

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

ÙGHDARRAS PÀIRC NÀISEANTA A'
MHONaidH RUAIDH

Cairngorms Equality Advisory Panel

27th April 2021

5:00pm – 6:30pm - Held virtually

Minutes

Present:

Fiona McLean (Chair)	Anita Howard
Bo Hickey	Celia Sweeny
Heather Earnshaw	Kirsteen Allison
Kevin Hutchens	Linda Bamford
Vanessa Altweck	Peter Kennedy
Stuart Hall	

In Attendance:

Kate Christie	Vicky Walker
Louisa McDaid (Captioner)	Gail (Captioner)
Martyn Crawshaw	Katherine Willing
Pip Mackie	Gavin Miles
Pete Crane	

1. Introduction and Discussion of Last Session

- 1.1. Fiona welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the guests.
- 1.2. It was agreed that the panel would ask all speakers to give “one-thing” they would report back to the panel on at a later date.
- 1.3. Fiona reminded the panel of the open invitation for those who wanted to have a one-to-one discussion regarding the panel.

2. Martyn Crawshaw –Badaguish and Speyside Trust Project Update

- 2.1. Martyn explained that previously, the Trust predominantly provided respite holidays for those with a range of needs, however, they are temporarily moving away from this due to constraints of the guidelines and change in the need for flexibility. The focus is currently how they work with local stakeholders.
- 2.2. The Trust held virtual visioning sessions and workshops, Martyn discussed the outcomes of these exercises. Holding these virtually was found to be helpful in

terms of accessibility to those who wouldn't have been comfortable with in-person meetings.

2.3. Martyn explained that following these visioning exercises and workshops the Trust has set itself four tasks:

- Review and clarify their identity and branding.
- Build stronger links with their communities, partners and agencies.
- Revise their charitable aims to better reflect their vision.
- Make improved and wider use of their facilities.

Following this, the trust has identified new aims which it hopes will help them to provide a more blended approach that offers greater flexibility.

Response from Panel

2.4. The panel raised that the aims reflect making the centre accessible for all. The panel suggested that affordable economic opportunities should be considered in the revised aims. The panel suggested there is enhanced funding due to this being high on local government initiatives.

2.5. Martyn was invited to join group discussions with multiple groups from the national park surrounding long term funding streams to make facilities fully inclusive, such as funding changing places toilets, religious appropriate places and quiet spaces.

2.6. The issue of stopping respite was raised, Martyn explained this is in abeyance as opposed to stopped. The centre is classed as a residential care centre by the care inspectorate and due to difficulties with recruitment, resourcing and local housing it is not able to maintain this standard. A number of contacts were raised such as the family holiday association and Contact for disabled children, Martyn expressed interest to continue this discussion out with the meeting.

2.7. The panel discussed that following the ease in Covid restrictions many care providers will be wanting to engage with accessible opportunities and therefore, it may be useful for the Trust to build contacts with local care providers such as Cornerstone or Enable.

2.8. Martyn's 'one thing' to take away from the discussion was to go through the list of agencies and people that has been recommended and felt it would be unfair to prioritise one of these over another.

3. Pete Crane – Update on the Covid Recovery Plan

3.1. Pete discussed the main areas of the Covid recovery plan and how this is effecting how CNPA aim to support the national park:

- Visitors - there is a higher amount of staycations and visitors who come from the five local authorities which make up the park.
- Planning – Regular meetings are held with the tourism group, key land managers, Cairngorm Business Partnership, local counsellors and residents. These partnerships meetings have produced practical plans for visitor management which change with the regular meetings.
- Messaging – the messaging focuses around 'Cairngorms Together' created through consultation with local residents and visitors as well as the national message of 'Respect, Protect and Enjoy' in combination with messaging from

the business partnership as to what's open. The key challenge is targeting the new visitor/audience who communicate differently.

- Focus – The focus is on the activities that visitors can experience for free through promoting the national path network which encourages visitors to visit local areas which helps lead to economic spending. There is a continued focus on irresponsible behaviour which happens within the park, there are partnerships forged with 'Keep Scotland Beautiful' and more messaging surrounding this.
- 3.2. Pete explained additional funding has been secured for seasonal rangers and four permanent rangers. Funding has been increased for the six partnership rangers funded by CNPA. There will also be trainee rangers this year as part of the Kickstart Scheme. This high ranger presence will help to welcome visitors and positively reinforce good behaviour within the park.
 - 3.3. Pete described multiple examples of partnership working where CNPA have funded improvements of carparks, signage to direct visitors where is busy and improvements to path networks. There is also funding available for the green recovery fund.
 - 3.4. Pete went on to discuss the continued monitoring of socio-economic groups to the park and the ongoing challenge that Covid presents to progressing in this area. It is felt that there has been improvement on getting a more representative range of visitors from different socio-economic groups.

Response from Panel

- 3.5. The panel asked how is CNPA measuring the socio-economic groups of visitors and staff of CNPA particularly within the ranger service? Pete explained there is a 12 monthly visitor survey which asks about socio economic group and discussed how this is being used with local businesses. In reference to staffing Kate pointed the panel member to the equalities mainstreaming report which is published on the website.
- 3.6. Relating to the paper sent out prior to the meeting, a panel member asked for clarification regarding a number of upgrades to public toilets and whether these were now fully accessible or whether this had been considered. Pete explained that currently, the projects he had information for, none are fully accessible however, there is the possibility of a future project funded by CNPA to create a fully accessible toilet.
- 3.7. The panel enquired about specialised equalities training for the rangers to make sure they are able to give advice on accessibility when greeting visitors. Pete and Kate explained all rangers and staff are required to complete a generic equalities training when they are first employed and CNPA are investing in a compressive equalities training programme this year for all staff and board. Covid-19 has created challenges for giving specific training to the rangers on this.
- 3.8. The panel asked what was being done to promote and link, active travel and public transport links to and within the park. Pete explained CNPA are currently working with Highland council to trial a regular bus service during the Scottish and English summer holidays for the Glenmore to Aviemore corridor for those who have pre-arrived. Pete explained the heritage horizons bid, if successful will look at active

transport within the park. Public transport out with the park is harder to control and requires more partner support. Pete explained several concerns with making the bus infrastructure accessible.

- 3.9. Pete's 'one thing' was to work with the Cairngorms Business Partnership to develop how we better share information between businesses and the visitor as to what's accessible which Pete feels will be an ongoing project.

4. Gavin Miles - Minecraft Planning

- 4.1. CNPA have an objective to encourage young people to get involved with the planning process so they feel able to participate in the planning process. Previous classroom based attempts have had mixed success. Gavin explained that they decided to engage the Cairngorm Youth Action Team.
- 4.2. Gavin explained that Covid has impacted our ability to engage with young people in the ways we had traditionally, so one member of staff has created a Minecraft world which represented the National Park. It was used with members of the Cairngorm Youth Action Team to learn about planning within the park, the group watched a planning committee and then reported back to the committee on their Minecraft experience.
- 4.3. Gavin explained the map is now open to anyone to use and was interested in if anyone had ideas on how this could be used in the future.

Response from the Panel

- 4.4. Some of the difficulties of using this with small educational groups were discussed. It was suggested by a member of the panel that a good partnership may be with the University of Highland and Islands to use and develop a Hackathon to look at it becoming more accessible.
- 4.5. The panel were interested in how it could be used to create more equal engagement with the planning process.
- 4.6. The panel suggested the platform could be used to engage those who have long term illness who may not be currently be able to access the park.
- 4.7. There was some concern from the panel due to the user statistics for Minecraft, and wider statistics for gaming that this may encourage more males to engage in planning and increase the gender gap of those who engage or pursue a career in planning.

5. AOB

- 5.1. No AOB's were raised.

Next Meeting: 25th May 2021

END OF MEETING

