



Annex 2

**Title: Convener, Deputy Convener & Planning Convener
Allocations Review**

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Authority**

1. Background

- a) Three Board roles currently attract a higher day allocation than other Board members. These are the Board Convener, the Board Deputy Convener and the Planning Committee Convener.
- b) Currently the Convener is allocated two days a week to perform their duties, with the Deputy Convener allocated an additional day a month and the Planning Convener also allocated an additional day a month.
- c) These allocations have been in place since the early days of the National Park and have not been routinely reviewed and were not part of the 2019 or 2017 Board Fees Reviews.

2. Allocations Review

2.1. Convener Allocation

- a) The Board Convener receives two days per week to undertake their duties. Although this is broadly similar to other NDBPs of the same size in financial terms they usually have Boards with memberships roughly half the size of the Cairngorms National Park Authority and that do not meet as regularly.
- b) Even adjusting for the exceptional time demands presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and the additional work required for the National Park Partnership Plan over the past few years the role generally demands more than two days a week. Whilst it will never be an exact time each week, 2.5 days a week is likely to closer reflect the time commitment required whilst continuing to reflect it is a part-time role and the size of the organisation. The additional 0.5 day would recognise the greater time commitment required to meet particularly with stakeholders who are



critical to National Park Partnership Plan delivery, but also the time to support a larger Board.

- c) Although Scottish Government rules on Board Fees allow the Convener to be paid a higher daily rate than other Board Members, the CNPA currently pays the Convener the same day rate as all other Board Members. Whilst this could be one way to increase the Convener remuneration to better reflect the workload and additional responsibilities, it is proposed that it would be more appropriate to seek an increase in the number of days allocated to a more realistic number.
- d) To ensure the widest range of Board Members are able to put themselves forward for additional responsibility roles such as Convener, it is important that the allocation reflects the workload involved. A park for all must reflect that position at all levels.

2.2. Deputy Convener Allocation

- a) In more recent years the Deputy Convener has been given a more inclusive role in supporting the Convener which has led to an increase in their workload beyond the fairly limited role of purely stepping in for the Convener when they are unavailable. This more partnership like approach has resulted in an increase in the number of meetings they are attending such as Ministerial Visits, national meetings and regular stakeholder meetings.
- b) This approach has been successful and it is expected that it is likely to continue and therefore consideration should be given to reflecting the extra work the Deputy Convener role is undertaken currently on a voluntary basis.
- c) An increase to two extra days a month (from 8th September 2023) instead of one extra day a month would be a more accurate reflection of the time commitment involved and ensure that those serving in this role are not being expected to perform significantly more hours than they are remunerated for.

2.3. Planning Convener Allocation

- a) Historically there were twelve Planning Committees a year and this corresponded with the additional twelve days the Planning Convener received a year to undertake their work. When the number of Planning Committees were reduced to ten, the number of days was not reduced to correspond with the reduction and it was left at twelve. This year the number of Planning Committees has been further



reduced to eight to correspond with lower Planning applications coming before the Committee.

- b) It would seem appropriate that the next Planning Convener (from November 2023) should receive eight additional days a year to correspond with the number of Planning Committees.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to consider:

- a) if it wishes to make a request to Scottish Government to change the Convener, Deputy Convener and Planning Convener allocations as part of the annual Board Fees submission being prepared for submission to government.
- b) Any changes would be proposed to take effect from 1st August 2023 in respect of the Convener, 8th September 2023 in respect of the Deputy Convener and 1st November 2023 in respect of the Planning Committee Convener and would not affect current post holders.