



Cairngorms Tourism Partnership

Held online on 25 February 2026 at 2.00pm

Present:

Jackie Brierton (Chair)	<i>Park Authority Board</i>
Craig Mills	<i>Cairngorms Business Partnership</i>
Ross Coulter	<i>Landmark Park</i>
Chris Taylor	<i>VisitScotland</i>
Douglas Chisholm	<i>Highland Council (from 2.32pm)</i>
Susan Considine	<i>Highland Council</i>
Gavin Miles	<i>Park Authority</i>
Chris Foy	<i>VisitAberdeenshire</i>
Jess Tomes	<i>RSPB</i>
Alice Fogg	<i>Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey</i>
Karen Johnston	<i>Park Authority (note taker)</i>

Apologies:

Anna Miller	<i>Highlands and Islands Enterprise</i>
Danielle McKinlay	<i>Aberdeenshire Council</i>
Eilidh Todd	<i>Park Authority</i>
Geva Blackett	<i>Park Authority Board</i>
Heather Trench	<i>Park Authority</i>
Olly Davies	<i>Park Authority</i>
Janet Hunter	<i>GrowBiz</i>
Steven Dott	<i>Highlands and Islands Enterprise</i>
Kelly Wiltshire	<i>Aberdeenshire Council</i>

1. Welcome and Apologies

Discussed

- Chair welcomed everyone and all introduced themselves. Apologies were noted.

2. Note of last meeting and matters arising

Discussed

- Chair ran through the action points from the last meeting which had been actioned where appropriate.
- Chair noted that Norma Lyall, Angus Tourism has left to take on a new role, therefore a new member will join the group and attend future meetings. Chair thanked Norma for all her input, work and efforts in the group and for Angus Tourism.
- Previous meeting notes were approved with no amendments.



3. National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) / Sustainable Tourism Action Plan

Discussed

- GM gave an update on the NPPP, noting this would go out for full consultation later this year. This group will discuss tourism at a strategic level in the next National Park Partnership Plan at the next meeting.
- Chair noted that they are actively looking to extend the membership of tourism partnerships including more business representatives within the group. Any suggestions would be welcome.

Action

AP(1) - Add NPPP to agenda for June meeting. HT

4. Planning for summer season 2026

Discussed

- GM gave an update on Fire Byelaws, noting this will come into effect from 01 April 2026. It was highlighted that there will be positive and simple messaging shared along with signage, variable messaging signs, leaflets, posters and social media campaigns, including adverts on Spotify.
- GM explained rangers will be trained in the enforcement of the fire byelaws, recording evidence to share with the prosecutor fiscal. Additional seasonal rangers have been recruited, specifically to work over weekends and busy periods. There will also be training provided for land managers and others on the ground on handling situations.
- CF asked if the communications and messaging could be shared with the group and local authorities to share via their own channels. GM confirmed communications materials would be shared once the byelaw comes into place to share as far and wide as possible.

5. Winter marketing

Discussed

- GM presented the STEAM 2019-2024 data, noting that the bulk of growth in visitor numbers and economic impact was in the quieter off-peak months.
- RC commented that this mirrored their figures, highlighting that Landmark sold more tickets in December than in June this year, which is unusual, but credited marketing of the winter lights, improving seasonal tourism.
- CF agreed the data mirrored with their own from Aberdeenshire, and CT noted that over a two-year period there has been national growth in international visitors and the domestic market traveling off season which improves numbers in the shoulder months.
- CM agreed that promotion and marketing is improving website traffic as well as visitors to the local businesses. It was highlighted that a Spotify campaign has been beneficial with results sitting above industry averages.



DC joined the meeting at 2.32pm

- CM commented that using hard data to demonstrate to businesses the impact the winter campaigns have had will improve business involvement. Discussions were had around accommodation businesses being closed over the winter months and the impact of this. It was suggested a collaborative approach from local businesses to stagger open days could help improve the tourism in the winter months.
- DC suggested the benefits of looking at data from further back to see the improvements.
- CT to gather comparables in other parts of Scotland to bring back to the group to help with sharing the good news story from efforts of the Park Authority and Partners.

Action

AP(2) - Gather comparable data from other parts of Scotland and share with Park Authority.
CT

6. Visitor Levy

Discussed

- DC shared link to Highland Councils Visitor levy consultation analysis and impact assessments - Highland Council. Highland Council are still in the decision-making process but leaning toward the percentage rates if Scottish Government change the legislation as expected.
- It was noted that different councils may choose different rate options, meaning there will be both percentage and flat rates operating throughout Scotland. Some Councils are waiting on the results of the bill before making decisions on what rate to operate under.
- CF confirmed that Aberdeen City are going ahead with percentage rates, noting DM will give a full update at a future meeting.

7. Partner Updates

Discussed

- AF updated that Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey (VABS) are working with communities to help them achieve their Community Action Plans through different delivery mechanisms.
- CT gave an update on their winter campaigns work, noting once this has been evaluated, the information will be shared to feed into the data for the NPPP.
- CM updated that work was ongoing for winter marketing and starting on summer marketing as well as ensuring support for businesses on licensing issues. CBP is hosting a cyber-crime conference in Aviemore.



- DC will be attending a meeting with the Park Authority and New Zealand Tourism Board to discuss their motor home scheme.
- JT noted that seasonal Rangers will soon be starting, engaging with public about responsible and respectable access, working on the 'Lek it Be' campaign and working alongside the Park Authority Rangers to support them enforcing the Fire Byelaw. The Nature Centre opens on 1 April showcasing the changing place facilities and the electric tramper scooter. Help from the Park Authority and CBP on promotion would be appreciated.
- RC updated on the difficulty of the increase in business costs, however noted that their heat source pump has been a massive improvement. A new attraction will be launched on 27 June, therefore working on marketing on this. Optimistic despite the challenges.
- **AoB**
Discussed
- Nothing raised
- **Date of next meetings**
Discussed
- Discussions were had around the location for the next meeting. Landmark was suggested. RC and HT will discuss this.
- Date of next meeting is 3 June 2026. CT gave apologies.

Action

AP(3) - HT AND RC to discuss venue options for next meeting. HT

- *The meeting closed at 3.20pm*