



Annex 1

Approved minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting

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

20 June 2025 at 10.00am

Present online

Fiona McLean (Chair)

Peter Cosgrove (Deputy Chair)

Bill Lobban

Geva Blackett

Paul Gibb

Duncan Miller

In attendance

Grant Moir, Chief Executive Officer

Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations

Kathrine Malin-August, Financial Accountant

Elizabeth Young, Azets

Graham Gillespie, wbg

Peter Clark, wbg

Tom Reid, Mazars

Alix Harkness, Clerk to the Board

Apologies

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

Paul Davison, Information Manager

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 21 March 2025 were approved with no amendments.

Matters arising not covered elsewhere

3. There were no matters arising.

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 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
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 Paper today
21/03/25	At para 28 i. Statistical analysis to be brought back to the Committee	Louise		Outstanding



	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.	Louise		
21/03/25	At Para 33 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.	David		



Declarations of interest

4. There were no declarations of interest.

Paul Gibb arrived at the meeting at 10.10am

Internal Audit Plan 2024/25: Recruitment (Paper 1)

5. Elizabeth Young, Partner, Azets presented the paper, which presents the internal audit review carried out by Azets of the Park Authority's recruitment and onboarding process. The review considered the recruitment processes in place, including the approval process for posts prior to advertisement through to the onboarding process for staff.
6. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) Head of Finance and Operations commented that the issue identified around document management because of the interaction of the People portal and SharePoint to manage documents, is similar to the situation with the new Finance system, which also works from the same Access platform. There is a need to establish the relative priority of these systems. She will discuss the appropriate approach to be taken with the Information Manager.
 - b) Comment made on the need to have a transparent way that documents senior management have approved all recruitment, especially given the recent guidelines around public sector spending released 19 June 2025. CEO advised that there had not been a single post recruited over the past 10 years that had not been approved by him, and he provided the reassurance that no new post would be in the future. The issue was ensuring a paper trail for each post to show this had happened.
 - c) Head of Finance and Operations made the Committee aware that Scottish Government have been requesting a monthly forecast of headcount, with justification for any additional posts, demonstrating that external scrutiny has already started.
 - d) The Chair thanked Stephanie and team for the reassurance and work provided on this.
7. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and agreed to the recommendations:



- a) Consider the internal auditors report and findings.
- b) Endorse the management responses to recommendations for future action and improvements.

8. Action Points Arising: None.

Internal Audit Annual Report 2024/25 (Paper 2)

- 9. Elizabeth Young, Chief Internal Auditor, Azets presented the paper, which summarises the conclusions and key findings from the internal audit work undertaken at Cairngorms National Park Authority during the year ended 31 March 2025, including the Internal Auditor's overall opinion on Cairngorms National Park Authority's internal control system.
- 10. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) Head of Finance and Corporate Operations commented that it was a great position to be in, and that it had been a very positive experience working with Azets; she thanked them for the supportive, advice and guidance provided over the years The Chair echoed those comments and particularly thanked Stephanie and Elizabeth.
 - b) The Chair noted that good progress been made on outstanding recommendations and felt reassured that Azets felt that this was the case.
- 11. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and agreed to the recommendations:
 - a) Consider the Internal Auditor's annual report for 2024-25.
 - b) Note the Internal Audit annual opinion as set out in page 4 of the report and endorse the inclusion of that opinion within the Governance Statement for 2024-25.
- 12. Action Points Arising: None.

Internal audit plan (Paper 3)

- 13. Graham Gillespie and Peter Clark, wbg, presented the paper, which set out a proposed internal audit plan for 2025-26 (and future years) prepared by wbg.



14. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) Head of Finance and Operations reported that they had had a very positive first meeting with wbg and the key theme of discussions had been how best to provide assurance while achieving best value for money. As an example, she explained that wbg had been prepared to take a pragmatic approach to the review of cyber security and that this would help the IT team as well as providing the Committee with the assurance they need.
 - b) The Chair praised the assurance map and commented that she had found it helpful.
 - c) The Chair raised her concerns around the timetabling, with no report until March 2026 when there would be five reports presented and then the final report for the year in June, which seemed very late in the year. Peter Clark, wbg advised this programme had been developed around team availability, but that he would be happy to review the situation to achieve a more even spread of the work. The Chair suggested that even if only one of the reports could be brought forward, that would be helpful. It was agreed that wbg would discuss and agree this with management.
15. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and agreed the two recommendations:
 - a) Consider the auditor's proposal
 - b) Assess the plan for 2025-26 and consider whether the focus of work meets the Park Authority's need for assurance.
16. Action Points Arising:
 - i. Wbg to review the timetabling of work and to discuss and agree with Management a more even spread of reporting.

External audit update (Paper 4)

17. Tom Reid, Mazars presented the paper, which sets out the audit of the annual report and accounts for 2024-25 prepared by Mazars.
18. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comments and observations:



- a) The Chair noted that the timeline had changed, with fieldwork commencing one month later than planned; she sought reassurance that it was going to be completed on time. Head of Finance and Operations advised that the delay had been down to team capacity. She explained that the earlier date would have been impossible given the ill health of the Finance Manager and the delay in the new Financial Accountant starting, due to her having to work a three month notice period.

19. The Audit and Risk Committee considered the auditor's report and progress to date.

20. Action Points Arising: None.

Strategic risk registers (Paper 5)

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

22.

23. Grant Moir, CEO reported that the funding for transport projects was currently going through the accountable officer process. Any expenditure over a certain value has to go through various approvals within Scottish Government. Transport Scotland have announced the money for the build phases that they're doing this year and we are now waiting for the funding announcements for design projects. A decision is likely to be made towards the end of July and if we still have not received any update on the funding at that point, then it's probably getting too late in the year to do the work that we are looking to take forward on some of these schemes. He provided reassurance that there was a plan B. He reiterated that the end of July would be the pinch point for this.

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

- a) The Chair asked for reassurance that the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) were flexible in response to this. CEO advised that if there is to be a significant change the Park Authority would need to make a formal change request to NLHF.



- b) Public sector reform strategy (PSR) – a suggestion was made to update risk 1 to incorporate the implications of the PSR strategy. CEO agreed to add that in.
- c) A member suggested that before the Scottish Government undergo a review of public sector bodies such as the Park Authority, it would be good to document shared services with Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.
- d) CEO advised that cost savings will be required of all public bodies. He noted that, as we come to the end of the Cairngorms 2030 project the Authority's headcount will reduce. Additional savings will be available from efficiencies such as those achieved from the new website build, which means that we no longer have to use the Common Place platform, and that will reduce spend by £10k per year. He added that there was not enough detail yet to know precisely what the PSR strategy will mean for us.

25. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and agreed to 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.

26. Action Points Arising:

- i. Risk One to be amended to include detail which considers and reflects the risks within the Public Reform Strategy that was published the day before the meeting.

Information requests and complaints update (Paper 6)

27. Louise Allen presented the paper, which provides an update on the number of information requests, and key performance measures in meeting them, under Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act (FOISA)/ Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations (EIR) and Data protection arrangements, providing an update for the full financial year 24/25. The paper also describes numbers and outcomes of formal complaints to the Cairngorms National Park Authority.



28. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comments and observations:
- a) The Chair thanked the Information Manager for the progress being made; she noted that 100% of requests had been dealt with within the timescales and praised this achievement.
 - b) CEO advised that significant staff resource is needed to deal with FOI requests. He expressed the view that the Park Authority might consider increasing the amount of information published routinely so that the public can find what they need without making a formal request. He acknowledged, however, that we should avoid creating more work for ourselves, and noted that the key is to find a balance between routine publication and FOI requests.
 - c) The Chair asked if the time spent by staff could be captured. CEO agreed to look into that and provide rough figures.
 - d) Member commented that it was interesting to see the number of requesters and the areas of the organisation involved in providing the information requested. He asked if it would be possible to have a summary breakdown that included more detail on the information requested, so that any emerging themes could be identified. CEO agreed to see what could be pulled out for the next update.
29. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and agreed to the recommendations:
- a) Note activity in this area and Park Authority performance
 - b) Comment on breadth and depth of reporting for future updates
30. Action Points Arising:
- i. Estimated time spent by staff on each information request to be captured and included in the next report.
 - ii. Each request to include enough detail to help identify emerging themes.

Procurement action plan (Paper 7)

31. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper, which presents an action plan towards improvement of the Park Authority's procurement processes, procedures and internal controls. The action plan had been developed in response to the Internal Audit review of procurement carried out by Azets as part of the approved 2023-24 audit programme.



32. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comment and observation:
- a) The Chair thanked the Head of Finance and Corporate Operations and the Procurement officer for all their hard work getting to that point.
33. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and agreed to the recommendations:
- a) Reviewed progress made against each activity in the programme for improvement developed by management.
 - b) Agreed they were content to pass ongoing monitoring back to the senior team.
34. Action Points Arising: None.

Update on outstanding internal audit recommendations (Paper 8)

35. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper, which set out an update on actions underway to address outstanding internal audit recommendations on controls relating to information technology, cyber security and information management. The paper proposes revised, updated actions for adoption by the Committee in place of the existing recommendations, which in some cases are outdated following significant action by the Park Authority's teams working in this area.
36. The Audit and Risk Committee Chair invited Stephanie Humes' Azets views on management's approach to this. She made the following points:
- a) The previous recommendations included those focused on the improvement of procedures for the management of cybersecurity, which may now have been superseded by cyber essentials plus, but it would be helpful to be clear to the Committee on how the original recommendations are being addressed.
 - b) The original recommendation for the development of a business continuity plan (BCP), include advice that the BCP should include testing schedules; the committee should seek assurance that the BCP developed is properly tested.
37. The Audit and Risk Committee Chair thanked Stepanie Hume, Azets and said those points would be noted.



38. The Audit and Risk Committee noted the paper and:
- a) Agreed the six prior internal audit recommendations set out are superseded.
 - b) Agreed the adoption of the three actions set out as replacement actions required to implement an appropriate overarching control environment for the Park Authority's IT and data management operations.
 - c) Agreed to receive updates on progress against these actions as part of updates on action in implementing audit recommendations.
 - d) Agreed the scope of any internal audit work in these areas over the next 12 months should reflect the status of the current evolution of the Park Authority's operating environment for IT and data services.

39. Action Points Arising: None.

AOCB

40. None

Date of Next Meeting

41. The date of the next meeting is 12 September 2025, online.

42. *The meeting concluded at 11.00*

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 To come to Sept meeting
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	Closed
27/09/24	At para 20i v. Update on internal audit view on financial scenario planning to be provided to the	David and Stephanie	At the end of the 24/25 financial year.	Ongoing Management to report back to

[illegible]



	of the Procurement Action Plan.			
21/03/25	At Para 33 v. 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.	David		Closed (on today's agenda)
From today's meeting				
20/06/25	At Para 16 vi. Wbg to discuss and agree with Management to review the timetabling of the reports to provide more of an even spread.	Peter Clark, Graham Gillespie, Louise, David	September meeting	
20/06/25	At Para 25 vii. Risk One to be amended to include detail which considers and reflects the risks posed within the Public Reform Strategy that was published the day before the meeting.	David	By the next meeting	



20/06/25	At Para 29 viii. Estimated time spent by staff on each information request to be captured and included in the next report. ix. Each request to include a little bit of detail to help identify emerging themes. x.	Paul	For the next update to Committee Nov meeting	
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Approved minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting

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

12 September 2025 at 1.00pm

Present online

Fiona McLean (Chair)
Paul Gibb
Bill Lobban

Peter Cosgrove (Deputy Chair)
John Kirk (sub for Geva Blackett)
Duncan Miller

In attendance

Grant Moir, Chief Executive Officer
Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations
Scott McCready. wbg
Tom Reid, Mazars
Ishana Singh, Mazars
Alix Harkness, Clerk to the Board

Apologies

Geva Blackett

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

Welcome and apologies

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 20 June 2025 were approved with no amendments



Matters arising not covered elsewhere

3. There were no matters arising.

Ref	Action Detail	Who	When	Status
21/06/24	At para 34i Lessons learned briefing for the committee for the next meeting	David	Will come to meeting in June/ Sept depending on staff time available	Open To come to Sept meeting
Update; on today's agenda/ closed				
27/09/24	At para 20i vi. 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 Management to report back to Committee to give assurance
Update: Grant and David have been working on it over the summer; more work to be done before can be brought to the Committee.				
21/03/25	At para 28 xi. 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	Louise		Outstanding



	over the course of one year. xii. Head of Finance and Corporate Operations to differentiate between conflict and declaration of interest on page 6 of the Procurement Action Plan.	Louise		
Update: Completed				
20/06/25	At Para 16 Wbg to discuss and agree with Management to review the timetabling of the reports to provide more of an even spread.	Peter Clark, Graham Gillespie, Louise, David	September meeting	
Update Closed – On today's agenda.				
20/06/25	At Para 25 xiii. Risk One to be amended to include detail which considers and reflects the risks posed within the	David	By the next meeting	



	Public Reform Strategy that was published the day before the meeting.			
Update Risk Register updated within today's papers. Closed				
20/06/25	At Para 29 xiv. Estimated time spent by staff on each information request to be captured and included in the next report. xv. Each request to include a little bit of detail to help identify emerging themes. xvi.	Paul	For the next update to Committee Nov meeting	
Update: In hand for next meeting				

Declarations of interest

4. There were no declarations of interest.

External audit assurances (Paper 1)

5. Tom Reid, Mazars presented the paper which sets out the Request for information from Management and Those Charged with Governance prepared by Mazars. The Audit and Risk Committee:
- a) Considered the auditor's request for information and Management's response to this.



- b) Provided assurance that its governance extends to cover the items on which assurance is requested.

6. Action Points Arising:

- i. None.

Internal audit progress report (Oral)

- 7. Scott McCready, wbg presented the update which sets out the progress made on the internal audit progress report.
- 8. The Audit and Risk Committee agreed with this approach and advised that, depending on the findings of the Internal Auditors on the various projects for the year they would schedule in an additional Audit and Risk Committee meeting in March 2026 should it be required.
- 9. Action Points Arising: None.

Strategic Risk Registers (Paper 2)

- 10. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper which supports a review by the Committee of the Park Authority's strategic risk register management position.
- 11. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) A member queried risk 11 around reputation and the potential for unrealistic expectations between CNPA and stakeholders, commitments made regarding beavers and their impact on flood banks. The Park Authority has made some financial guarantees over a limited timeframe but what were the expectations after this period ends, and was there also a reputational risk out with the Cairngorms National Park (CNP) when beavers move across the park boundary? CEO advised that the flood bank commitment would be reviewed in 2026. At time of making this commitment, the initial thought was that potential for support through agri-funding would be clearer, but to date, that was not the case. If necessary, financial commitments will be extended to 2028 which was the end of the translocation license. NatureScot pick up the



effects out with the CNP. A watching brief is being kept on that. The member agreed with that approach.

- b) CEO commented that Transport Scotland having given funding for 2025/2026, it would be odd if they did not award us money for the second stage. However, the fact that there is a Scottish election next year creates some uncertainty, so it is not guaranteed at this stage.

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

- a) Considered 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) Considered 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.

13. Action Points Arising: None.

Procurement approaches: lessons learned (Paper 3)

- 14. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper which draws together reflections on the lessons learned in identifying and taking steps to implement the improvements required to the Park Authority's procurement controls. The paper is presented at the request of the Committee and following reflection by officers involved in the development and implementation of the procurement action plan which followed the internal audit review of the Park Authority's procurement controls.
- 15. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the report and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) The Chair commented that the Committee had requested the report to be brought to the Committee and felt reassured by its contents.
 - b) CEO advised that the work undertaken was wider than procurement. Lots of work had gone into digitising various aspects of our services, including procurement, grants etc. - 38 different processes had been made digital - and ensuring those processes are fit for purpose for the future.



- c) A member commented that it was a good paper that covered a lot of questions the Committee had raised, and that it dealt with an area that had been picked up at Board meetings. However there still remained an undercurrent of people within the community who do not understand the function of CNPA. The member felt that the report did not pick that up strongly enough and asked who should be leading to address this. CEO advised that the member's question was not a matter related to procurement but a more general point. He agreed there were some grey areas and the development of next National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) would be a sensible time to consider this.

16. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed and commented on the lessons learned from collective handling of the Park Authority's approach to developing internal controls on procurement as set out in this paper.

17. Action Points Arising: None.

AOCB

18. The Chair announced that this would be Peter Cosgrove's last meeting as Vice-Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and thanked him for being an incredibly helpful member of the Committee, a supportive vice chair whose insightful comments have made a real difference to this Committee. Peter Cosgrove explained that he was now Chairing two other groups and remaining as vice Chair of this one, was just too much. The Chair wished him well in his new chairing opportunities.

19. Motion to take the next items in confidential session.

Date of Next Meeting

20. The date of the next meeting is 14 November 2025 in person.

21. *The public part of the meeting concluded at 13.46 pm*



Ref	Action Detail	Who	When	Status
27/09/24	At para 20i vii. 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 Management to report back to Committee to give assurance
21/03/25	At para 28 ii. 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.	Louise		Outstanding
20/06/25	At Para 29 iii. Estimated time spent by staff on each information request to be captured and included in the next report. iv. Each request to include a little bit of detail to help	Paul	For the next update to Committee Nov meeting	Open



	identify emerging themes.			
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Approved 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

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



Approval of minutes of previous meetings

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

Matters arising not covered elsewhere

3. 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 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 i. 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

4. There were no declarations of interest.



Climate Adaptation Fund 2024/25 (Paper 1)

5. 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.
6. The Performance Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) 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.
 - b) 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.
 - c) 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.
7. The Performance Committee noted the paper and agreed to the recommendations:
 - a) 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.



8. Action Points Arising: None.

Website update (Paper 2)

9. 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.
10. The Performance Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments and observations:
- a) 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.
11. The Performance Committee noted the paper and agreed to the recommendations:
- a) Review activity on the website, including procurement process followed / budget position.
 - b) Review the accompanying risk register to ensure key risks are captured and that mitigation measures are appropriate.
12. Action Points Arising: None.

Bringing beavers back project (Paper 3)

13. Andy Ford, Director of Nature and Climate Change introduced the paper which presents the latest delivery updates on the Bringing beavers back project.
14. The Performance Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments and observations:
- a) 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.

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

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

17. 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.
18. The Performance Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments and observations:
 - a) 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.
 - b) 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.
 - c) 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.

- d) 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.

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

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

20. Action Points Arising: None.

AOCB

- 21. 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

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



23. The meeting concluded at 3.35pm

ACTION	Status
Action points arising from previous meetings	
13 December 2024	
AOCB At para 26 ii. 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.	



Approved minutes of the Resources Committee meeting

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

Hybrid

29 August 2025 at 09.00am

Present in person

Russell Jones (Chair)

Lauren McCallum (Deputy Chair)

Kenny Deans (substitute for Hannah Grist)

Michael Williamson

Sandy Bremner

Derek Ross

Present online

Jackie Brierton

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

Hannah Grist

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 16 May 2025 were approved with no amendments.

Matters arising not covered elsewhere

3. There were no matters arising.
4. The Chair announced that Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services had shared a draft of the social media Policy with himself, and the Board Convener and the final policy has now been shared with the full Board. Committee Members were all content with the policy.

Actions from 24 January 2025 meeting:	
Paper 3 i. Share FOI policy with Board members to highlight the work being done in this area.	Closed – FOI update to Audit / Risk Committee June 25 will cover this.
Information set out in Paper-6-FOISA_Complaints.pdf	
Paper 1 i. Return to committee the new policy on staff recognition and reward once available.	Open. Policy still in development
Paper 2 i. Arrange for a budget monitoring information session with board members.	Complete
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 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.

Currently in development - should be issued prior to next meeting.

Declarations of interest

5. There were no declarations of interest.

Budget monitoring (Paper 1)

6. 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 July - month four of the 2025/26 financial year.
7. The Resources Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments:
 - a) Clarity was sought around the £300,000 underspend from 2024/25, if this was deducted from the 2025/26 budget. Head of Finance and Corporate Operations explained this was treated as cash in advance which can be drawn down and the 2025/26 budget remains the same. Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services explained that the Peatland budget was the most difficult to manage to an outturn by the end of the year due to a variety of dependant factors. It was also noted also that the funding is ring-fenced and can only be applied to delivery of peatland restoration.
 - b) A Board Member commented on point 16 a, regarding Community Led Local Development (CLLD) funding, noting that this is Cairngorms Trust funding and not Park Authority funding. Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services explained that the Park Authority is the accountable body for CLLD funding. Around £60,000 of the funding is claimed by the Park Authority to cover a proportion of the staff costs for administration of the fund. It was suggested that the wording was changed to make it clearer that this is not a financial resource over which the Park Authority has control – decisions on application of the funding are made by the Cairngorms Trust. Head of Finance and Corporate Operations agreed.



- c) Board Convener commented on the recent announcement of the Transport Funding acknowledging the exhaustive efforts from the staff, thanking them all for their hard work on this. Committee members all echoed the comments.
- 8. The Resources Committee noted the paper agreeing to the recommendations:
 - a) Consider the budget management position for 2025/26.
- 9. Action Points Arising: None.

2024/25 estimated outturn (Paper 2)

- 10. Louise Allen, Head of Finance and Corporate Operations presented the paper which sets out the current cash outturn position for the 2024/25 financial year.
- 11. The Resources Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments:
 - a) CEO credited both the finance and operational teams for their work ensuring spend passed through the system, noting that a £14,000 variation is impressive given the scale of the budget.
- 12. The Resources Committee noted the paper agreeing to the recommendations:
 - a) Note the cash outturn position for the 2024/25 financial year.
- 13. Action Points Arising: None.

Cairngorms National Park Authority Equal Pay Audit 2024/25 (Paper 3)

- 14. Kate Christie, Head of Organisational Development presented the paper as the Park Authority reports annually on its Gender Pay Gap, using staff data from 31 March each year. Whilst it is not a legal requirement for the Park Authority to publish this report (only organisations with more than 250 staff have to publish their gender pay gap data), it is good practice to monitor the gender pay gap, not only with regards to informing future policy direction, but also to support our Public Sector Equality Duty, and particularly outcome one - "we will have an increasingly diverse workforce with more under-represented groups working for us, supported by an inclusive culture, where all existing, new and prospective staff are treated equitably, and feel that they belong".



15. The Resources Committee discussed the paper and made the following comments:
- a) Head of Organisational Development explained the paper would go to Senior Management Team (SMT) soon for a leadership discussion but was brought to the Resources Committee first.
 - b) A Board Member commented that in a small organisation, such as the Park Authority, small changes can have the impact of distorting statistics disproportionately.
 - c) A Board Member questioned if the Park Authority were proactively encouraging females to apply for Director / CEO roles. CEO explained there has been three Directors recruited in the last 15 years, and that the panel for recruitment was gender balanced with a short list for all the posts including males and females. In these three cases the best candidates were male. Heads of Service are encouraged to step up to Director roles internally when they become available and externally there are a good range of backgrounds applying for the roles – however, these can only be filled once a position becomes available.
 - d) Head of Organisational Development explained that band E female staff have been offered training for women advancing into leadership, which should enhance their confidence to apply for Directorate roles when they are available.
 - e) Discussions were had around job shares to which Head of Organisational Development explained most vacant posts are recruited on the basis that the Park Authority would be willing to consider job shares or part time hours of 30 hours per week. CEO explained due to the level of work required in a director's role, this may be difficult to fulfil on part time hours, and this would be considered individually on a case-by-case basis.
 - f) A Board Member thanked the staff for the hard work into making roles more appealing to women, especially policies like menopause and endometriosis, highlighting how progressive the organisation is.
 - g) A Board Member asked if there was a way to capture if “leavers” are progressing to a more senior level outwith the organisation, which would help us to track the impact of our work to support women into leadership Head of Organisational Development explained that is not something that is currently reported, though this information is captured during exit interviews, however this could be reported and added to the future gender pay gap analyses.



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

- a) Consider the gender pay gap figures 2024/25

17. Action Points Arising:

- i. Capture if staff are moving on to more senior roles out with the Park Authority in future reports.

Health and Safety Committee Minutes (Paper 4)

18. Kate Christie, Head of Organisational Development presented the paper which sets out the minutes for the Health and Safety Committee meeting on 13 May 2025.

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

- a) A Board Member questioned if near misses have been captured and discussed or acted on. Head of Organisational Development explained that near misses are included in the accident and incident reporting, and this is evaluated at the meetings.
- b) A Board Member sought clarity on the rangers receiving training on sexual harassment, if this was a precautionary training or due to an incident. Head of Organisational Development explained this was training that was being provided to expand skill sets, not due to any incidents.

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

- a) Note the minutes from the Health and Safety Committee meeting.

21. Action Points Arising: None.

Staff Consultative Forum Minutes (Paper 5)

22. Kate Christie, Head of Organisational Development presented the paper which sets out the draft minutes from the Staff Consultative Forum meeting on 11 June 2025.

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

- a) Head of Organisational Development highlighted that the Gender Diversity policy was amended following the Equality and Human Rights Commission's (EHRC) interim guidance that was published after the recent Supreme Court ruling about the definition of sex. The amendments involved updating the



definition of sex in the glossary and setting out that all toilets in the Grantown-on-Spey office are now single use, gender neutral toilets, which we were able to facilitate with some minor structural changes in the building. It was reported that staff were very positive about the policy and the amendments. The policy was still “draft” to reflect that it could change further once the EHRC published its final guidance.

- b) CEO noted how unique it was to have the Staff Consultative Forum (SCF) as this is not common in other non-departmental public body's (NDPB) and hopeful the Park Authority can maintain this for as long as possible.

Mike Williamson joined the meeting at 9.44am

- c) Discussions were had around the union involvement in the SCF, Deputy CEO and Director of Corporate Services explained that the Park Authority has a voluntary recognition agreement with the Prospect union and that one of the staff reps sitting on the SCF is there as the union representative, but they have an equal voice to the non-union members. The external Prospect official is invited to and regularly attends the SCF meetings. But a “formal recognition” agreement typically involves consultation with union representatives only, which means non-unionised staff are not included in such consultations. Head of Organisational Development explained that there are seven staff representatives sitting in SCF and one union representative.
- d) Board Members shared support and thanks to the SCF for their discussions on complex issues and involvement. Committee members all supported the work done via the SCF.

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

- a) Note the minutes from the Staff Consultative Forum meeting.

25. Action Points Arising: None.

AOCB

26. None



Date of Next Meeting

27. The date of the next meeting is 07 November 2025.

28. The meeting concluded at 09.49am

Actions from 24 January 2025 meeting:	
Information set out in Paper-6-FOISA Complaints.pdf	
Paper 1 ii. Return to committee the new policy on staff recognition and reward once available.	Open. Policy still in development
Paper 5 iii. 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 16 May 2025	
Matters Arising At para 4 c) iv. 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.	Currently in development - should be issued prior to next meeting.
Action points from 29 August 2025	
At para 15 g ii. Capture if staff are moving on to more senior roles outwith the Park Authority in future reports.	

Motion for confidential session to be set out will be to protect confidentiality of staff pay and conditions proposals prior to formal negotiations.