board Members had already committed to six days or more on top of the 30 days and that as set out in the implementation plan, any Board Members who were not currently committed to an additional six days would be given the opportunity to volunteer for a full six days before the implementation on 1st October. He further drew member's attention to the provision in the new policy which set out a new more transparent system for deciding which Board Members would attend conferences.

- e) A concern was raised that Option B was not equitable and that trusting Board members was paramount. The Convener advised that Option B was based on trust, but that as a public body we had to show we were accounting fully for public funds.
- f) A comment made that it was unfair if one Board Member who performed 28 days got the same level of remuneration as another who had performed 40 days. If there was no deduction system in place how could the fees be clawed back? The need to be open and transparent was emphasised.
- g) A comment made that attendance at Board and Committee meetings should classed as core commitments with attendance at conferences over and above that.
- h) A concern raised that some Board members who volunteered for less groups and/ or attended minimal conferences would be disadvantaged. The Convener advised that the purpose of Option B was not about different members doing different things, it was about board members committing to the core 30 days with the extra 6 days as optional and not expected. He went onto add that if attendance fell below 30 days a mechanism would be put in place to monitor that.
- i) A suggestion was made that substitutes for each Board Group should be reintroduced.
- j) A comment was made that it needed to be recognised that as a result of some Board Members' other commitments it would be too difficult for them to have the same flexibility to attend events that colleague Board Members might be able to. The Convener advised that this was one of the benefits of Option B as it did not expect Board Members to commit more than the core 30 days if they were unable to.
- k) A comment made that opportunities would need to be made available to Board members in their vicinity and that an appeal system should be put in place. The Convener advised that these were fair comments.
- l) A suggestion was made to review the importance and weighting of attending different meetings and for the Board to have an opportunity to debate who should sit on each group. The Convener advised that the weighting had been reviewed threw the consultation process and drew the Board's attention to the

updated listing of Board Membership on Groups document that he had tabled that morning.

- m) Recognition that where members may duplicate by attending the same meeting, such as an elected Board Member and Local Councillor at a Community Council, they may make an agreement between them which community council meetings they will each attend. Recognition that in addition to preparing information in their role as Local Councillor they would also need to prepare a CNPA briefing.
- n) A comment made that it was vital that community councils be kept informed.
- o) A comment made that the current system was set up to promote and prioritise attendance at core meetings (Planning and Board) and that it was important these continued to be prioritised. The member expressed support for the current system. The Convener advised that there was provision for this in Option B. A comment made that some Board Members may have more relevant knowledge and experience to sit on certain groups and this should be a consideration.
- p) Disappointment raised with the current system docking fees for non-attendance at a core meeting while some Board Members regularly attend additional meetings and this is not recognised in the current system. The Convener agreed that this was a fair point that came out of the recent consultation.

10. The CEO made the following points:

- a) Board remuneration was the equivalent of 3.5 members of staff.
- b) Attendance at Board and Committees are the Board's statutory functions and these must be prioritised.
- c) It is important to keep the flow of information to community councils.
- d) It's about simplicity and having an element of trust to make sure attendance at meetings are at the core of any Board fee policy.

11. The Convener advised that were Board Members to only be remunerated for attendance at Board and Committee days only this would amount to 25 days per year.

12. The Board continued to discuss the paper and made the following comments and observations:

- a) A concern was raised that some Board members might choose to attend a conference instead of a board meeting but encouraged to hear that there would be a safety net there to pick that up if that scenario were to arise.
- b) A Board Member reiterated that the policy was introduced to encourage attendance at core meetings to meet quorum requirements. The Convener advised that non-attendance would still be recorded.

- c) Board Member expressed it was important to have a fair, open and transparent system.
- d) Members wishing to contribute additional days over the minimum expected levels should be seen as being positive.

13. Carolyn Caddick made the following comments:

- a) Had not been on the Board when the current policy was introduced.
- b) Has seen people who perform a considerable number of extra days getting penalised for missing the occasional meeting.
- c) There will be strict rules for swapping out attendance at core meetings to attend non statutory meetings.
- d) With regards to attendance at community council meetings, a way of recognising Local councillor's dual mandate was addressed in the revised policy.
- e) Going forward the Board should revisit who represents the Board on different outside bodies
- f) The policy should be about compromises and rewarding people for their efforts.

14. The Convener put forward a motion to go with the recommendation for Option B as per the recommendation in the paper. This was seconded by Carolyn Caddick.

15. Peter Argyle put forward an amendment to pay fees at a standard 36 days each year, with requirement to have officers make transparent, accountable, open, reporting arrangements to support pay at that flat rate. This was seconded by Fiona McLean.

16. William Munro proposed an amendment to the motion which stipulated that those attending a community council meeting would be paid at the same rate no matter what background they were nominated onto the Board. There was a quick show of hands for this amendment to the motion and as there was only two in favour it was decided not to proceed with this amendment to the motion on the table.

17. The Board proceeded into a vote with members asked by roll call to express their vote for either the motion or amendment. The results were as follows:

NAME	MOTION	AMENDMENT	ABSTAIN
Peter Argyle		√	
Carolyn Caddick	√		
Deirdre Falconer	√		
Pippa Hadley		√	
Janet Hunter	√		
John Kirk	√		
John Latham		√	
Eleanor Mackintosh			√
Douglas McAdam	√		
Xander McDade	√		
Willie McKenna	√		
Ian McLaren	√		
Fiona McLean		√	
William Munro	√		
Gaener Rodger		√	
Derek Ross			√
Judith Webb	√		
TOTAL	10	5	2

18. The Board agreed:

- a) The recommendations of the Staffing & Recruitment Committee as set out in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of the paper;
- b) Minor matters relating to the implementation of this policy shall be delegated to the Director of Corporate Services and Chief Executive with the agreement of the Convener and Deputy Convener.

19. Action:

- i. Issue of final policy papers to support implementation.

Date of Next Meeting

20. Next formal Board meeting to be held on 20 September 2019, Dee & Spey Meeting rooms, CNPA HQ.

21. This meeting concluded at 11.00.