



Annex 1 – Committee Minutes

Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting

**Held at Cairngorms National Park Authority office, Grantown-on-Spey
Online**

21 March 2025 at 09.30am

Present online

Fiona McLean (Chair)

Kenny Deans (Sub)

Bill Lobban

Peter Cosgrove (Deputy Chair)

Paul Gibb

In attendance

Elizabeth Young, Azets

Tom Reid. Mazars

Ishna Singh. Mazars

Grant Moir, Chief Executive Officer

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

Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations

Mikko Saari, Procurement Officer

Alix Harkness, Clerk to the Board

Apologies

Geva Blackett

Duncan Miller

Welcome and introduction

1. Fiona McLean, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted.



Approval of minutes of previous meetings

2. The draft minutes of the previous Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 8 November 2024 were approved with no amendments

Matters arising not covered elsewhere

3. There were no matters arising.

Ref	Action Detail	Who	When	Status
27/09/24	At para 20i iv. Update on internal audit view on financial scenario planning to be provided to the Audit and Risk Committee	David and Stephanie	At the end of the 24/25 financial year.	Ongoing
27/09/24	At para 36ii vi. CEO to mention the impact the Procurement Officer is making in the organisation within his next CEO report for Board meeting on 22 November 2024.	Grant	Next Formal Board meeting on 22 November 2024	Complete
From today's meeting				
08/11/24	At para 10a i. A meeting between Azets and Head of Finance and Corporate Operations to discuss examples of what evidence is required to complete outstanding actions.	Louise/ Stephanie		On Agenda today
	At para 10b	Stephanie		



	i. Stephanie Hume, Azets to look at potentially changing the wording "incomplete" and "partially complete" to something more transparent.			
08/11/24	At para 10c i. Officers to carry out a recruitment audit and a financial planning audit within the current financial year.	David/ Louise		complete
08/11/24	At para 18b i. Update the risk register to show upskilling and training Is being delivered.	David/ Louise		complete
08/11/24	At para 26b i. Information manager to provide Committee members with the number of requestees for FOISA.	Paul	20 June 2025 meeting	open

Declarations of interest

4. There were no declarations of interest.

External Audit Plan 2024/25 (Paper 1)

5. Ishana Singh, Mazars presented the paper which sets out the external auditor's plan for the forthcoming audit of the 2024/25 Annual Report and Accounts.

Bill Lobban joined the meeting at 9.36am



6. David Cameron, Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services advised that he had had a good discussion with the audit team and agreed with approaches set out in the report. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations welcomed the slight adjustment to the timetabling to accommodate Daniel Ralph, Financial Accountant's retirement at the end of April 2025.
7. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) Fiona McLean, the Audit and Risk Committee Chair thanked Daniel Ralph on behalf of the Committee for his valuable contribution over the years and wished him a very enjoyable retirement.
 - b) On Paper 1 Annex 1, could the name of the organisation be spelled correctly? The 's' at the end of Cairngorms was missing. Ishana Singh, Mazars apologised and agreed to correct it.
 - c) With reference to IT Policies on page 17 of the Annex to the paper, there was a follow on recommendation concerning IT change management and user access to which no management update had been provided. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations advised that the IT team were currently undergoing a government cyber health check and that the need for better documentation had also been raised during this work. As a result, documentation is being prepared. However, she reassured the Committee that while there was a lack of documentation, , the team are exercising appropriate change management and user access procedures.
 - d) Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services added that management were content with the fee quoted in the report and had recently received Audit Scotland's fee structure for the year, which provided the reassurance that the fee quoted by Mazars was midpoint in that.
 - e) With reference to page 18 of the Annex to the paper, bullet point one – how many companies does the organisation have in the current accounting system? Head of Finance and Corporate Operations clarified that the point raised by the auditors relates to the way the Cairngorms National Park Authority are recording in the existing finance system the transactions within the various projects it undertakes; Cairngorms 2030, Capercaillie project, Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership etc were being treated as separate companies. This was our Finance Manager's way of keeping separate the transactions relating to different funding streams within our Sage accounting system. She acknowledged that this approach is difficult for



the auditors and that it results in the need to manipulate transactions outside the finance system in Excel spreadsheets, with all the potential for human error associated with extensive spreadsheet use.

- f) On page 25 of the Annex to the Paper, 'Significant risks' what potential is there for error and fraud? Tom Reid, Mazars explained that this risk is standard on all public sector audit plans and it is as a result of the position that management are in, where they can override controls merely by the nature of their being in a management position. Head of Finance and Corporate Operations advised that monthly monitoring and scrutiny of the accounts being presented to management team monthly reduces the risk of that happening.

8. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and agreed the recommendations.

9. Action Points Arising: None.

Internal audit progress report (Paper 2)

10. Elizabeth Young, Azets presented the paper which sets out progress against the internal audit programme for 2024/25 prepared by Azets.

11. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and agreed the recommendations.

12. Action Points Arising: None.

Strategic risk registers (Paper 3)

13. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper which sets out a review by the Committee of the Park Authority's strategic risk management position.

14. David Cameron, Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services advised that the Strategic Risk register also formed part of Budget and Operational Plan paper to be presented to the Board at its meeting on 28 March. He explained that risk 11 had been amended to reflect the element of reputational risk arising from disinformation. This change had been reflected in the Board paper annex but the papers for this Committee had already been issued and did not include this change.

15. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comments and observations:



- a) Audit and Risk Committee Convener reported that it was good to see the risk score improving of 1,2,3, 9 and noted that there were 13 active risks.
- b) Question posed around risk 13 that it may be fits within risk 1 however noted that the Board had been keen to keep it as a separate risk. Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services advised that the separation of risks 1 and 13 had been his attempt to distil the conversations the Board had had at the horizon scanning discussion. Risk 13 is more around policy development and potential impact on finances, with the Scottish parliamentary election taking place next year, it seems important to have it separately on the register.
- c) The Convener raised her concern around shoehorning risk 13 on policy development into the category of financial risk, when the risk also relates to operational activity. Deputy CEO agreed to look into the wording; he explained there is a risk to our funding position as it gets squeezed as a result of other competing Scottish Government priorities such as a new National Park. It is important to ensure that our priorities as set out in the National Park Partnership Plan match the priorities at a Scottish Government level. The Committee agreed that the Convener raise this at the Board meeting next week.

16. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and agreed the recommendations:

- a) Consider the coverage and adequacy of the Park Authority's strategic risk management position and advise on any gaps or amendments required to the current strategic risk register.
- b) Consider the coverage and adequacy of the Cairngorms 2030 programme risk management position and advise on any gaps or amendments required to the current programme risk register.

17. Action Points Arising: None.

Draft Governance statement (Paper 4)

18. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper setting out the draft Governance Report, which forms part of the Annual Report and Accounts, to the Committee for review and comment prior to inclusion in the draft accounts submitted for external audit.

19. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and agreed the recommendations:



- a) Reviewed the draft Governance Statement presented with this paper.
- b) Subject to any agreed amendments, approved the Governance Statement for inclusion in the Park Authority's draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2024/25.

20. Action Points Arising: None.

Mikko Saari joined the meeting at 10am

Procurement Action Plan (Paper 5)

- 21. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper, which sets out an action plan towards improvement of the Park Authority's procurement processes, procedures and internal controls. It has been developed in response to the Internal Audit review of procurement carried out by Azets as part of the approved 2023/24 audit programme.
- 22. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) The Convener expressed her thanks to Mikko Saari, Procurement Officer for being on board and for creating a culture shift within the organisation, and thanked Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations.
 - b) Peter Cosgrove, Audit and Risk Committee Deputy Convener reported that he had reflected on concerns on this area last year together with the recommendations as stated in the paper and reported that he could see that good and steady progress had been made and is therefore more comfortable with where we are now. Peter reflected that the next meeting may be an appropriate point to consider removing this matter as a standing item from the Committee's agenda.
 - c) The Convener praised the transformation in position from last year.
- 23. The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the progress made against each activity in the programme for improvement developed by management.
- 24. Action Points Arising: None.



Procurement guidance (Paper 6)

25. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper which sets out recently developed guidance for colleagues, outlining the Park Authority's procurement processes. It has been developed in response to the Internal Audit review of procurement and is delivered in satisfaction of the Procurement Action Plan. Mikko Saari presented the work being done on developing new procurement processes within the organisation to the Committee.
26. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) Question raised around declaring interests such as friendships and associations: those working in peatland restoration for example would establish good working relationships with contractors. Mikko Saari, Procurement Officer advised that he mitigates any bias as he compiles the tender evaluations prepared by the operational team, and gives recommendations based on the scores alone; everyone in evaluation team has to agree on the winning bidder. David Cameron, Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services advised that he is aware of the levels of connection staff may have with contractors, fine for staff to build relationships and advised that the National Park Authority also have a staff register of interests whereby any significant connections can be reviewed and tested by senior staff prior to involvement of staff in procurement activity.
 - b) How did the procurement work for cycle paths? Procurement Officer advised that it split into smaller parts, to allow local contractors to bid as well.
 - c) Comment made that it was a clear paper and praised the oversight and loop back.
 - d) Discussion around how to put locality as a criterion for bids. Could put standard criteria, eg sustainability by way of community benefit carbon impact/ climate impact, retention of jobs/ creation of jobs apprenticeships. Agreement in carrying out an analysis over a year, of the contracts awarded how many companies were based in the Cairngorms National Park, how many around and how many out with Cairngorms, to the extent that data held allows this analysis. This is to be brought back to the Committee.
 - e) With reference to page 6 on Annex 1 of the Paper, the use of conflict of interest instead of declarations of interest. Head of Finance and Corporate Operations agreed to add an additional bullet point to differentiate it.



- f) Head of Finance and Corporate Operations added that with smaller procurement contracts we are able to support smaller businesses as legal rules are less onerous.
- g) The Convener praised the work noting that significant progress was being made.

27. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and:

- a) Reviewed the guidance and consider its suitability to support the Authority's staff in carrying out procurement in the public sector environment.
- b) Considered whether the document meets the Internal Audit recommendations noted on the Procurement Action Plan.

28. Action Points Arising:

- i. Statistical analysis to be brought back to the Committee showing of the contracts awarded how many companies were based in the Cairngorms National Park, how many around and how many out with over the course of one year.
- ii. Head of Finance and Corporate Operations to differentiate between conflict and declaration of interest on page 6 of the Procurement Action Plan.

Internal Audit Report Management Action Follow up (Paper 7)

- 29. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper which sets out the internal auditor's independent overview of management action taken on previous internal audit recommendations raised and agreed (Annex 1). The follow up review work reported here is part of the internal audit programme agreed for 2024/25.
- 30. Elizabeth Young, Azets made the observation that more than half of the actions were more than two years old and asked the Audit and Risk Committee to consider whether they were still relevant and they wanted to continue to pursue them?
- 31. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) The organisation name on page 2 of the Annex was spelled wrongly. Elizabeth Young, Azets apologised and agreed to correct it.



- b) Appendix 1 action by report - the totals at the bottom do not match the numbers in the table. Reading the progress made on some of the recommendations, it seemed inaccurate to categorise them as partially complete? Azets apologised for the inaccuracy in the numbers and advised that 'partially complete' is a standard phrase used. Actions are assessed and only marked as complete once the auditors have seen all the documentation. It was suggested that the assessment could be changed to 'substantially complete' where appropriate.
- c) Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services advised that the follow up report provided a good start point to establish the position with the remaining recommendations. Given the number of linked operational strands in many cases, for example IT strategy, cyber security, information management he suggested an overview report in each subject area setting out where we are on all the remaining linked items and detailing the outstanding actions the Committee should sign off on going forward. and any impact in context of the Strategic Risk Register would be an approach to update the position and clarify future action. He suggested bringing two or three reports to the Committee under different topics: IT management strands, grant funding and program management. The Committee supported this approach. They commented that this seemed proportionate and reasonable.
- d) Head of Finance and Corporate Operations reported that she did not want to undermine any recommendations the auditors had made. She recalled in December 2022 the finance team were working with paper documents and that the changes made to digitize records since that time mean that we are now a completely different organisation. A number of recommendations have sat for a long time and have been stuck as there were a number of sequential improvements required to achieve completion on the recommendation; despite the remaining outstanding recommendations where we are now reflects considerable progress. The Convener acknowledged that, and the significance of the internal audit reports and Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services echoed both this and the huge organisational improvement.
- e) A member asked if it would be possible to have a workshop over a one- or two-hour window on an already scheduled board day. Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services advised that the capacity to do this would depend on priorities. He agreed to liaise with the Head of Finance and



Corporate Operations and the internal auditors to assess the staff capacity to review all of these things in a timely way. He agreed to come back to the Committee in June with an assessment of priorities and the key risk areas, and then bring a paper to a subsequent meeting, depending on staff capacity

32. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and agreed the recommendations:

- a) Noted the progress made by management in implementing agreed management actions; and
- b) Noted the actions planned in respect of those recommendations that remain outstanding.

33. Action Points Arising:

- i. Paper detailing the priority of key risk areas to include a timetable of future reports on the strands to be brought to the next meeting.

Appointment of Internal Auditor 2025-28 (Paper 8)

34. David Cameron, Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services presented the paper which sets out an update on the process underway to appoint an independent internal auditor for the period 2025 to 2028. He added that it had come to a conclusion in the last day or two. Azets had not been successful; the successful company were a Scottish based firm and the full detail would follow via email at a later date. He recognised the huge value Azets had contributed to the development of the Park Authority over their period of appointment.

35. The Audit and Risk Committee Convener thanked Elizabeth Young and team from Azets for all their work and professionalism.

36. The Audit and Risk Committee noted:

- a) the update on the appointment of internal auditor for 2025 to 2028
- b) that an internal audit plan will be presented to a future committee meeting following completion of the appointment process

37. Action Points Arising: None.



Internal Audit Plan 2024/25: Cairngorms 2030 (Paper 9)

38. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper which sets out the review of the arrangements in place for the delivery phase of Cairngorms 2030, including whether there is a robust governance structure in place. This included consideration of the internal reporting arrangements in place, including reporting on NLHF funding claims, and the extent to which ongoing reporting and monitoring has been integrated as far as possible into wider organisational reporting.
39. The Audit and Risk Committee:
- a) Considered the internal auditors report and findings.
 - b) Endorsed the management responses to recommendations for future action and improvements.
40. Action Points Arising: None.

Mikko Saari left the meeting at 11.07am

AOCB

41. None

Ref	Action Detail	Who	When	Status
21/06/24	At para 34l Lessons learned briefing for the committee for the next meeting	David	Will come to meeting in June/ Sept depending on staff time available	Open
21/06/24	At para 34m Chair and Deputy Chair to receive monthly updates of progress against the action plan	David and Louise	Monthly updates have been issued since June meeting	In Progress
27/09/24	At para 20i v. Update on internal audit view on financial scenario planning to be provided to the Audit	David and Stephanie	At the end of the 24/25 financial year.	Ongoing

[illegible]



	<p>iv. Paper detailing the priority of key risk areas to include a timetable of future reports on the strands to be brought to the next meeting.</p>			
--	--	--	--	--

Date of Next Meeting

42. The date of the next meeting is 20 June 2025
43. The Convener moved a motion to move into confidential session.
44. The meeting concluded at 11.07 am.



Minutes of the Resources Committee meeting

Held at Cairngorms National Park Authority office, Grantown-on-Spey
Online

16 May 2025 at 01.00pm

Present online

Russell Jones (Chair)

Lauren McCallum (Deputy Convener)

Jackie Brierton

Peter Cosgrove

Eleanor Mackintosh

Michael Williamson

Sandy Bremner

Chris Beattie

Hannah Grist

Derek Ross

In attendance

Grant Moir, Chief Executive Officer

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

Kate Christie Head of Organisational Development

Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations

Karen Johnstone, Clerk to the Board

Apologies

None.

Welcome and introductions

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



Approval of minutes of previous meetings

2. The draft minutes from the previous meeting on 24 January 2025 were approved with the amendment of adding Derek Ross as an attendee of the meeting.

Matters arising not covered elsewhere

3. There were no matters arising.

Actions from 24 January 2025 meeting:	
Paper 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Staff and Board Member training on navigating social media while adhering to the policy.ii. Monitoring officer from Moray Council to share their guidance on misuse, sharing and copy rights of webcasts with Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services.iii. Share FOI policy with Board members to highlight the work being done in this area.	Complete / scheduled Complete Open – FOI update to Audit / Risk Committee June 2025 will cover this.
Paper 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Return to committee the new policy on staff recognition and reward once available.	Open. Policy still in development
Paper 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Arrange for a budget monitoring information session with board members.	Session was delivered – 3 members attended.
Paper 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services and Jackie Brierton to Investigate the possibility of Credit Unions for staff and park wide.	Open



4. The Chair discussed the personal use of social media policy which was brought to a Board Business session on 09 May.
 - c) Concern was raised that Board Members were expected to follow the same policy as staff and questioned if there would be an opportunity to make amendments to this. Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Director of Corporate Services explained that the expectations for Board Members personal social media use are set out on in the Code of Conduct and supported by specific guidance issued by the Standards Commission. The Park Authority's policy is complementary guidance to the Standards Commission document and should provide additional help in complying with expectations of the Code of Conduct.
 - d) A question was raised that if a Board Member was to fall foul of the guidance, what the repercussions would be. Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services explained that the Park Authority may receive complaints directly from Stakeholders or members of the public. This would be highlighted to the Convener, the complaint considered under establishes processes, and the Convener may write or discuss the matter with the member. However, the complaint may be made by the stakeholder or member of the public to the Standards Commission, in which case the Commission would handle the situation from there. It was highlighted that the Park Authority have a duty to provide training / awareness on this topic, which has now been done, therefore if a complaint was made, Standards Commission would be notified that Board Members have received the training.
 - e) Discussions were had around the confusion of understanding around the aim of the policy at the Board Business Session and therefore was agreed for Officers to make this clear to members that this is supplementary guidance for best practise. David Cameron, Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services, agreed to develop an advice note for members in follow up to this discussion and the training session.

Declarations of interest

5. There were no declarations of interest.



2024/25 estimated outturn (Paper 1)

6. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper which sets out an estimated outturn position for the 2024/25 financial year.
7. The Resources Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments:
 - f) Clarity was sought on the £300,000 underspend in peatland restoration. Head of Finance and Corporate Operations explained that of a total £3 million in grant aid available, the Park Authority drew down £2,620,000. However, they should have drawn down £245,000 less as this was not spent. This unspent money goes back to Scottish Government (SG) as a new allocation of money has been set for this year.
 - g) Questions were raised regarding the underspend if this has implications in the future to potentially restrict budget as projects have been delivered with less money. CEO explained the cost of projects depends on if the land is eroded or drained, remoteness and other factors. Estimations are made of the cost of a project, however, until procurement and works start on the ground it is difficult to gauge the cost. It will not affect the allocated budget for the following year. It was noted that underspend will likely decrease due to increasing complexities of projects.
 - h) A Board Member asked if the Peatland underspend could be spent on capital items to facilitate other peatland work throughout the year, eg thermal kit. Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services confirmed the underspend can be deployed to purchase capital items relevant to the overall peatland restoration programme subject to SG approval.
 - i) A question was raised if peatland applications are scrutinised to ensure the claimants have adhered to muirburn code and not carried out any misdemeanours. CEO confirmed if an applicant has burnt out on an area of peatland and requesting restoration, then this would not be awarded. Also, if an area has high deer numbers, then this would not be a plausible restoration project for certain types of restoration. However, discussions will be needed with NatureScot regarding if an applicant has had a muirburn or grouse licence revoked are they still eligible for peatland restoration funding.
8. The Resources Committee noted the paper agreeing to the recommendations:
 - j) Note the estimated outturn position for the 2024/25 financial year.



9. Action Points Arising: None.

Budget monitoring (Paper 2)

10. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper which sets out an overview of the Park Authority's budget management position at the end of April - month one of the 2025/26 financial year.

11. The Resources Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments:

- k) Following internal discussions on Cairngorms 2030 spend to date, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations gave an update to members in respect of the proportion of Month one spend relating to recharged staff costs, rather than expenditure on direct delivery. There is a budget of £38 million for the whole project, of which £27 million relates to capital costs: woodland expansion, peatland restoration and transport projects. Of the remaining £11 million, £5.5 million is staff costs, and a similar amount is for direct delivery of activities (non-capital spend). An interpretation had been made that staff costs were too high a percentage of the total amount spent in first month, but the Head of Finance and Corporate Operations reassured the Committee that the distribution of spend between staff costs and direct delivery was in line with the budget allocation.
- l) CEO gave an update on the Nature Restoration Fund (NRF) noting the Park Authority have received confirmation on the funds however, we are waiting on terms; it is hoped that additional internal funds can go into the Climate Adaptation Fund. A further update was given in respect of funding from SG and Transport Scotland, noting the Park Authority is still waiting for an answer. This is being followed up with both organisations and we should have an answer by the end of May. More information will follow to the Board.

12. The Resources Committee noted the paper agreeing to the recommendations:

- m) Consider the budget management position for 2025/26.

13. Action Points Arising: None.



Health and Safety Committee minutes (Paper 3)

14. Kate Christie, Head of Organisational Development presented the paper which sets out the minutes from the most recent Health and Safety Committee Meeting.

15. The Resources Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments:

- n) Board Members praised the response work carried out by the staff following a serious incident. It was also acknowledged that the increase on reporting of accidents and incidents would be due to the simplification of the reporting system, which was a positive.
- o) Discussions were had around some staff being unaware the office had a defibrillator available at reception, to which a board member offered to provide training defibrillators for staff to practise on and build confidence in using these. Head of Organisational Development said that we were looking to deliver training provided through the British Heart Foundation, which used the same defibrillator as ours during the course and agreed that while equipment was designed to be used by anyone, training and familiarisation would be helpful.
- p) Discussion was had around domestic abuse; spotting the signs and if the rangers were given training to handle these situations. Head of Organisational Development explained that Rangers receive conflict and safeguarding training which would cover aspects of domestic abuse. Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services highlighted that as an Authority we must tread carefully not to expect too much of our ranger services. Rangers should not be blind to these issues arising; however, the Park Authority should be aware of potential issues and how far they can expect Rangers to go during a brief contact.
- q) A Board Member suggested in relation to the bike project that staff make contact with Police Scotland as they have schemes relating to recovered or stolen goods, such as bikes and may be helpful to the sustainable transport team. Officers agreed to pass this information on to the relevant Head of Service.

16. The Resources Committee noted the paper agreeing to the recommendations:

- r) Note the Health and Safety Committee meeting minutes.

17. Action Points Arising: None.



Staff Consultative Forum minutes (Paper 4)

18. Kate Christie, Head of Organisational Development presented the paper which sets out the minutes from the most recent Staff Consultative Forum meeting.

19. The Resources Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments:

s) There were no comments made.

20. The Resources Committee noted the paper agreeing to the recommendations:

t) Note the Staff Consultative Forum meeting minutes

21. Action Points Arising: None.

AOCB

22. None.

Date of Next Meeting

23. The date of the next meeting is 29 August 2025 in person.

24. The meeting concluded at 01.52pm

Motion to move to a confidential session to protect capacity to undertake public business in conduct of pay negotiations; confidentiality of staff pay considerations.

Actions from 24 January 2025 meeting:	
Paper 3	
i. Share FOI policy with Board members to highlight the work being done in this area.	Open – FOI update to Audit / Risk Committee June 25 will cover this.



Paper 1 i. Return to committee the new policy on staff recognition and reward once available.	Open. Policy still in development
Paper 2 ii. Arrange for a budget monitoring information session with board members.	Session was delivered – 3 members attended.
Paper 5 i. Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services and Jackie Brierton to Investigate the possibility of Credit Unions for staff and park wide.	Open
Action points from today's meeting 16 May 2025	
Matters Arising At para 4 c) i. Provide an advice note to Board Members to give a clear understanding that the personal use of social media policy is supplementary guidance for best practise.	



Draft minutes of the Performance Committee meeting

Held at Cairngorms National Park Authority office, Grantown-on-Spey

Hybrid

13 June 2025 at 02.30pm

Present in person

Kenny Deans (Chair)

John Kirk

Sandy Bremner

Eleanor Mackintosh

Present online

Steve Micklewright (Deputy Chair)

Ann Ross

In attendance

Grant Moir, Chief Executive Officer

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

Andy Ford, Director of Nature and Climate Change

Gavin Miles, Director of Planning and Place

Colin Simpson, Head of Visitor Services

Oliver Davies, Head of Communications and Engagement

Adam Streeter-Smith, Recreation and Access Manager

Karen Johnstone, Clerk to the Board

Apologies

Chris Beattie

Welcome and introduction

25. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Performance Committee.
Apologies were noted.



Approval of minutes of previous meetings

26. The draft minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 March 2025 were approved with no amendments.

Matters arising not covered elsewhere

27. The Chair of the Committee asked if a previous action involving making contact with Angus Council contacts regarding the voluntary donations had been completed. Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Director of Corporate Services confirmed initial contact has been made and this action is currently in hand.

ACTION	Status
Action points arising from previous meetings	
13 December 2024	
Cairngorms 2030 programme update quarter 3 2024 (July – September) (Paper 1) At para 8 ii. Azets report when finalised to be brought to a future meeting of the performance committee for information.	Closed
Update: Azets report on C2030 agreed by Audit and Risk Committee can be found here: Microsoft Word - CNPA Cairngorms 2030 FINAL.docx	
AOCB At para 26 iii. Ranger service update to be incorporated into the Active Cairngorms action plan paper.	Open
Update: Annual update paper will be taken to Formal Full Board in November 2025.	

Declarations of interest

28. There were no declarations of interest.



Climate Adaptation Fund 2024/25 (Paper 1)

29. Andy Ford, Director of Nature and Climate Change and Gavin Miles, Director of Planning and Place introduced the paper which provides an update to the Performance Committee on the allocation of funding from the Cairngorms Climate Adaptation Fund, which awarded a total of £370,000 to 20 recipients in 2024/25. The purpose of the funding was to support immediate and impactful actions that address the challenges of climate adaptation within the Cairngorms National Park.
30. The Performance Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments and observations:
- u) Clarity was sought if the current year fund was still open for applicants to apply. Director of Planning and Place explained that the first phase of applications are now closed. Officers are hopeful that some previous applicants who did not meet the criteria will reapply after making necessary improvements to their applications.
 - v) Discussions were had around the funding already allocated, if there were results from these projects available, and if there was a record to ensure a variety in projects. It was noted that due to a significant amount of funding available, it will attract a lot of applicants, and the Park Authority want to ensure support is given to projects that will be a benefit. Director of Planning and Place confirmed officers are reviewing the projects already awarded funding, allowing them to evaluate the impacts. CEO noted that the benefit of this being a broad fund allows for a wide range of projects / applicants to apply. If there is another fund available, officers can guide them towards this fund instead allowing the Climate Adaptation Fund to help with many different aspects.
 - w) Credit was given to the panel and officers who have worked on this fund, acknowledging this was a great example of people and nature thriving together and the Park Authority making a great difference with a diverse fund.
31. The Performance Committee noted the paper and agreed to the recommendations:
- x) Note the progress on the delivery of projects and achievement of the Climate Adaptation Fund objectives from allocations made in the 2024/25 financial year.



32. Action Points Arising: None.

Website update (Paper 2)

33. Oliver Davies, Head of Communications and Engagement introduced the paper which presents an update of current website activity including a strategic risk register and accompanying mitigation measures.
34. The Performance Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments and observations:
- y) A question was raised regarding the risk register and if there were any significant new issues from the process of the website role out. Head of Communications and Engagement explained there had been nothing significant, however there were some snagging elements that will be tackled over the next month, which will require more resources on a short-term basis.
35. The Performance Committee noted the paper and agreed to the recommendations:
- z) Review activity on the website, including procurement process followed / budget position.
 - aa) Review the accompanying risk register to ensure key risks are captured and that mitigation measures are appropriate.
36. Action Points Arising: None.

Bringing beavers back project (Paper 3)

37. Andy Ford, Director of Nature and Climate Change introduced the paper which presents the latest delivery updates on the Bringing beavers back project.
38. The Performance Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments and observations:
- bb) A question was raised regarding how the Park Authority worked with the mitigation group: was it a collaborative approach to develop the project or simply providing information to the group. Director of Nature and Climate change explained that the Park Authority and the mitigation group work collaboratively on overseeing delivery of the management and mitigation plan. Whilst there are some differences of opinion and disagreements over



policy, the opportunity for open dialogue is creating a much valued, improving and increasingly effective relationship.

39. The Performance Committee noted the paper and agreed to the recommendations:
- cc) Progress towards the project's objectives.
 - dd) Any strategically significant impacts on delivery of the Cairngorm National Park Authority's Corporate Plan and National Park Partnership Plan.
 - ee) Any material impacts on the Cairngorm National Park Authority's strategic risk management.
40. Action Points Arising: None

Delivery of statutory duties as conferred by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (Paper 4)

41. Colin Simpson, Head of Visitor Services and Active Travel, and Adam Streeter-Smith, Recreation and Access Manager introduced the paper which updated members on delivery of the Park Authority's statutory duties under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. While activity is delivered by officers with annual reporting to the Local Outdoor Access Forum, as this is a statutory function it is also considered appropriate that there is an element of Board oversight and scrutiny of related casework.
42. The Performance Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments and observations:
- ff) Discussions were had around the high number of obstruction cases on barriers and gates, questioning if the issues were with landowners not understanding their responsibilities. Recreation and Access Manager explained that landowners have concerns about stock and forestry gates, noting there was nothing malicious and discussions with landowners normally result in a swift resolution.
 - gg) Discussions were had around the Local Outdoor Access Forum (LOAF) noting a Board Member currently sitting on the group has not been able to attend some meetings. Board Convener agreed to take this forward.
 - hh) A Board Member questioned if there was a water-based person sitting on LOAF. Recreation and Access Manager explained a lot of members and a



range of roles and are involved with water, however agreed to take this as a point to identify someone from the paddling community to join LOAF.

- ii) Clarity was sought on Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey (VABS) and Mar Area Partnership (MAP) involvement in the delivery of one of the Active Cairngorms Action Plan actions. Recreation and Access Manager explained VABS was used as a resource to gather information from lots of different communities and groups that may be involved in outdoor access related projects, not just community path groups. It was highlighted that it was important to ensure this work picked up on any aspirations in the various community action plans, and the support of these organisations helped ensure this was achieved. Next step would be to pull together a program for a summit conference / gathering for the paths groups to move forward with it. It was highlighted that VABS and MAP are a partner that provides community engagement activities which the Park Authority pay for, and therefore a good resource to utilise in supporting this area of work. The Park Authority are aware of community and groups working on paths, however VABS and MAP have link with a wider range of community groups and this allows officers to ensure they have captured as much information as possible.

43. The Performance Committee noted the paper and agreed to the recommendations:

- jj) Note the summary of access casework undertaken by the Access and Infrastructure Team.
- kk) Consider findings, trends and other relevant issues arising.

44. Action Points Arising: None.

AOCB

- 45. Performance Committee Chair asked for an update for upcoming Agendas. Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services explained there will be a Cairngorms 2030 update, with a deep dive into a theme, and Peatland Action update coming to the next meeting. It was noted there was a Community Led Local Development paper due; however, this will be going to the full Board on 27 June.

Date of Next Meeting

- 46. The date of the next meeting is 12 September 2025.



47. *The meeting concluded at 3.35pm*

ACTION	Status
Action points arising from previous meetings	
13 December 2024	
AOCB At para 26 iv. Ranger service update to be incorporated into the Active Cairngorms action plan paper.	Closed
Update: Annual update paper will be taken to Formal Full Board in November 2025.	