
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DISCUSSION

**Title: NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2012-2017
DELIVERY UPDATE**

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Purpose

This paper presents an update of delivery progress achieved during the 2012-2017 Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP).

The paper presents an overview of delivery toward the three long-term outcomes set out within the NPPP, and highlights specific achievements and any exceptions against the ten five-year priorities established by the NPPP. The paper also presents an update of measurement of delivery on the basis of the key performance indicators (KPIs) adopted to help evaluate progress in delivery of the NPPP.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to

- a) **Review the update on delivery of the NPPP.**
- b) **Highlight any achievements or exceptions which, from a strategic leadership perspective, Board members believe are of particular significance to the Authority in its coordinating role in delivery of NPPP strategic objectives.**

STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING CORPORATE PERFORMANCE – FOR DISCUSSION

Strategic Context

1. The Authority's Corporate Plan, http://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/CorporatePlan2015_2018Final1.pdf describes how we will contribute to the delivery of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP). The Corporate Plan also sets out how the CNPA will support the Government's central purpose: 'to focus the Government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth' and delivery of the Programme for Government. To this end, the plan highlights (page 13) that the work of the Authority makes a contribution to 9 of the Scottish Government's 16 national outcomes agreed within the National Performance Framework.
2. We continue to review our delivery against our 2015-2018 Corporate Plan priorities, the most recent update having been presented to the Board in June 2017. This report presents an overview of the delivery of the previous NPPP following the end of the life cycle of that Plan at 31 March 2017.

National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP)

3. Much of the Authority's work is directed toward leadership and coordination of the National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP). With the end point now reached on the NPPP covering the 2012-2017 period, this paper presents an overview of delivery achievements and any exceptions from our leadership and coordination of the NPPP.

Strategic Policy Considerations

4. Delivery of the NPPP represents an integral element of partners' wider contributions to the Scottish Government's national outcomes, and Government's central purpose to create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. The NPPP five-year outcomes are shown to contribute in varying ways to 13 of the 16 Scottish Government national outcomes.

Success Measures

5. Implementation of an effective corporate performance monitoring system is an essential component of enabling identification of success in delivery of the Board's agreed Corporate Plan and in leadership and coordination of NPPP delivery. Regular reporting on NPPP and corporate plan delivery, together with presentation of supporting KPI information is a key part of these systems.

6. This report, as a round up on the delivery of the NPPP for 2012-2017 seeks to begin to "close off" the performance monitoring of this Plan while the Authority commences its leadership and coordination of the newly adopted NPPP for 2017-2022.

David Cameron, on behalf of Management Team and Operational Management Group

Supporting Information

1. The following sections present an overview of delivery progress made over the NPPP period against each of the three long-term outcomes.

A Sustainable Economy Supporting Thriving Business and Communities

2. This Plan period saw significant changes in the ways that businesses, communities and the public sector coordinated activity. Investment in the Cairngorms Business Partnership by public and private sector has strengthened the organisation, its membership and its ability to promote business in the National Park. The formation of the private sector-led Cairngorms Economic Forum in 2013 and creation of the Cairngorms Economic Strategy in 2015 created a strong foundation of coordinated action. The work of Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey, Marr Area Partnership, the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust and the Cairngorms LEADER Local Action Group in supporting community development has provided consistent and vital support for communities. Significant highlights that supported the long term outcome included:
 - a) Growth of Cairngorms Business Partnership – membership at 30% of businesses in 2017, compared to membership at 10% for similar chamber of commerce organisations;
 - b) Delivery of Cairngorms Food for Life project stimulating support for Cairngorms food producers, local food festivals and demand for Cairngorms food products;
 - c) Local skills development projects such as Cairngorms Construction Skills Project, training and apprenticeships in path building and maintenance through Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust and Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland;
 - d) Roll out of high speed broadband internet services to main settlements in National Park and creation of Cairngorms Community Broadband company to identify solutions for remoter locations (although the community project was not ultimately taken forward and was overtaken by Scottish Government's Reaching 100% programme);
 - e) Upgrades to mobile telecoms networks to provide increased 4G coverage across many areas of National Park;
 - f) Development of small-scale hydro electric energy generation projects, including two community projects and significant increase in domestic renewable energy generation through solar cells and solar, air and ground heat generation;

- g) Delivery of Cairngorms Peatland Restoration Project delivering Scotland's Peatland Action Framework in the Cairngorms National Park through restoration of peatland habitats;
- h) Consistent support for communities to prepare and review community action plans, numerous community enterprise projects established and community project starting to generate reliable income;
- i) Investment of £8million in community development projects through Cairngorms LEADER and establishment of Cairngorms Trust to provide other funding support and investment;
- j) Completion and delivery of Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015; and
- k) Implementation of Tomintoul and Glenlivet Regeneration Strategy, including establishment of community enterprises and development of T&G Landscape Partnership Project.

A special Place for People and Nature with Natural and Cultural Heritage Enhanced

3. This Plan period has seen a significant increase in the level of ambition, collaboration and delivery of conservation action. Over this time partners have cemented a core focus on landscape-scale conservation, setting out the vision and mechanisms to deliver big scale conservation gain across land ownership boundaries. The establishment of Cairngorms Nature was a fundamental step, bringing together the wide range of organisations who can deliver and providing a campaign style approach for engagement. Other significant steps delivered by partners include:
- a) Increased delivery through catchment partnerships;
 - b) Establishment of large scale collaborations Cairngorms Connect, the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership and the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership;
 - c) Mapping of land use priorities providing clarity of opportunities, together with securing a grant premium for woodland creation in target areas;
 - d) Development of Capercaillie Framework co-ordinating work on habitat enhancement, recreation management and development planning;
 - e) Establishment of species specific projects on rare plants and invertebrates led by NGO partners;
 - f) Progress on deer management collaboration and habitat monitoring; and
 - g) Delivery of significant peatland restoration.

People Enjoying the Park Through Outstanding Visitor and Learning Experiences

4. This Plan period has seen significant investment in the outdoor access infrastructure, creating an outstanding network of low ground routes for recreation and community use, together with investment in restoring upland paths. During this period the establishment of the Active Cairngorms Partnership and Strategy has been a key step in raising the collaboration and ambition for making the most of the outdoor access opportunities of the National Park. Significant steps delivered include:
 - a) Refurbishment and improvement of two visitor centres and ranger bases;
 - b) Completion of the Mountain Heritage Project and establishment of the Mountains and the People Project continuing restoration of upland paths and accredited training on path construction and maintenance;
 - c) Establishment of the Cairngorm and Glenmore Partnership and strategy to co-ordinate enhancement of this key visitor destination;
 - d) Significant increase in cycling participation and promotion;
 - e) Extension of the Speyside Way to Ardgeal; and
 - f) Development and delivery of the Festival for All in partnership with Backbone.

NPPP Priorities 2012-2017

5. The following section sets out details of delivery achievements against each of the ten NPPP Priorities for action. Details are also given, where appropriate, of any exceptions: priorities where progress has perhaps not been as extensive as planned or intended impacts have not been achieved.

NPPP Priorities 2012-2017

Priorities	Achievements	Exceptions
Long-term outcome 1: A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities		
<p>1. The economy of the Park will have grown and diversified, drawing on the Park’s special qualities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of Cairngorms Economic Forum; • Creation of Cairngorms Economic Strategy; • Focused skills delivery training courses; • Delivery of Food for Life project and raised awareness of and demand for Cairngorms food and drink products; • Continued growth of CBP; • Cairngorms LEADER with specific economic development and diversification targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow delivery of Cairngorms Economic Strategy • Inconsistent business advice services across National Park
<p>2. Businesses and communities will be successfully adapting to a low carbon economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out of high speed broadband to many communities in National Park and establishment of Cairngorms Community Broadband to provide solutions for areas that don’t receive commercial services; • Upgrades to mobile phone networks increasing coverage and 3G/4G coverage; • Completion of more than 100 affordable homes • Increases in renewable energy provision across small scale hydro and domestic renewable infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High speed broadband coverage remains partial across National Park with uncertainty about connections for remote communities. Community-led broadband initiative has been abandoned and replaced by Scottish Government Reaching 100% programme with further delays and some remaining uncertainties on delivery timetables for Cairngorms properties.

Priorities	Achievements	Exceptions
<p>3. Communities will be more empowered and able to develop their own models of sustainability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of significant community enterprises, including two community hydro schemes and innovative use of community shares for fundraising; • Consistent advice and support services for community development across national Park and development and review of community actions plans; • Successful bid for Landscape Partnership at Tomintoul and Glenlivet as part of Regeneration Strategy and winning national SURF Award. • Successfully secured a Cairngorms LEADER allocation of £3 million; • One of first LEADER Local Action Groups to launch their local LEADER programmes, with 19 Community Led Local Development projects securing £1.35 million in LEADER investment towards £2.18 million total eligible project costs by the end of the NPPP period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities continue struggle to influence provision of housing to meet their needs.
<p>Long-term outcome 2: A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced</p>		
<p>4. The quality and connectivity of habitats is enhanced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been significant advancements in developing maps for targeting funding for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It looks unlikely that the (ambitious) target of 5,000ha of new native woodland will be

Priorities	Achievements	Exceptions
	<p>woodland expansion with a number of new woodland creation schemes in the pipeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peatland restoration funded through Peatland Action is progressing well with over 400ha restoration due to take place over the next winter period. • East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership, Cairngorms Connect and Catchment Partnerships continuing to develop strong working networks 	<p>met. The most recent figure is 2,245ha since 2013.</p>
<p>5. The species for which the Park is most important are in better conservation status.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HLF bid in for £4m project to create more habitat for Capercaillie • Action for many of the species has progressed significantly with the start of the Cairngorms Wild Plants project and the Rare Invertebrates Cairngorms project. • SWWI, Tomintoul & Glenlivet, Grampian Waders Initiative continue to deliver for farmland waders/ wet grassland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little progress has been made for species not covered by projects (e.g. scarlet splash fungus)
<p>6. The special landscape qualities, including wildness, are conserved and enhanced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Landscape Toolkit created and widely used in variety of planning and development schemes • Removal of electricity pylons through the 	

Priorities	Achievements	Exceptions
	<p>National Park as compensation for the Beauly-Denny powerline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant landscape enhancements made to A9 Dualling project 	
<p>7. Settlements and built development will retain and enhance the distinct sense of place and identity in the Park.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of Local Development Plan and improvements in planning service delivery across National Park • Delivery of two National Park Design Awards competitions 	
<p>Long-term outcome 3: People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences</p>		
<p>8. More people will enjoy, learn about and help to conserve and enhance the Park.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Volunteer ranger programme with eight people recruited for first training programme • Continued delivery of John Muir award to some 2,970 people in 2017 and 78 in five day Junior Ranger Programme. • Mountain Heritage Project and The Mountains and The People projects have established a Scottish Vocational Level 2 Qualification and trained around 30 people in the Cairngorms to this standard on path-building and wider environmental management. 	

Priorities	Achievements	Exceptions
<p>9. The expectations of visitors are met or exceeded.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some 93% of 2015 visitor survey indicated satisfaction with their visit. • Visitor numbers increased in 2016 to an estimated 1.8 million. 	
<p>10. The Park’s recreation opportunities have improved the health and enjoyment of residents and visitors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 community path leaflets now complete and available on line. All updates are including the new national path grading system. • Work ongoing to promote local health walks and better record uptake in a consistent way. • Speyside Way extended to Ardgael. • Mountain Heritage Project and The Mountains and The People projects have invested in significant upland path restoration. • Second Wee Walks week promoted for mid-September to encourage more people to take exercise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some important recreational resources in Deeside, especially two significant pedestrian bridges and some paths, remain unusable or badly damaged after storm damage in December 2015.