

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY RESOURCES COMMITTEE

FOR DECISION

Title: RESOURCES COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT TO BOARD

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Purpose

This paper presents the draft Resources Committee Report to Board for the period August 2021 to August 2022.

Recommendations

The Resources Committee is asked to review the draft Annual Report to the Board and agree any amendments prior to submission to the board in September.

Activity in Period

1. The Resources Committee was established following a review of the Cairngorms NPA's board committee structures over the first quarter of 2021/22. The Committee combined many of the responsibilities of the previous Finance and Delivery and Staffing and Recruitment Committees.
2. The Committee met for the first time in August 2021 and has met a total of five times up to and including the meeting of 12 August 2022.
3. The Committee has sought assurance over the following key aspects of the Cairngorms NPA's operations over the course of the reporting period:
 - a. Staff pay award effective from 1 April 2022;
 - b. Development of 2022/23 budget;
 - c. Budget monitoring for both 2021/22 and 2022/23;
 - d. Draft financial outturn position for 2021/22;
 - e. Delivering the Cairngorms NPA's Equality Duties;
 - f. Staff engagement, including the results of the staff survey and Staff Consultative Forum discussions;
 - g. Evolution of staff terms and conditions, particularly around the development of 35 hour working week proposals;
 - h. The Right to Disconnect Charter;
 - i. Health and Safety operations;

4. The Committee also initiated consideration of the potential for developing commercial income and the committee's future consideration of this aspect of the Authority's activity toward the end of this reporting period. The Committee will take this aspect of work forward in future years.

Review of Activities and Commentary

5. The Committee, as a new aspect of the Cairngorms NPA assurance processes, has worked over the year to understand its remit and its role in the context of other committees and governance structures and evolve appropriate reporting structures and points of focus. Overall, the committee feels it has been successful in this work. Appropriate areas of overlap with other committees on performance and risk management have been recognised and minimised.
6. The Committee had a consistent membership over the course of the year with excellent attendance and engagement by members in matters covered.
7. The Committee has not identified any changes required to its terms of reference over the course of this reporting period.
8. There have been no instances of need for escalation of concerns to the full board, while some minor matters have been made known to other committees to enhance coordinated assurance over organisational performance.
9. The initial scheduling of four committees on the same day has been challenging for timing of meetings; keeping meetings to time while allowing full and valuable discussions to take place; and on officer support time. The change to holding performance committee meetings as part of a schedule of three committees is welcomed and will be monitored for effectiveness.

Conclusions

10. The operation of the Resources Committee has provided an important and effective element of assurance to the Cairngorms NPA's governance and assurance systems.
11. Members believe the combination of the remits of two committees into a single committee scrutinising the key areas of financial and staff resources, in addition to some oversight of wider resources work in the deployment of offices and other facilities, has given an enhanced level of assurance over these key areas. The Committee's view therefore after the first year of operation is that the Committee should be retained as an element of the Cairngorms NPA's governance and assurance framework under its current remit.
12. The Committee believes there are no significant changes needed in the Committee's operations over the coming year. Committee members will continue to work with senior officers to evolve and adapt reporting structures as required.
13. The Committee is grateful to the support of officers provided over the year, for full and clear papers and effective, helpful engagement at our meetings.

David Cameron

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