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# Minutes of the Performance Committee

## Held online

**20 September 2024**

### Present

Kenny Deans (Convener)

Sandy Bremner

Eleanor Mackintosh

Chris Beattie

Dr Hannah Grist (sub for Steve Micklewright)

Ann Ross

### In Attendance

Grant Moir, Chief Executive Officer

David Cameron, Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Director of Corporate Services

Gavin Miles, Director of Planning and Place

David Clyne, Head of Cairngorms 2030

Colin McClean, Head of Land Management

Eilidh Todd, Communities and Rural Development Manager

Karen Johnstone, Clerk to the Board

### Apologies

John Kirk

Steve Micklewright

### Welcome and introduction

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Performance Committee.

### Minutes of Previous Meetings

2. The minutes of the previous meeting, 14 June 2024 were approved with no amendments.



## Matters Arising

ACTION	Status
<b>Draft Minutes – 14 June 2024</b>	
<b>Action points arising from previous meetings</b>	
11 February 2022	In hand
ii. Item 3.13a1 an accurate record of Visit Scotland funding 2023 / 24 will be brought to the Performance Committee in due course as external auditors are still working through records.	Update at next meeting
<b>Paper 2 - Cairngorms 2030: Q1 2024 (Jan – Mar)</b>	
At para 9c	
i. Chair of Performance Committee, Kenny Deans and Deputy CEO, David Cameron to discuss and make a plan for how best to share with the Board Members the forward look document to allow them to see what's coming up.	Completed.

- Performance Committee meeting on 14 June 2024 - 9d - update on the active travel budget between Transport Scotland and Sustrans. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) stated this would be addressed under the Cairngorms 2030 update.

## Declarations of interest

- Eleanor Mackintosh noted she sits on board of both the Cairngorms Trust and Cairngorms 2030 Programme Board, both of which are connected to reports presented to this meeting.

## Cairngorms 2030: Quarter two 2024 (April – June) Programme update (Paper 1)

- David Clyne introduced the paper which presents an update to the Park Authority Performance Committee on the risks under management by the Cairngorms 2030 programme team. This paper presents the status of programme management, including risk management status, based on information in project reports for the period from March to June 2024, updated where appropriate to reflect current position as at the time of writing, and the planned work to end September 2024.



6. The Performance Committee discussed the update and made the following comments and observations:
  - a) A board member raised concerns regarding if provisions have been made in the case that funding is withdrawn due to Scottish Government's (SG) current financial situation. Head of Cairngorms 2030 (C2030) reassured committee members that changes to Government funding will not impact on the Cairngorms 2030 budget from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. There are some issues specifically around the match funding associated with transport projects, but staff are having constructive discussions with Transport Scotland and Scottish Government.
  - b) CEO noted from the previous matters arising, that the Park Authority is in a reasonable place at the moment following recent discussions with Transport Scotland and sharing the Park Authority's proposed expenditure for 2025 / 26 and 2026 / 27 with them. CEO highlighted the Park Authority are confident they will receive funding for design work as they have strong construction match funding in place.
  - c) A board member questioned if there were any publicly sensitive projects that are not progressing at the moment. Head of C2030 noted there are a range of projects all at design stage now, however in Carrbridge they have some push back relating to active travel designs. The team are aware of the differing views, it was noted that the project is not going forward in the foreseeable future.
  - d) Clarity was sought regarding the Red Amber Green (RAG) rating of risk status. Head of C2030 noted that following a meeting with Transport Scotland and Sustrans, the red risk rating moved to amber to reflect improved expectations of funding being made available and continues to be at amber status as there is sufficient time to mitigate risk around delivery of these targets.
  - e) A board member questioned the scope of the infrastructure of the sustainable transport projects, specifically, if there would be places for public to park their bikes. Head of C2030 confirmed that there would be as this was a fundamental part of the cycle friendly and behaviour change projects, along with transport locations where there will be bike parks, charging stations. These project elements will all be connected in a strategic way.
7. The Committee noted the paper.
8. Action Point Arising: None



## **Verbal Update on Cairngorms 2030 Empowerment Theme**

9. Eilidh Todd, Communities and Rural Development Manager gave a presentation on Cairngorms 2030 Empowerment Theme.
10. The Performance Committee discussed the update and made the following comments and observations:
  - a) A board member questioned how the local communities' views were gauged without them having a community council to speak for them as a whole and highlighted that residents not engaged with the park are the most underrepresented groups. Communities and Rural Development Manager noted that using multiple channels of communication, innovative methods, listening to individuals, meeting people where they are based; allowing them to be as involved as they chose to be; and not forcing pressure or opinions on them are all mechanisms being deployed to engage with local residents.
  - b) A board member questioned if the SG budget restrictions were having an impact on how they engage with the public. Head of C2030 noted that though they were not directly impacted, they have to act sensitively and appropriately given the current circumstances.
  - c) A board member raised concern about the language used in the presentation and how this would help engage the public and suggested focusing more on quality conversations. CEO highlighted that there has been a lot of public engagement from recent events. These events and their follow up allow the public to share their feedback, thoughts and opinions with the team openly. The language used in the presentation is designed to explain the processes being deployed and would not be used publicly.
  - d) There was a discussion about the regularity of community events, such as the recent events at Boat of Garten, the CEO confirmed they are hopeful to hold another event annually, if not more regularly.
  - e) A board member questioned managing volunteer burn out. Communities and Rural Development Manager agreed that this was a concern, and the team are very aware of how much time and effort is involved for volunteers. Going forward the team plans to improve on building relationships and creating positive memories with the public; having open and honest conversations, being action focused and delivering on meaningful objectives.
11. The Committee noted the verbal update.
12. Action points: None



## **Cairngorms Peatland ACTION Programme (Paper 2)**

13. Colin McLean introduced the paper which presents an update on the delivery of the Park Authority's Peatland ACTION programme in 2024 / 25 and consideration of plans for the 2025 / 26 pipeline of activity.
14. The Performance Committee discussed the update and made the following comments and observations:
  - a) CEO stated the Park Authority had attended a peatland conference in Aviemore with 400 people from across the UK where Jim Farlie confirmed £250 million of capital from SG over the next 10 years and the Programme for Government for 2025 / 26 confirms at least 10,000 hectares will be restored in Scotland per annum. Funding appears to be positive for next year, especially with the match funding, however noting that it is always beneficial to have private funding as well. It was also highlighted that there were three more peatland projects applications submitted before closing the programme for this year, taking the hectares restored over target, and significantly reducing the forecast underspend.
  - b) A question was raised regarding the circumstances around losing a big project. Head of Land Management stated that this was due to a unique situation with complicated land ownership around the carbon credits, however noted that this is unlikely to have constraints on the programme going forward for others.
  - c) The CEO noted ongoing partnership between academic institutions and other partners regarding long term agreements on carbon credits and will share the update with the committee when information is available. SG are currently carrying out work regarding tenant and landowners on forestry and peatland carbon credits and if there is some Information, this will be shared.
15. The Committee noted the paper.
16. Action Point Arising:
  - i. **Updated on carbon credit work being undertaken within the sector.**

## **Cairngorms Trust and Community Led Local Development update (Paper 3)**

17. David Cameron introduced the paper which presents an update on the work of the Cairngorms Local Action Group Trust ('the Cairngorms Trust') and the collective work



of the Cairngorms Trust and the Park Authority in Community Led Local Development (CLLD) activity.

18. The Performance Committee discussed the update and made the following comments and observations:

- a) A discussion was had around the possibility of using levelling up funds, however Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services noted that this was difficult for the Park Authority to access as it is allocated to local authorities and as the Park Authority sits in five different local authorities this would be a challenge to coordinate.
- b) Questions were raised if Cairngorms Trust have combined with similar organisations to lobby for a change in funding. Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services assured the Committee that this work is already ongoing, however noting this is a slow process as it involves creating a new structure.
- c) Comments were made regarding the frustration around the slow decision-making process on awarding funds by government to the Trust, resulting in fears of job losses where community projects and their staffing were potentially dependent on these funding decisions.
- d) A board member questioned whether the three funding streams on offer were pro rata or if they were concentrating on alternative funds. Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services stated that regarding Community Lead vision funds, some projects have already been funded, some are ready to go waiting on approval from SG. Nature funded streams are fully committed, allocating £90,000. There are still three strands of funding, but the community lead vision fund had to be paired down.

19. The Committee noted the paper.

20. Action Point Arising: None.

## **AOCB**

21. None

22. Date of next meeting 13 December, hybrid at the moment, but may get moved to online only.

23. The meeting closed at 11.27am



Performance Committee Action Points:

ACTION	Status
<b>Action points arising from previous meetings</b>	
<b>14 June 2024</b>	
<b>Action points arising from previous meetings</b>	
11 February 2022 ii. Item 3.13a1 an accurate record of Visit Scotland funding 2023 / 24 will be brought to the Performance Committee in due course as external auditors are still working through records.	In hand  Update at next meeting
VisitScotland through Rural Transport Infrastructure Funding which had been carried in deferred income deployed in 23/24 to: Glenmore toilet refurbishment £35,000 Path survey work £12,339 Other projects £6,371	
<b>Action points arising from this meeting</b>	
<b>20 September 2024</b>	
Cairngorms Peatland ACTION Programme (Paper 2) At para 13c i. Updated on carbon credit work undertaken within the sector between academic institutions and landowners.	