

**CAIRNGORMS**  
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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ÙGHDARRAS PÀIRC NÀISEANTA A'  
MHONaidH RUAIDH

**ANNUAL REPORT AND  
ACCOUNTS 2019/20**

**AITHISG BHLIADHNAIL AGUS CUNNTASAN  
2019/20**

***...AN OUTSTANDING NATIONAL  
PARK, ENJOYED AND VALUED BY  
EVERYONE, WHERE NATURE AND  
PEOPLE THRIVE TOGETHER...***

***...SÀR PHÀIRC NÀISEANTA, A THA  
A' CÒRDADH RIS A H-UILE DUINE  
AGUS AIR A BHEIL IAD UILE A' CUR  
LUACH, AGUS FAR A BHEIL NÀDAR  
AGUS DAOINE A' SOIRBHEACHA...***

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## KEY PERSONNEL AND SPONSORING BODY

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### BOARD MEMBERS

Peter Argyle  
Geva Blackett – Deputy Convener (resigned as Deputy Convenor 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020)  
Carolyn Caddick  
Deirdrie Falconer  
Pippa Hadley  
Janet Hunter  
John Kirk  
John Latham  
Douglas McAdam  
Dr Fiona McLean  
Anne Rae MacDonald  
Eleanor Mackintosh – Chair Planning Committee  
Ian Maclaren  
Xander McDade – Convener  
Willie McKenna  
William Munro – Chair Finance and Delivery Committee  
Dr Gaener Rodger  
Derek Ross  
Judith Webb – Chair Audit and Risk Committee

Board member profiles can be found at <http://cairnforms.co.uk/authority/board/>

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER

Grant Moir

### DIRECTORS

David Cameron – Corporate Services  
Murray Ferguson – Planning & Rural Development  
Dr Peter Mayhew – Conservation & Visitor Experience

### SPONSORING BODY

Environment and Forestry Directorate, Natural Resources Division, Scottish Government

# PART I – PERFORMANCE REPORT

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# PART I PERFORMANCE REPORT

## OVERVIEW

### Forward

I have pleasure in presenting the Cairngorms National Park Authority's (the Park Authority) Annual Report and Accounts covering its sixteenth year of operation, from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

The Park Authority has worked this year to progress priority objectives set out in our Corporate Plan spanning 2018 to 2022, our second year of delivery against this strategic delivery plan approved by Scottish Ministers. Our Corporate Plan sets out how we will allocate our resources and explains how our use of these resources will help to deliver the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan along with our wide range of partners, and through this contribute to achieving the Scottish Government's Strategic Objectives.

Like every citizen and organisation in Scotland, we were impacted by the public safety measures put in place over March 2020 to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, and before that had to risk manage our work in the context of political reactions to the UK's exit from the European Union. Despite these periods of unrest in our strategic operating environment, the Cairngorms National Park Authority has had another successful year in delivering against our priorities and in managing a balanced budget position while doing so.

The Park Authority is responsible for delivering across conservation, visitor experience and rural development. This involves us in providing effective and efficient public services covering our statutory functions of planning and access, and also in our wider roles working with a wide range of partners across the full spectrum of conservation, visitor services and rural development to deliver projects on the ground that deliver on our outcomes. This has been achieved through leveraging in significant additional funding into the National Park on conservation projects, rural regeneration projects, access projects and much more besides.

It has been a busy year and some of the key highlights of our work in the National Park are in this Annual Report and Accounts, with more detailed information available in our Annual Review of 2019/20. <https://cairngorms.co.uk/working-together/authority/about/annual-reports/>

Particular highlights in the year include the development of a Youth Action Team to follow up on the huge success of the 2018 Europarc Federation conference hosted by the Cairngorms NPA, which forms the first steps in real engagement of and with young people to inform the future development and conservation of their National Park. We also hosted the Net Zero with Nature Conference in March 2020 which cemented our long term commitment to finding fully sustainable ways to live in, work in and visit the Cairngorms and which will continue to be a key focus for us even as we work hard in the shorter term to support the Cairngorms in its recovery from impacts of Covid-19. We remain committed to ensuring that "our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local peoples' needs." We aim to deliver high standards of service within our agreed budget allocation while achieving a break even financial outturn.

Fundamentally we are determined to set an ambitious, fully sustainable long term vision for the Cairngorms National Park and to work with people and continue to deliver the projects that make a significant difference to all those that are involved in this National Park. That is what public service is all about.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grant Moir', written in a cursive style.

Grant Moir, Chief Executive and Accountable Officer  
21 October, 2020

## The Cairngorms National Park

The Cairngorms National Park is the largest National Park in the United Kingdom and covers 4,525 square kilometres, twice the size of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs and 40% larger than the Lake District.

The Park Authority is a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Environment and Forestry Directorate, Natural Resources Division, Scottish Government, established under the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 with the purpose of being a model of sustainable development working towards achieving four statutory aims:

- to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area;
- to promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area;
- to promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public; and
- to promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.

### Strategy and business model

The Park Authority has a key role in leading the delivery of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan. The Plan sets the context for close cooperation and partnership across public, private and voluntary organisations in the Park towards an agreed set of shared priority objectives. The National Park Partnership Plan sets out three long term outcomes for the Park, which have also been used as the basis for developing the Corporate Plan. The Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022 (CNPPP), which was approved by Ministers, provides the overall guide for strategic alignment between public agencies within the Park, and also with private and community organisations who are signatories to and partners in delivery of the CNPPP.

The Park Authority's Corporate Plan was approved by the Board and Scottish Ministers in Spring 2018 to cover our work up to the end of the current CNPPP and the development of the following Park Partnership Plan which will be put in place to commence from April 2022. In the wider Scottish context, the Park Authority will also work on ensuring greater strategic alignment to ensure delivery of key national strategies, such as current and future Programmes for Government, 2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity, Scottish Climate Change Act, the Land Use Strategy for Scotland, Scotland's Economic Strategy, National Planning Framework, the Community Empowerment Act, the national Tourism Strategy 2020, the National Walking Strategy and the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland.

Our strategic work includes being an active member of the Environment and Economy Leaders' Group, together with input to a range of national leadership and stakeholder groups.

### Our commitment

Following engagement with staff and our Board in 2016 we adopted a vision, mission statement and a set of values, as part of our corporate planning processes, which are central to our purpose and strategic context:

**Our vision** – an **outstanding** National Park, **enjoyed** and **valued** by **everyone**, where **nature** and **people thrive** together;

**Our mission** – to lead the way in delivering for the Cairngorms National Park by bringing people together towards a common purpose; enhancing the Park for everyone and inspiring new generations to be Park Champions;

**Our values** – the CNPA is an **open, inclusive, innovative** and **professional** organisation that behaves with **integrity**. The CNPA will also operate in an **environmentally friendly** way that provides leadership in this area.

**Our culture** – ...to be the best small public body in Scotland.

We aspire to be the best small public body in Scotland. Our staff survey results, undertaken every 2 years through “The Best Companies Survey” has shown that we are a people oriented organisation performing well. We were delighted to once again be listed in the Top 100 Not For Profit Organisations in the UK wide survey in Autumn 2019. We will continue to build on our Organisational Development Strategy to imbed a high performance, high achieving and high quality culture. The Park Authority will be innovative, quick to act and empower staff to deliver the strategies put in place by our Board.

## **New ways of working**

The Park Authority will continue to look at new ways to operate to deliver our commitments in the current National Park Partnership Plan. This will include continuing our success in looking for alternative funding opportunities, including applications to funds, such as the National Lottery Heritage Fund, sponsorship opportunities and merchandising. It also includes working collaboratively with partners to deliver improved services. We also continue to strive for more efficient, and sustainable working practices internally through delivering against the third phase of our Organisational Development Strategy.

## **Performance monitoring**

Performance indicators have been set for each of our key themes against which we will measure and monitor performance. By the nature of the Park Authority’s role, in seeking to lead collaborative effort in tackling the big issues for the Cairngorms, these performance measures are rarely entirely controllable by the Park Authority. Rather, they require collaboration and engagement with our partners and are measures of the effectiveness of our leadership and influencing, combined with our direct investment of finance and staff resources, in addressing our priorities. We compile performance monitoring reports twice each year to the Authority’s Board, with all of these reports available on our website. The most recent report, together with detail of performance against each measure, is available at: <https://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/06122019/191206CNPABdPaper5AACorporatePlanUpdateCover%20V.2.pdf>

Further detail on our most recent performance against our key performance measures is available in the Annexes to this report, available at:

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/working-together/meetings/meeting/board-2019-12-06/>

## Strategic Aims and Priorities

We contribute to delivery of the long term outcomes in the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan, through working to achieve our agreed Corporate Plan strategic objectives. Our strategic aims and priorities are set out across three Themes of Conservation, Visitor Experience and Rural Development. Each of these three themes set out a number of priority objectives. Corporate Services and Communications support the main themes and their outcomes.

**Conservation** – to be a special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced

The Cairngorms National Park is the premier area in the UK for nature conservation, with 50% of the area recognised as important on a European scale through Natura 2000 designation. Home to some of the most extensive and internationally important montane, woodland, river and wetland habitats, our role is to bring partners together to deliver conservation at a landscape scale and engage the public in this endeavour.

### Priorities:

- support landscape-scale conservation, especially the expansion of native and montane woodland, peatland restoration, natural flood management and capercaillie management;
- ensure deer management is focused on delivering public interest priorities specifically the expansion of native woodlands and peatland restoration;
- support sustainable moorland management to deliver greater habitat diversity and good management practice.

**Visitor experience** – people enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences

The Cairngorms National Park is an internationally renowned visitor destination with an outstanding range of outdoor recreation opportunities. Our role is to ensure the quality of visitor experience matches the quality of environment by coordinating investment in the core infrastructure, carrying out our role as an Access Authority, promoting sustainable tourism and ensuring people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities are able to experience and enjoy the National Park.

### Priorities:

- continue to ensure visitor infrastructure meets the expectations of visitors to the National Park and help deliver a sustainable tourism economy;
- increase physical activity in both residents and visitors and support delivery of Scotland Natural Health Service;
- create a 'Park for All' by encouraging people from all backgrounds to come and recreate, learn in or visit the National Park.

**Rural development** – a sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities

Delivery of our priorities within the Cairngorms National Park can only come through close joint working with the people who live and work in the communities of the Park. Our role is to promote investment in a diversified economy, help communities plan and achieve their own visions and deliver a Planning Service to guide the right development to the right place.

**Priorities:**

- support delivery of housing for local needs through an efficient and effective planning service;
- support communities, specifically focussing on the most fragile, to deliver their agendas for change;
- work closely with the business community and partners to support a sustainable Park economy.

**Support themes**

The delivery of the themes and priorities is supported by Communications and Corporate Services teams. Our Communications team works with visitors, communities and stakeholders to raise the profile of the Park and create a connection and commitment to care for it. Our Corporate Services team ensure the delivery of effective, efficient and sustainable services in addition to promoting the highest standards of governance, both within the Park Authority itself and also in working with community and voluntary organisations involved in delivery of NPPP priorities.

**Corporate services**

Delivering effective, efficient and sustainable services and promoting the highest standards of governance, to support delivery of the Corporate Plan and Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan by the Park Authority and our community and charity partners. We will also play an active role in the Environment and Economy Leaders' Group.

**Priorities:**

- implement the Organisational Development Strategy and embed the organisational and cultural improvements to make the Park authority the best small public body in Scotland;
- ensure that the office extension, existing accommodation and ICT facilities are 'fit for purpose' and help to deliver the Organisational Development Strategy;
- deliver ongoing service improvement, including appropriate shared services development and operation, to the Park Authority, other public bodies and the community and charitable organisations we support;
- promote and support the highest standards of governance and management, including equalities actions, within the Park Authority, other public bodies and the community and charitable organisations we support.

## Communications and engagement

Communicating with visitors, communities and stakeholders is vital for the work of the Cairngorms National Park Authority. It supports the work being undertaken across the organisation to deliver on conservation, visitor experience and rural development. Our role is to raise the profile of the Park and create a connection and commitment to care for it with identified audiences so they actively support the Park and benefit from doing so.

### Priorities:

- deliver the Communication and Engagement Strategy and increase awareness, engagement and involvement with the Park;
- ensure high quality internal communications that help deliver the key priorities of the Corporate Plan.

## Key Issues and Risks

Risk management and consideration of issues arising that may impact on the delivery of our strategic corporate priorities are central to our management activities within the Park Authority. The Management Team reviews strategic risks at least quarterly, and we have developed and embedded strategic and operational risk management practices, together with project management processes, to take full cognisance of these core aspects of effective organisational and strategic control arrangements.

The Park Authority has developed a Strategic Risk Management Strategy and associated Strategic Risk Register, which, in tandem with our corporate performance and monitoring system, details the key issues and risks around delivery of our Corporate Plan together with the strategic objectives and key performance indicators set out in that plan. The Board receives detailed reports and comments on key issues and risks twice annually, with the Board's Audit and Risk Committee reviewing strategic risk management between these Board meetings. The most recent review of key issues and risks considered by the Board's Audit and Risk Committee in March 2020 can be found at:

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/working-together/meetings/meeting/planning-2020-02-21/>

Significant projects will also have their own embedded risk registers and risk mitigation plans. More information on risk and internal controls can be found in the Governance Statement within this document and in our Risk Management Strategy available at:

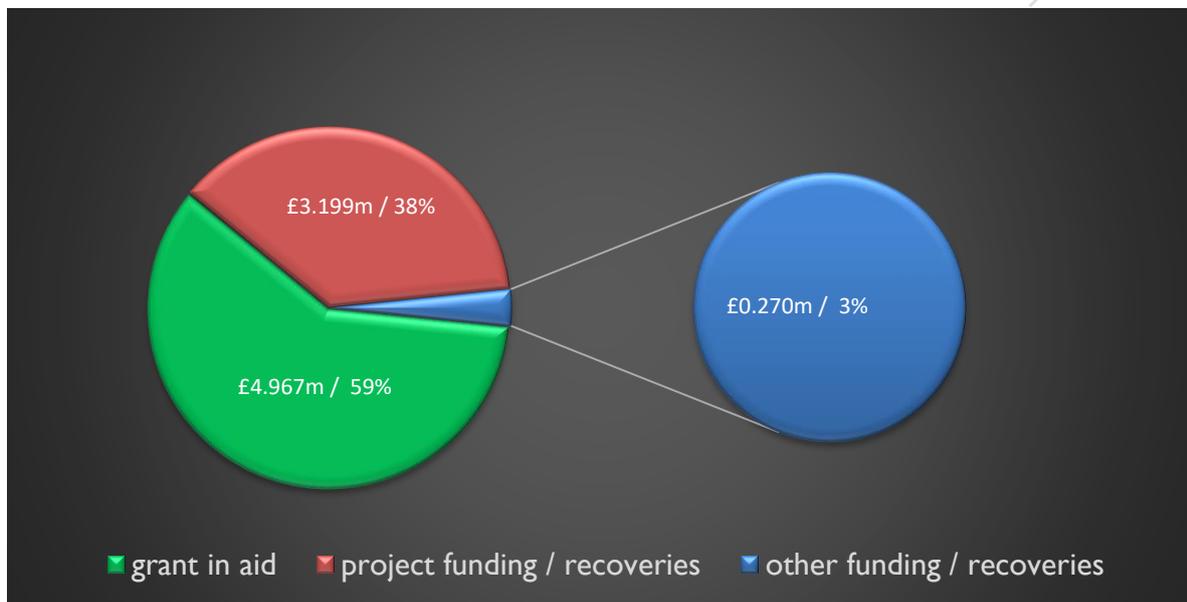
<http://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/15062019/180615CNPABdPaper4Annex1RiskManagementStrategyV0.1.pdf>

# PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

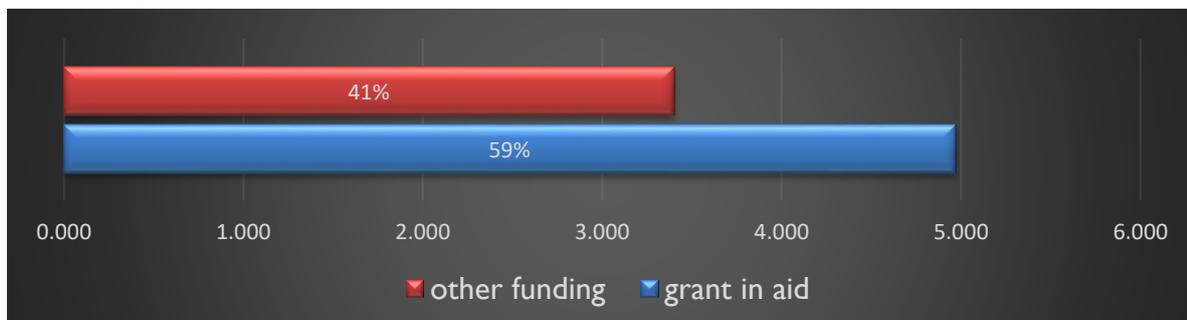
## Financial Performance Summary

The main sources of the Park Authority's funding for the year were the resource budgets and grant-in-aid funding from the sponsoring body the Environment and Forestry Directorate, Natural Resources Division, of the Scottish Government. The Authority also acts as Accountable Body for the Cairngorm LEADER programme and The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and partner funded projects, the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape partnership, Great Place Badenoch and the Capercaillie Framework.

**Our income and funding** - total income for the year was £8.436m, an increase of £1.434m over 2018/19.



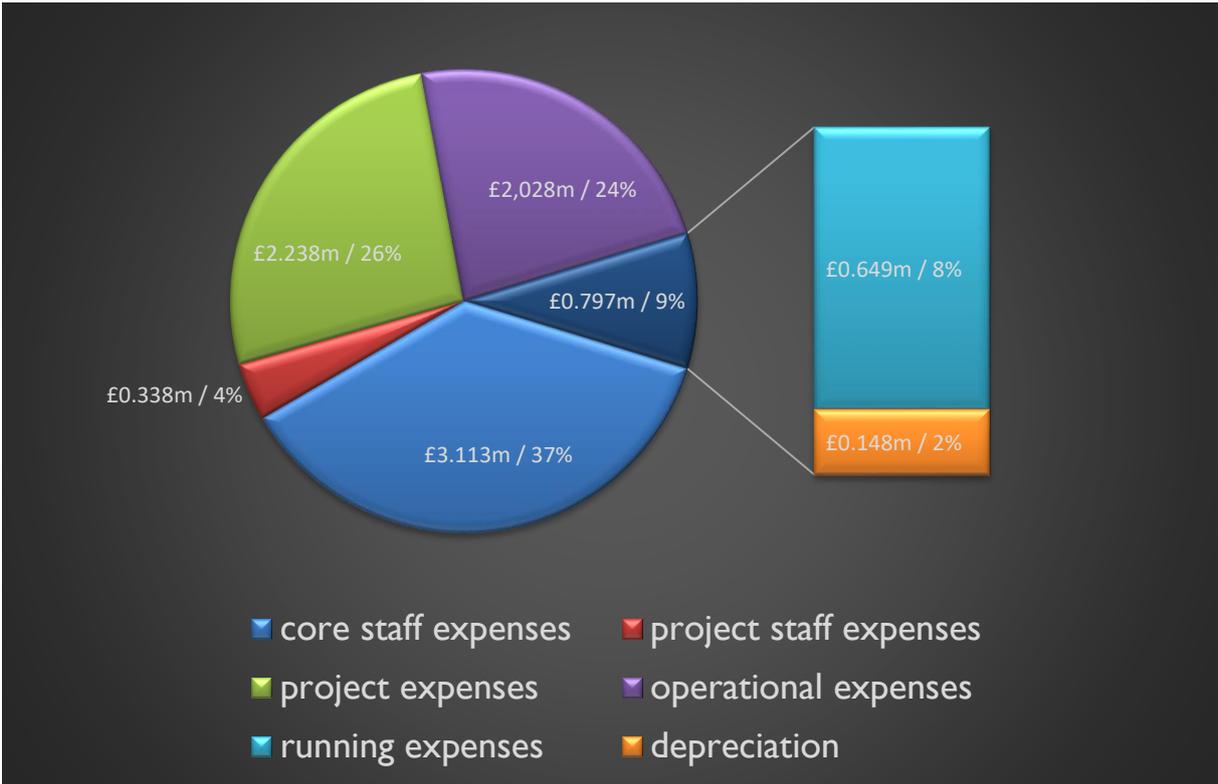
Grant-in-aid received in the year was £4.967m, made up of Resource grants £4.727m (2019: £4.565m) was received against operational activities, together with Capital grants of £0.240m (2019: £0.240m). During the year the Scottish Government made additional grant-in-aid available to cover increased Civil Service pension costs (£0.117m) and for peatland recovery work (£.045m). Partner contributions to projects totalled £3.199m (2019: £1.585m) with income and grants from all other sources coming to £0.270m (2019: £0.672m).



Grant-in-aid represents 59% of the funding of the Park Authority’s work, meaning that for every £1 of direct Scottish Government funding and additional 40p comes from other public bodies, both UK and European, and third parties.

All the projects, LEADER and the Heritage Fund projects, are entering the final phases of delivery and so expenditure and funding will reduce in 2020/21. It is expected, but not yet confirmed, that the projects may be extended to allow for the backlog of work to be completed due to the impact on normal operations of the Covid-19 pandemic arrangements.

**Our expenditure** - total expenditure for the year on operational costs was £8.444m, an increase of £1.503m over 2018/19:



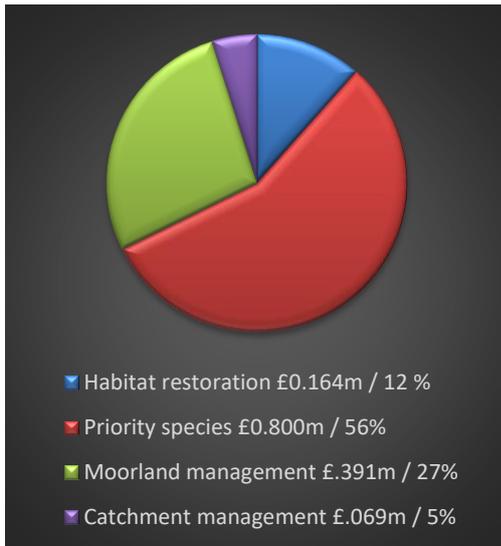
Project income and expenditure levels for the year have again increased on 2019 levels as a result of the increase in activity in both the LEADER program and on NLHF supported projects.

As a percentage of grant in aid received only, staff costs, including Board fees, account for 70% of the spend

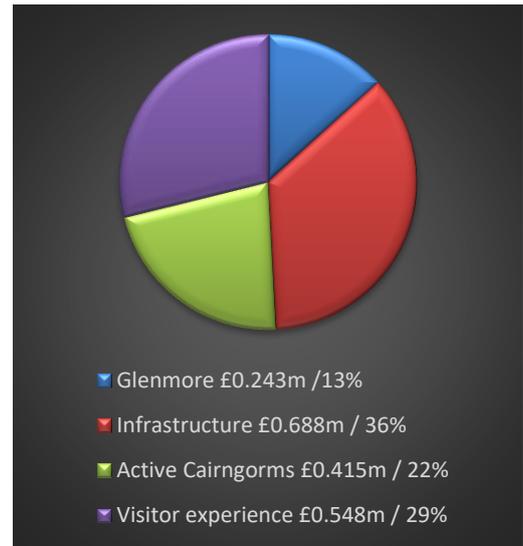
**Our expenditure on main themes**

The Park Authority’s expenditure is also broken down over key themes and priorities of operational activity in note 3 (segmental reporting) to the Financial Statements. The summaries below shows our investment in the main operational themes before the allocation of any other income or partnership funding. (Depreciation on tangible and intangible assets is not attributed to any theme or priority in our reporting.)

## Conservation and land management



## Visitor experience



Conservation and land management	£1.424m	17%
Visitor experience	£1.894m	22%
Rural development and planning	£3.373m	41%
Corporate services	£1.310m	16%
Communications and engagement	£0.365m	4%
	<u>£8.366m</u>	

## Rural development and planning



## Corporate services



Our operational plan expenditure rose by £1.4m. over 18/29, due to large projects such as the Speyside Way extension, the enhancement of the car park and facilities at the Muir of Dinnet in conjunction with Nature Scotland, and path enhancements in Glenmore in conjunction with Forestry Scotland. The last 2 projects were funded by Visitor Scotland through the Rural Transport Infrastructure Fund (RTIF). Significant work was completed in the year on the Blairfindy, Scalan and Access projects which are part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund supported Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership and mark the complete of the 3 largest build projects. This project is set to complete by December 2020. Further information on the activities undertaken during the year are noted below in the Operating Performance Summary and key performance indicators.

## Our outturn

We are transferring (£0.079m) for the year (2019: £0.61m) to Taxpayers' equity (Table 1). After accounting for capital investment creating £0.065m in new tangible and intangible assets, and capital grants of £0.165m, the planned breakeven outturn for the year was not achieved with an underspend on resource spending of £.005m. However, we consider this a more an acceptable outturn given the many challenges to our operations, and those of our many partners because of the Covid-19 pandemic which severely impacted operation in the run up to the end of the financial year.

Table 1	£,000
Resource and capital DEL received	4,967
Less net expenditure (including capital grants)	(4,897)
Capital grant and Resource underspend	70
Less depreciation	(149)
Transfer for year to Taxpayers' equity	(79)

The accounts for the year to 31 March 2020, set out on pages 52 to 66, which are prepared on a going concern basis, and in a format directed by Scottish Ministers in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. A copy of the Accounts Direction is reproduced in Appendix 1.

## Outturn to budget

A budget is agreed with the sponsoring department (Departmental Expenditure Limited [DEL]) which covers all expenditure net of income from all other sources. DEL is further split between cash allocations (resource [RDEL] and capital [CDEL]) and non-cash allocations. Non-cash DEL covers depreciation and impairment of non-current assets, which are capitalised tangible and intangible assets included in the Statement of Financial Position at the year end.

Table 2	Resource DEL	Cash Capital DEL	Total DEL	Non-Cash DEL	Total DEL
	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
<b>Budget</b>	4,727	240	4,967	150	5,117
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Net resource expenditure	(4,722)	-	(4,722)	-	(4,722)
Capital grants	-	(175)	(175)	-	(175)
Non-current assets bought	-	(65)	(65)	-	(65)
Depreciation	-	-	-	(149)	(149)
	(4,722)	(240)	(4,962)	(149)	5,111
<b>Outturn [underspend]</b>	5	0	5	1	6
	0.11%	0.0%	0.10%	.67%	0.12%

\*percentages are calculated on the total per component

## Net incoming resources

The net incoming resources for the year to 31 March 2020 comprises income received from partners reimbursing costs incurred, including reimbursement of grant outlays and administration costs incurred on the Cairngorms LEADER programme 2014-20, and the National Lottery Heritage Fund projects - Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership, Great Place Badenoch and the Capercaillie Framework. Fees are also received from called-in planning applications submitted in the first instance to the five local authorities within the National Park's boundaries.

## Changes in non-current assets

Movements in non-current assets are shown in note 8.

## Charitable donations

There were no charitable donations made in the year or previous year.

## Relationship with suppliers and partners

Our supplier payment policy complies with the terms of the Better Payment Practice Code. During the year to 31 March 2020, the time taken to pay creditors achieved an average of 9.1 days (2019: 7.4 days) against a target of 10 days (2019: 10 days), with 71.0% (2019: 89.6%) of payments being made by the target date.

## Operating Performance Summary

### 2019/20 Activity Highlights

Our achievements and key areas of work in the second year of our four year Corporate Plan included the various highlights set out in the following sections. We also highlight here the current status of delivery against our adopted Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). As this report is written while we continue to vary our operations in response to the Covid-19 emergency, forward looking comments on delivery expectations are given in terms of our current plans while liable to ongoing change as we continue to modify and adapt our operational plans to suit current circumstances. We provide regular updates on our activities on our website and through quarterly reports by our Chief Executive to our Board. The most recent such report is available at:

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/27032020/200327CNPABdPaperIAACEOReport%20GM.pdf>

## Conservation

- **Woodland Expansion Targets** work commissioned from the James Hutton Institute to determine the area of the Cairngorms National Park suitable for woodland expansion and able to contribute toward delivery of the national target of 12,000 ha (hectares) per year has confirmed our original annual target of 5,000 ha per year as an appropriate objective. At this rate, only 20% of the Cairngorms would be woodland by 2045: highlighting an aspirational while achievable objective to

contribute to national climate control objectives, while making only minimal impacts on open habitats. This important piece of research was reported at the Cairngorms Climate Conference in March 2020.

- **Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership** is now into the final year of the project delivery. As well as hosting an event in Perth with other National Lottery funded projects the emphasis has been on completing projects and on developing appropriate mechanisms to ensure the legacy of the project. The major projects are now complete including the stabilisation work at Blairfindy Castle, the Speyside Way spur, restoration of the Scalan Mills, the hidden seminary, with the Discovery Centre now established as a focal point for visitors following the Snow Road. Remaining major work focuses on interpretation and completing water-environment projects and riparian woodland. The programme is due to complete by September 2020, although the Project Board has agreed to seek a three month extension to this deadline in order to deal with interruptions to delivery as a result of Covid-19 response measures.
- **Peatland Action** Achieving peatland restoration on the ground in remote and challenging high altitude terrain, alongside a shortage of available skilled contractors and a lengthy funding approval process, brings many challenges. Despite this, our team are currently overseeing over 600 hectares of restoration work with another 965 hectares at the feasibility study stage.
- **East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership (ECMP)**, funded and supported by 6 Estates and the Park Authority, our partners in the ECMP have prepared a work programme including 9 potential projects, including action on wader monitoring, peatland restoration, muirburn plans and raptor studies.
- **Deer management and Moorland management** work has included the initiation of a key piece of work to be completed in 2020/21: a Cairngorms National Park-wide deer count will take place, to include helicopter counts over open areas and extrapolation of numbers into woodland areas. This will represent a key step toward achieving our corporate priority of supporting deer population modelling and herbivore impact assessments.
- **Cairngorms Capercaillie Framework**, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and LEADER, completed its development phase to answer the question “How can people who live, work and play in the Cairngorms National Park help secure the long-term future of Capercaillie” in March 2020 and was followed by the Delivery Phase application. The extremely positive results from the community listening work carried out by Dr Alistair Bath in Carrbridge has given the community group a great boost and strong mandate to go ahead with drawing up a community-led action plan. Learning and outcomes from this development phase on how to support further communities of place and interest through a similar process establishes the basis of the next phase application for the project, along with proposals for raising awareness and understanding, habitat expansion and enhancement, predator management and genetic analysis.
- **Cairngorms Nature Action Plan** Delivery of the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan’s three priorities of ‘landscape-scale conservation’, ‘action for priority species’ and ‘involving people’ continues to be on-track with no significant risks or barriers identified at this early stage. Funding via the Biodiversity Challenge Fund is delivering nature-friendly farming, freshwater restoration and species conservation projects across the Park.

## Conservation Key Performance Indicators

Indicator	Target	Update	Delivery Risk
Area of new native woodland	1,000 hectares (ha) each year	2,948 ha created through Scottish Woodland Grant Scheme since 2017	<b>Green</b> , on target
Area of peatland restoration	1,000 hectares (ha) each year	Funding secured for 10 projects covering 1,052 ha. A total of 600 ha restoration work in progress with 965 ha at feasibility study stage	<b>Amber</b> , behind schedule
Deer density across deer management groups	Reductions towards or less than 10 per km <sup>2</sup>	2020/21 Operational Plan contains resource to undertake a major study of deer density	<b>Amber</b> , some uncertainty on current data
Number of capercaillie	1,200 by 2022	No change – national count expected 2021.	<b>Amber</b> , some uncertainty on current data
Number of wildlife crime incidents in Cairngorms NP	Zero each year	Wildlife crime continues to occur. We have worked with SNH and British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) to develop a new raptor tracker which is planned for roll out in 2020	<b>Red</b> , zero tolerance ambition not achieved

## Visitor Experience

- **Volunteering and Health Walks in the Cairngorms:** the Park Authority, with support from Paths for All and NHS Highland, obtained a three year LEADER funding package to support the development of volunteering and organised walks to support physical and mental health, with the second year of the project successfully delivered over 2019/20.
- **Long Distance Routes (1) Speyside way** after 16 years since an initial study on the Long Distance Route, it is now complete and officially open. We are now developing new maps and interpretation boards to be installed at key sites along the route and working with Newtonmore Business Association to develop a start/finish sculpture in the village. **(2) Deeside Way** The route from Aberdeen to Ballater is also promoted as NCN195 by Sustrans. We continue to work with partners to find funding to improve the route and extend it to Braemar, and also work to reinvigorate efforts to find funding for segments of the route which already have planning consent.
- **The Mountains and People Project** supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund covers investment in the mountain path network, accredited training, volunteering and interpretation work in both Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park and the Cairngorms National Park is due to complete in 2020. 82% of the paths identified in the Cairngorms were completed by October 2019 including the Beinn a Ghlo path in Highland Perthshire which was opened by John Swinney in September 2019. This project along with its predecessor, the Cairngorms Mountain Heritage Project, have upgraded 144km of key mountain paths. We are now refining our

partnership with Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland to ensure that paths improved in Cairngorms over the last 15 years are maintained.

- **Active Travel:** we continue to work on a wide range of project developments promoting and supporting the development of more active travel in the Cairngorms. This includes our work as a partner in the Cairngorms Trust’s Transport in Cairngorms and Kilkenny (TICK) Sustainable Transport project, seeking to support behaviour change toward more active travel as part of a more sustainable, healthy lifestyle, and supporting projects with communities in Glenmore, Laggan, Dulnain Bridge and Kingussie.
- **Volunteer Rangers** now have 26 fully trained volunteers and will be joined by 12 others currently undergoing training to continue to support the work of our ten partner ranger services;
- **Cairngorms Youth Action Team** was launched in October 2019 by Mari Gougeon, Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment and has recruited 15 young people up to 25 years old to develop on the work started in 2019 fully engaging young people in the work of the Cairngorms National Park.
- **Information and interpretation:** ten local information centre partnerships are now in place with staff taking part in the ‘Make it Yours’ training. All centres are branded, have visitor leaflets and are promoted on our website and maps of the National Park;

## Visitor Experience Key Performance Indicators

Indicator	Target	Update	Delivery Risk
Length of path upgraded	20km upgraded by 2022	44.2km of path upgraded in Cairngorms through The Mountains and The People Project	Target Achieved
Length of path extended	6km new path by 2022	5.2km of new path building along Speyside way and Seven Bridges path, Ballater	<b>Green</b> , on target
Tourism Impact: Increase economic impact of visitors to eastern and southern CNP	25% of total visitor economy by 2022	STEAM data shows: 22.8% of total visitor economy in these areas in 2017, declining to 21.9% in 2018	<b>Amber</b> , ahead of baseline with declining recent movement
Completions of John Muir Awards	2,500 awards each year with 20% from disadvantaged backgrounds	2,477 people completed a John Muir Award in and around the Cairngorms in 2019	<b>Green</b> , on target with backgrounds of participants to be determined
Number of Volunteer Rangers	8 or more trained each year	26 volunteer rangers fully trained in first two years of planning period	<b>Green</b> , ahead of target
Cairngorms “A Park For All”: increase in visitors from lower socio-economic backgrounds	Increase visitors from C2, D, E backgrounds from 18% to 20%	Initial mid-survey data in 2020 indicates proportion from this background now at 22%	<b>Green</b> , on target pending finalisation of survey data

## Rural Development

- **Local Development Plan 2020:** the preparation of the Local Development Plan 2020 (LDP 2020) continued throughout 2019/20. Consultation on the proposed LDP 2020 ended on 5 April 2019 and responses were analysed over the summer. The Cairngorms National Park Local Proposed Local Development Plan was submitted to Scottish Ministers on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The examination of unresolved representations by Reporters from the Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA) is now under way. We have been advised by Reporters that oral sessions will not be required and that work should be completed by the end of May 2020. Progress can be monitored on the DEPA's website:  
<http://www.dpea.scotland.gov.uk/CaseDetails.aspx?ID=120658>
- **Economic Action Plan:** we consulted on, and approved, an Economic Action Plan for the Cairngorms National Park during the year. An Economic Steering Group, chaired by Board member Deirdre Falconer, has been established to advise on and monitor delivery of the Economic Action Plan.
- **Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF):** The Authority sponsored two successful bids to this fund over the course of 2019/20. The Muir of Dinnet project (car-park extension, new sewage disposal and motor-home provision), owned by Scottish Natural Heritage, was completed. The approved project in Glenmore managed by Forestry and Land Scotland to provide new pavement / path from Beach Car Park to Hayfield is yet to start and is due for completion by July 2020. The RTIF scheme has been extended into 2020/21 and an Expression of Interest for a small motor home parking facility in Strathdon has been submitted with a grant awarded to support the proposal to be more fully developed.
- **A9 Dualling:** the Park Authority objected to the Dalraddy to Slochd section of the A9 dualling project on the basis that the provision for non-motorised users between Aviemore and Carrbridge is insufficient. The Authority progressed this matter throughout the year, and staff assisted Transport Scotland with a study to identify a suitable off-road walking and cycling route between Aviemore and Carrbridge. We have now reached agreement with Transport Scotland who have committed to provide an appropriate off road route for cyclists and walkers and consequently we have withdrawn our objection.
- **Community-led Housing Delivery:** the communities of Dulnain Bridge, Boat of Garten, Tomintoul, Braemar and Ballater continue to pursue community housing projects, with support provided by the Authority.
- **Badenoch Great Place Project** is now well established and 2 years into the 3 year project. Multiple projects are progressing, including the interpretation and Marketing Strategy and scoping an Alternative Tourist Route for Badenoch. While there has been an interruption in project management with the resignation of the project officer, impacts have been mitigated through provision of support to the project by a number of the Authority's staff.
- **Planning Casework:** in addition to progressing our casework in an efficient and timely manner, we continue to closely monitor the development in the Cairngorms against planning approvals and regulation. Over the course of 2019/20, the Reporter from the Scottish Government Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals has upheld the CNPA's enforcement notice requiring an unauthorised track to be removed following an appeal against the enforcement notice.

## Rural Development Key Performance Indicators

Indicator	Target	Update	Delivery Risk
Number of affordable houses delivered through planning frameworks	200 new affordable houses by 2022	Cairngorms NPA has granted consent (including consent by appeal) for 105 affordable houses since 31 March 2018	<b>Green</b> , on target
Number of people involved in community development activity for the first time	80 people newly involved in community development	LEADER Programme Monitoring and Evaluation currently reporting 237 people have become involved in community projects for the first time through the programme's interventions	Target Achieved
Business satisfaction with Cairngorms NPA	Maintain or increase average satisfaction rating of 5.44/10 at March 2018 baseline	Cairngorms Business Partnership's Business Barometer measure gives a satisfaction rating of 5.82 in Q2 of 2019	<b>Green</b> , on target

## Communication and Engagement

- Make it Yours Campaign:** we continue to support training and adoption of the “Make it Yours Campaign” for people involved in the Cairngorms, whether in business or community groups, to own their relationship with the Cairngorms National Park and promote the Park as an integral element of their work and activities. Attendees at training course supporting the campaign are now nearing 400 since the commencement of the corporate planning period – almost 2% of the total population of the National Park. The training has been updated to reflect the new project initiatives of the Great Place Badenoch and Dark Skies (Tomintoul and Glenlivet).
- Cairngorms Nature Campaign:** The Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend took place between 10 – 13 May 2019, with over 100 events across the Park. Over 3,000 people across the Park got out into our amazing landscapes and nature; over 400 school children were involved in the art competition and the rural skills day; 6 private estates, 2 farms, 10 ranger services, 17 private businesses and 18 organisations and projects were involved. The next Cairngorms Nature BIG Weekend was scheduled to take place 15-17 May 2020, building on the previous year's success. However, this has been cancelled as a consequence of the Covid-19 emergency and instead plans are in place to run a Cairngorms Nature Virtual Week bringing the fantastic nature of the Cairngorms to people as they observe travel restrictions.
- Active Cairngorms:** the third **Wee Walks Week** was promoted across the National Park 9-15<sup>th</sup> September encouraging us all to take a short walk for health and enjoyment. It also promoted the great local path network shared on 17 community path leaflets, and celebrated local health walks. Promotion of responsible access continues to be a major focus of the campaign and work is underway to get a more

collaborative approach in place across Scotland led by SNH and supported by both National Park Authorities and the Forestry & Land Scotland.

- **Corporate Communications:** the Annual Review 2019/20 is published on our website along with the Annual Accounts and can be accessed here ([link](#)). To progress our Gaelic Language Action Plan we recruited our second Gaelic Language internee to help promote Gaelic Experiences in the Park through our digital communications. The online 'Gaelic as an Asset' Toolkit was published in July and a joint Gaelic Education project with Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority was promoted with local schools in August.
- **Net Zero with Nature Conference:** 2019/20 drew toward a close with our sponsored Conference attracting over 150 invited delegates, including the Cabinet Secretary, Ms Rosanna Cunningham, to engage in considering how the Cairngorms National Park can sustainably move to a zero emission economy.

## Corporate Services

- **Office extension project:** our HQ extension won the Architecture Journal Architecture Award 2019 for best workplace up to 10,000m<sup>2</sup> with judges commenting that the development "achieves remarkable things on a limited budget". For more information see: <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/story.aspx?storyCode=10045328>
- during the year **youth development** supported three short term internships: for a project to bring Gaelic Heritage to life for non-Gaelic speakers; digitising unmapped woodland and trees in the National Park; and identifying and digitising eroding and drained peatland in the National Park. We also supported a Grantown Grammar pupil on a 10 day placement. We plan to continue our commitment to Youth by supporting at least 2 intern posts a year;
- **Climate Change Mitigation:** We remain well ahead of our targeted reductions in our emissions from business activities, with our modelled emissions of 97.5 tonnes significantly below the target of 107.3 tonnes. We secured funding to replace two of our diesel cars in our fleet with electric vehicles, and also took 4 petrol hybrid vehicles into the fleet.
- **Shared Services:** we continue to work closely with the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, as well providing Human Resource Services support to the Scottish Land Commission (development of new policies, recruitment, and development, staff consultation and on the submission of the 2019/20 pay remit) and the Cairngorms Trust on supporting staff on developing a Visitor Giving scheme. We also provided human resources and organisational development support to our partners at Bord na Gaidhlig in the year to help support that organisation through some strategic organisational change processes.
- **Cairngorms Trust and LEADER:** The Cairngorms LEADER Programme allocation of £3.04 million is now fully committed, with an additional £0.07 million secured from remaining national funds. The estimated total project value, including eligible match funding, is estimated at £3.807 million, excluding "in-kind" match funding. The Trust is leading on a sustainable rural transport cooperation project, alongside Kilkenny LEADER (Ireland) with the aim of implementing improvements in community and active travel provision. The Trust has also made its first awards from charitable funds to support community projects from a small grants scheme offering up to £1,000 supporting community led projects, while supporting two larger campaigns with up to £10,000 in funding each.
- and we continue to focus our work towards becoming **the best small public sector organisation in Scotland**. We were delighted to see very positive staff

feedback in our staff survey undertaken in Autumn 2019, with results which placed the Authority in the top 100 not for profit employers in the UK on the basis of levels of positive staff engagement.

## Sustainability and climate change

The Park Authority has voluntarily participated in the Scottish Government's revised climate change modelling and measuring exercise since 2015/16. We continue to revise and enhance our internal monitoring methodology and due to our continued effort to reduce our carbon footprint we have reduced emissions in our final report for 2018/19 by 35%, compared to our base year's emission levels. This represents a reduction of 52.5 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

Sustainability and climate change remain key underlying themes within our Corporate Plan and also within the National Park Partnership Plan, underpinning the strategic work of the Park Authority and all its partners in the National Park.

The Authority has been an active partner in the review of Cairngorm Mountain and the future plans for the funicular. As part of our partnership in this project, we commissioned research in the year on the climate projections for the area and the modelled impact on snowfall on the mountain to assist with wider considerations around business planning for Cairngorm Mountain, the snow sport industry and considerations around the future plans for the funicular railway. Our partnership role in this project has therefore supported a focus on climate change and sustainability in business planning for the lead bodies and communities of place and interest involved.

## Future activities

Many of our activities for 2020/21 build on existing work from previous plans and therefore continues the excellent work already started. While the start of the 2020/21 operational year has been impacted considerably by the necessary curtailment of activities in response to the Coronavirus outbreak, we continue to plan and deliver against our strategic priorities while also planning to support the community and economic recovery of the Cairngorms following the Covid-19 responses. While a number of forward references to our planned activities have been given in the preceding reports of our achievements over the last year, this section summarises the Authority's main priorities for 2020/21:

- Development and delivery of a Recovery Plan to establish the Authority's key roles and investment priorities to support the communities and businesses within the Cairngorms National Park in their recovery from the impacts of the Covid-19 emergency, in the context of national work by Scottish Government and the regional and local actions of our various delivery partners.
- Develop the statistical and wider knowledge base to support development of the next National Park Partnership Plan which will run from 2022. We plan to commission key pieces of research on deer numbers and the wider "state of nature" of the Cairngorms in order to provide a more robust evidence base to support our future strategic planning of priorities with our partners for the Cairngorms National Park.
- Delivery of the Capercaillie Framework and the finalisation of our bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) for the full delivery phase of the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project;
- Support completion and conclusion of a number of long-term, externally funded activity programmes and establish appropriate legacy management arrangements to maintain the benefits and outcomes of these programmes in the years to come. This work covers

The Mountains and The People Project (led by Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland); The Cairngorms LEADER Programme (led by the Cairngorms Local Action Group Trust); and the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership (led by the Partnership Board).

- Maintain our focus on leveraging in significant inward investment to the Cairngorms, developing funding bids focused on supporting delivery of the National Park Partnership Plan priorities, with work in 2020/21 focusing on progressing our Heritage Horizons bid to the NLHF;
- Continue our focus on realising a zero emissions economy in the Cairngorms National Park through investment in nature: delivering programmes of work in peatland restoration and woodland expansion while continuing our research and policy work to explore new opportunities and sources of funding for future activities;
- Continuing support for the Cairngorms Nature partnership and their programme delivery, including project and communications support;
- Finalise and begin to implement the Cairngorms Local Development Plan 2020;
- Support the Cairngorms LEADER Local Action Group and our range of valued community partners as we seek to establish new ways to continue to support essential investment through communities in community led local development in an era after the UK has left Europe and we lose access to LEADER funds;
- Supporting the development of Active Cairngorms and Active Aviemore, while working to maintain the evolution of volunteering, including a focus on Volunteer Rangers and Ranger cover across the Cairngorms, with particular reference to the likely heightened requirements to manage visitor access and activities in the outdoors as Scotland moves out of Covid-19 restrictions;
- Continue our work to develop and seek funding supporting implementation and improvement of Long Distance Routes within the Cairngorms National Park, with a particular focus in the Deeside Way in Aberdeenshire;
- Continued support for implementation of the Cairngorms Economic Strategy, and the likely immediate orientation of work stemming from that Strategy around our response to the Coronavirus crisis.

The main internal priorities for the coming year are as follows:

- Continued focus on our Corporate Plan aspiration to be the Best Small Public Body in Scotland. Phase 3 of our Organisational Development Strategy will direct this work and pick up on any further improvements required as identified in the 2019 staff survey, through programmes of work on leadership; culture and behaviour; our working environment; an efficient and agile workforce; and informed and engaged staff;
- Build on work commenced through the Board's Audit and Risk Committee in 2019 in developing our approach to commercial investment within the Cairngorms and the wider risk management of this aspect of activity, while developing our overall approach to risk management and establishing the Authority's "risk appetite" across each of our various areas of management and responsibility.
- Further office development to remodel areas of the original office buildings;
- Finalise implementation of the Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) which has been delayed in 2019, followed by the design and implementation of a new Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS);
- Supporting the Cairngorms Trust in achieving its charitable objectives and developing a visitor giving project for Cairngorms National Park, while continuing to provide wider support to the Trustees in their potential interactions over 2020/21 with Scottish Government around the future for Community Led Local Development investment;
- Providing financial stewardship and governance support for the various externally funded programmes within the Cairngorms National Park for which the Authority acts as the "Accountable Body".

- Providing and participating in shared services and wider collaborative activity in order to provide best value in public services, including the UK National Parks Communications Partnership, providing HR service support to the Scottish Land Commission, and working across a range of shared service activities with our colleagues in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority.
- Focusing communication activities on the agreed campaigns established in the communications strategy.
- Building on Planning Service Improvement actions and delivering best value planning services.

The Authority's Board approved our budget and operational plan for 2020/21 at their virtual meeting on 27 March 2020. While at the same time recognising that the operational plans and resource deployment will have to be frequently revisited and adapted as we respond throughout the year to the Coronavirus crises, the budget and operational plan provides a strong foundation to continue to deliver against our agreed corporate objectives and the wider priorities of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan as approved by Scottish Ministers. The budget and operation plan for 2020/21 can be accessed at:

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/working-together/meetings/meeting/board-2020-03-27/>

## Key Performance Indicators

We have established a full suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) against which we assess our delivery against corporate objectives and through which we establish our contribution to national performance indicators. We report on delivery against these KPIs every six months to the Board and make these reports publicly available. The most recent performance report can be accessed at:

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/06122019/191206CNPABdPaper5Annex2Corporate%20Plan%20UpdateCorpPerformanceKPIs%20v.2revise.pdf>

The most recent KPIs against each of our delivery priorities have been presented in the preceding section. Our suite of internal organisational and governance KPIs are not replicated in this report and can be found through this link.

Highlights of our performance over 2019/20 include:

- Target of 1,000 hectares of peatland restoration met, with 1,052 hectares worked on in year;
- Target of 8 volunteer Rangers trained per year exceeded in first year of corporate plan delivery with 14 volunteers recruited and trained;
- On target to increase economic impact of visitors to eastern and southern Cairngorms NP from 21% to 25% of total visitor economy by 2022, with latest "STEAM" data showing 22.8% of total visitor economy in these areas;
- On target to create 6km of new paths, with 3.7km built along Speyside Way and Seven Bridges Path in Ballater (Aberdeenshire);
- Support of the Cairngorms LEADER Programme has assisted in **achieving** one of our KPI's with objective of bringing 80 people into community development activities for the first time exceeded by the 157 people who have become involved in such activities for their first experience, supporting the sustainability of communities and community led action;
- On target to deliver 200 new affordable houses by 2022, with planning permission granted for 108 affordable houses since adoption of the Corporate Plan.

We continue to highlight one exception in our Corporate Performance to the Board over 2019/20. Our adopted target of zero instances of wildlife crime in the Park has not been met, with several instances of wildlife crime reporting in the Cairngorms over the year. Of course, this measure like many adopted in our suite of KPIs, is not entirely within our control. However, it remains a key aspiration for the Authority and a matter in which we will invest time and resource in working with our partners to seek to resolve.



# PART 2 – ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

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## Directors' report

The Directors' Report sets out the key aspects of the internal organisational change and development within the Park Authority during the year to 31 March 2020.

### The Senior Management Team and Board

The Chief Executive, who is also the Accountable Officer, is Grant Moir. The names of the Directors, who all served throughout the year, are listed on page 2.

Board members who served throughout the year are also listed on page 2 with profiles of the current Board members on the Park Authority's website. Fees paid to Board members are noted in Table 4 together with the total amount of reimbursed expenses paid in the year which are not subject to audit. No pension contributions are made for any Board member.

### Staff development and management

The Park Authority continues to recognise the importance of training and development to ensure that all staff and Board members have the skills required to deliver their role in the context of the organisation's enabling and partnership ethos. Recognising the large numbers of recent changes in Board membership, the Board held a full day training course on governance and "On Board" training regarding requirements around compliance with our Code of Conduct. Conversations on staff development are held regularly as part of the appraisal review process and a reasonable training and development budget has been retained to support delivery of identified training requirements.

The Authority implemented a revised approach to staff development and performance management in 2019/20, moving from a process based on appraisal meetings twice each year to much more regular, two to three weekly performance development conversations (PDCs). Conversations on staff development and training requirements are held regularly as part of the PDCs and an adequate training and development budget, able to date to cover all agreed training and development requirements, has been retained to support delivery of identified training requirements.

The Park Authority maintains oversight of its management of sickness absence through regular review of performance at Board and Management team level. Sickness absence is included as a key performance indicator in the Park Authority's balanced scorecard performance measurement tool. In 2019/20 the average number of days lost through sickness absence was 8.3 days per person (2019: 4.9 days). (In common with many organisations, the Park Authority implemented special leave arrangements to support staff dealing in various ways with the Covid-19 emergency. Absences as a result of Covid-19 are excluded from these sickness absence figures.)

### Sustainability reporting and environmental matters

A key purpose of the Park Authority is to promote partnership working and give leadership to all the bodies and agencies involved in the sustainable development of the National Park. Through coordinating development and collective agreement of the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan, the Park Authority aims to ensure the collective and co-ordinated delivery of the four aims of the National Park. Thus the Park Authority leads others in ensuring that we are all living in, or working and caring for, the Cairngorms National Park in

such a way that it remains, and wherever possible is enhanced, to be enjoyed by future generations. Sustainability and environmental considerations are therefore at the heart of everything this organisation does.

The Authority initiated the planning process of our becoming a net zero emission organisation by 2045 and achieving the even more challenging objective of realising a 75% reduction in our emissions by 2030 in 2019, through our Board's consideration of the "Net Zero with Nature" paper in December 2019.

The Authority followed this up by coordinating the Cairngorms Net Zero with Nature conference in Aviemore in early March 2020, with over 150 delegates considering how the Cairngorms National Park and the Authority can lead the way in developing a more sustainable rural economy.

The authority continues to outstrip our current emissions reductions targets, with a 35% reduction of 52.5 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> achieved by the end of the last fully modelled year to 31 March 2019.

Illustrations of our wider priority to deliver sustainability are presented throughout these accounts.

## **Social, community and human rights issues**

Our work on sustainability and the environment is also central to our activities around social and community development. Conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the Cairngorms National Park is essential if the Park is to build and maintain a diverse and vibrant economy.

The Park Authority's work in this area spans support for sustainable business development within the National Park, to promoting development of affordable housing, to establishing partnerships with individual communities in developing and delivering these communities' action plans, and more widely to engage with community planning partnerships.

Our "Make It Yours" campaigns seek to engage people and communities in the work required to protect and enhance the special qualities of the National Park, seeking to make residents and businesses own their role in and for the National Park.

Our various community development activities, support for community action planning and community led local development through LEADER all seek to engage communities in identifying both needs and solutions to ensure their long term sustainability.

## **Diversity**

The Park Authority continues to embed its approach to ensuring equality. Three Equalities Outcomes are published to provide a framework promoting equality within the work of the Park Authority and in the work undertaken to deliver the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan. These three Equalities Outcomes are:

- ensure a gender balance in senior management positions;
- more under-represented equality groups will visit and experience the National Park removing or minimising disadvantage;

- more equality groups will participate in CNPA led consultation and engagement

The Authority's Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report 2017 to 2021 draws all of our work in embedding equalities within the operation of the organisation and promoting the requirement to act on equalities issues with external partners into a single document. Our progress report on work undertaken and impacts of this work was published in 2019 and is available from the above web link.

The Park Authority's on-going work on equalities and creating 'A Park for All' is overseen by an internal working group comprising staff drawn from across the organisation and is chaired by a senior manager. The Park Authority is accredited within the 'Positive about Disabled People' scheme.

## **Information and data security**

The Park Authority has continued to improve workflow and implemented the first phase of its planned improvements to digital processes with implementation of a customer relationship management system (CRM). Once commissioned this system will be followed in 20/21 with an electronic document management system.

The Park Authority has had no instances of loss of data or personal information over the course of the year. The Governance Statement included in this Annual Statement and Accounts sets out more information on the Park Authority's range of internal controls and review mechanism to ensure data security amongst other things.

In 2019/20 we received a total of 33 information requests (2018/19 28): 18 under Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOI) [2018/19: 15] and 15 under and Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (EIR) [2018/19: 13] 97% of requests were responded to within statutory timescales (2018/19: 93% in 2018/19. Our internal auditors reviewed the Authorities processes which support our management of information requests during the year and made a number of recommendations for further enhancements to our systems which we will implement over the course of the coming year.

The Authority also has a fully developed suite of wider policies designed to ensure that feedback on our service standards, activities and performance can be given. This includes our complaints, grievance and whistleblowing policies. We have a mature approach to internal and external feedback, ensuring appropriate investigations of feedback take place and seeking to draw improvement points out of investigations where appropriate, irrespective of whether the initiating point of complaint or negative feedback is upheld. Our seeking improvement in this way supports our organisational aim of being the best small public body in Scotland, and also in securing Best Value in accordance with national objectives.

Our information access and complaints policies are published on the Authority's website.

## **Statement of the National Park Authority's Responsibilities**

Under section 25(1) of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, the Cairngorms National Park Authority is required to keep proper accounts and accounting records, prepare an account of its expenditure and receipts for each financial year in accordance with directions issued by the Scottish Ministers, and send the account to the Scottish Ministers by such time as they may direct.

The financial statements are to be prepared on the accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of its expenditure and cash flow for the financial year, and of the state of affairs as at the end of the financial year.

## **Auditors**

The accounts of the Park Authority are audited by Grant Thornton UK LLP who are appointed by the Auditor General for Scotland in accordance with paragraph 25(2) of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000.

The costs relating to the statutory audit work for the financial year were £11,320 (2019: £10,940). No other fees for non-audit related services were paid in either year.

The Independent Auditor's report is on pages 47-50.

## **Statement of the Board's Responsibilities**

### **The Board**

The Board has a corporate responsibility for ensuring that the Park Authority fulfils the aims and objectives set by the Scottish Ministers and for promoting the economic, efficient and effective use of staff and other resources in accordance with the principles of Best Value.

### **The Convener of the Board**

The Convener is responsible to Scottish Ministers, and is charged with ensuring that the Park Authority's policies and actions support the wider strategic policies of the Scottish Ministers, and that the Park Authority's affairs are conducted with probity.

The Convener has particular leadership responsibilities on:

- formulating the Board's strategy;
- ensuring that the Board, in making decisions, takes proper account of guidance provided by the Scottish Ministers/Department;
- promoting the efficient and effective use of staff and other resources;
- encouraging high standard of propriety;
- representing the view of the Board to the general public.

The Convener also ensures that all Board Members, when taking up office, are fully briefed on the terms of their duties, rights and responsibilities, and receive appropriate training. He advises the Scottish Ministers when Board vacancies arise, with a view to ensuring an appropriate spread of balance of professional and financial expertise, and also assesses the performance of Board Members annually.

## Statement of the Accountable Officer's Responsibilities

As Chief Executive of the Park Authority I am designated the Accountable Officer and am personally responsible for safeguarding the public funds for which I have sole charge, for ensuring the propriety and regularity in the handling of those funds, and for the day-to-day operations and management of the Park Authority. I am expected to act in accordance with the Management Statement/Financial Memorandum for the Park Authority and within the terms of the relevant guidance in the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM) and other instructions and guidance issued by Scottish Ministers, in particular the Memorandum to Accountable Officers for Other Public Bodies, and in particular,

- observe the financial statements direction issued by Scottish Ministers, including relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether the applicable accounting standards have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the Park Authority will continue in operation.

## Disclosure of Information to Auditors by the Accountable Officer

So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Park Authority's auditors are unaware and I have taken all reasonable steps to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

## Accountable Officer's statement on the Annual Report and Accounts

As Accountable Officer I believe that the annual report and accounts as a whole are fair, balanced and understandable.

## Governance Statement

### Scope of Responsibility

As Accountable Officer, I am responsible for maintaining sound systems of internal control which support the achievement of Cairngorms National Park Authority's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and departmental assets for which I am personally responsible. These duties are in accordance with the Management Statement agreed between the Park Authority and Scottish Government, and also responsibilities assigned to me in the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM).

The SPFM, issued by the Scottish Ministers, provides guidance to the Scottish Government and other relevant bodies on the proper handling of public funds, and sets out the relevant statutory, parliamentary and administrative requirements, emphasising the need for economy, efficiency and effectiveness, and promotes good practice and high standards of propriety. I am therefore responsible as Accountable Officer to ensure the Park Authority's internal control systems comply with the requirements of the SPFM.

The Management Statement sets out the role of the Park Authority's Board in providing leadership and governance. The governance responsibilities of the Board are supported by Standing Orders last revised and adopted in 2019 and a Code of Conduct revised and adopted in 2014. A group of professional, senior staff advisors and appropriate Board training and development processes support the good governance arrangements set out in the Standing Orders and Code of Conduct. As a public body, the Park Authority operates in an open and accountable manner, and is committed to accessibility, openness and accountability and supports the highest standards in corporate governance.

Other than the documents referred to above and the resource allocation letters issued to me over the course of the year, there are no other written authorities provided to me in 2019/20.

## **The Operation of the Board and Sub-Committees**

The Board comprises 19 members: 7 appointed by five Councils with boundaries within the National Park, 7 appointed by Scottish Government, and 5 directly elected within the wards of the Park. The Board therefore reflects a blend of different experience, backgrounds and interests. The full Board meets regularly to consider strategy, and performance against the current Corporate Plan. Meetings are scheduled quarterly, with additional meetings convened as required. To enable the Board to discharge its duties, all members receive appropriate and timely information in advance of meetings with all agendas and papers also placed in the public domain. Meetings are open to the public save the occasional meeting held in private for various reasons of business and commercial confidentiality.

To ensure that the Board develops an understanding of the current and emerging issues, members also participate in informal discussion sessions to consider emerging policy issues and proposals, and a preferred strategic direction identified prior to fuller, open consideration at formal meetings.

The Board has established sub-committees: a Planning Committee (which deals with all aspects of the Park Authority's statutory planning responsibilities), together with Committees covering Finance and Delivery, Staffing and Recruitment, and Audit and Risk. All committees have delegated duties and responsibilities set out in terms of reference agreed by the full Board to oversee and scrutinise the Park Authority's deployment and management of resources. (The record of attendance at Board meetings can be found in Table 5.)

## **The Audit and Risk Committee**

The Audit and Risk Committee's role is to provide effective governance over all aspects of the Park Authority's internal management control systems and the annual financial accounts and audit. It also takes a lead in strategic risk management ensuring that risks impacting on strategic objectives are identified and mitigated and that risk management is embedded throughout the Park Authority's operations. The Committee receives independent audit opinions and reports from the Park Authority's internal audit function (BDO LLP) and external auditors (Grant Thornton UK LLP), who both have independent access to the Committee and to its Convener. The Committee is tasked with monitoring the operation of the internal control function and bringing any material matters to the attention of the full Board. Detailed reports of all audit reviews are made available to both management and the Committee.

The Committee meets at least quarterly and reports annually to the Board on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Park Authority's internal controls, and more widely on its work in the preceding year.

The Board has continued a process of self-evaluation of effectiveness and governance over the course of 2019/20 which were originally initiated under the "Leadership" element of the first Organisational Development Strategy in 2015/16. The Board completed a revision of its skills matrix in February 2020 and, through this process, established a priority for continuing professional development of members over the coming years. Other elements of Board governance and effectiveness are reviewed and supported by senior officers as required.

The Board has agreed a set of Corporate Performance Indicators so it may improve its oversight of delivery against key strategic objectives and the Park Authority's Corporate Plan. A detailed performance report is submitted to the Board twice yearly on delivery key performance indicators, considered at each June and December meeting alongside a review of strategic risk management. These monitoring and control mechanisms support Board scrutiny over delivery of the Corporate Plan and National Park Partnership Plan priorities.

Periodic reports from independent internal and external auditors form a key and essential element in informing my review as Accountable Officer of the effectiveness of the systems of internal control within the Park Authority. The Board's Audit and Risk Committee also plays a vital role in this regard, through its consideration of audit recommendations arising from reviews of internal control systems and its scrutiny of proposed management action to address any improvements required. The Audit and Risk Committee also considers both a three year plan for internal audit coverage and annually agrees an internal audit plan flowing from that three year plan.

## **Shared Services Delivery**

The Park Authority plays an important role in providing support over a range of activities to local communities and organisation to help deliver the National Park Partnership Plan's priorities. In the last year we have supported Cairngorms LEADER Programme Local Action Group, the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership, the Great Place Badenoch Project as well as the Capercaillie Framework. Our management and internal control structures ensure that support for these community delivery entities are separated from the core activities of the Authority, while ensuring that our support helps them achieve "best practice" in their operations.

The Authority also undertakes a range of shared service arrangements with other public body partners, while collaborating on a range of shared service delivery with Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority (LLTNPA). We receive key support from LLTNPA on IT infrastructure maintenance, development and shared licence agreements for planning systems and data back-up and security arrangements. In addition to these more formal shared services with LLTNPA, both National Park Authorities continue to collaborate closely on areas of shared policy interest.

## **Internal Audit**

The internal audit function is an integral element of scrutiny of the Park Authority's internal control systems. BDO LLP was appointed following an open procurement process as the Park Authority's internal auditors in 2016 and have undertaken a comprehensive review of

key internal control systems since their appointment. During the year to 31 March 2020, BDO has reported to the Audit and Risk Committee on the following reviews:

<b>Governance &amp; risk</b>	Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act Risk management
<b>Internal control systems</b>	Follow up review of prior recommendations Staff appraisal and objective setting LEADER administration Expenses management Payroll administration Project management

All recommendations made by BDO are considered and implemented as appropriate.

Our internal audits over the course of the year have generally resulted in positive reports, with “substantial” or at least “moderate” ratings on the design and implementation of internal control systems.

### External Audit

External auditors are appointed for us by the Auditor General for Scotland through Audit Scotland. Audit Scotland appointed Grant Thornton UK LLP to the role for an initial five year period commencing in 2016/17. This role has now been extended for a further year and will cover the financial year 2022/23. We work well with Grant Thornton UK LLP, who review key systems so they can form a view on the effectiveness of control arrangements which in turn supports their audit opinion on the financial statements.

The fees paid to Audit Scotland for the independent statutory audit for 2019/20 is £12,320. No fees were paid for non-audit work.

### Best Value

The Audit and Risk Committee continues to monitor the Authority’s adherence to Scottish Government Best Value guidelines and our approach to continuous improvement. We launched phase three of our Organisational Development Strategy in the year to continue to improve our work processes, organisational environment, and delivery of services.

### Risk Management

We have a risk management strategy in accordance with guidance issued by Scottish Ministers to identify actual and potential threats which may prevent us from delivering our statutory purpose and also to identify appropriate mitigation actions.

The Board recognises the importance of risk management and continues to monitor the Park Authority’s Strategic Risk Register. The Strategic Risk Register records risks, action taken to mitigate the identified risks and senior management’s responsibility for leading on mitigation generally. The Strategic Risk Register is reviewed by Management Team four times each year and updated by the full Board twice and by the Audit and Risk Committee twice a year.

The Audit and Risk Committee, with the Senior Management Team, leads on embedding risk management processes throughout the Park Authority. Both groups consider the

management of strategic risk in line with the Risk Strategy to ensure that the required actions are appropriately reflected and incorporated in operational delivery plans. A revised Risk Management Strategy was adopted by the Audit and Risk Committee in 2016, and subsequently reviewed by the Board in 2019, with the Committee also receiving an internal audit report on the effectiveness of operations of risk management within the organisation in that year.

The Strategic Risk Register was refreshed with reference to the current Corporate Plan, covering 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2022 and continues to be monitored and revised when appropriate.

## **Data Security**

Procedures are in place to ensure that information is being managed in accordance with legislation and that data is held accurately and securely. The Park Authority has no reported nor recorded instances of data loss in the year to 31 March 2020.

The second iteration of Cyber Essentials + accreditation was achieved in the year. We continue to review our digital practices and infrastructure to ensure they remain fit for purpose and that all reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risk of data loss or compromise of systems due to Cyber Attacks. Work is currently underway on a Cyber Security Policy and Digital Working Strategy with both to be adopted in 2020/21.

## **Our response to Covid-19**

We have considered the risks of the covid 19 pandemic against the needs to keep the Park Authority's operations functioning and to help sustain and aid the Park's economy and conservation until such time as the pandemic is considered at an end.

We have implemented a full scale Business Continuity Plan (BCP) which maps onto the Scottish Government's "roadmap". In implementing this BCP we have developed new ways of working, such as holding meeting 'virtually', and in more use of collaborative IT solutions, and by remote working, with the use of the office kept to the absolute safe minimum. This has allowed the Board and its committees, and staff, to continue to "meet" and to carry on working as near normal as is possible in a very abnormal time. We have also adapted procedures and controls to allow us to continue operating in an effective and safe way. A specific BCP risk register has been developed and is reviewed on a regular basis by management and the Board's Audit and Risk Committee.

The Management Team, Operational Management Group and Board have reviewed our strategic and operational delivery plans. We have adapted our resource allocation and operational plans to manage and mitigate the impacts of COVID19, while continuing to deliver existing strategic objectives where possible.

We will continue this process of governance and BCP review throughout 2020/21. We will continue to monitor the impact of the pandemic as time goes on and ensure that we are financially stable and have all the resources to deliver our plans for 20/21, just as we will explore and adapt new technologies and practices to aid our response to the pandemic.

## Conclusion

As Accountable Officer I am responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. In order to do this my review is informed by:

- a) The executive managers within the organisation who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework and who provide assurance on systems within regular Senior Management Team meetings;
- b) Internal monitoring of control systems by staff against SPFM requirements;
- c) The work of the internal auditors, who submit regular reports to the Audit and Risk Committee which include the Head of Internal Audit's independent and objective opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of our systems of internal control together with recommendations for improvement; and
- d) Comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports.

I am supported by a Corporate Services Director, who in turn is supported by the Corporate Services staff group, and provides senior management leadership on the financial management, internal controls and governance arrangements. I take assurance from the effectiveness of internal control systems, financial management and planning processes, and risk management from the assurances received from the Corporate Services Director.

I have also been advised on the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Board and its Audit and Risk Committee. Appropriate action is taken against any weaknesses identified and to ensure continuous improvement of our systems. The internal auditor's annual report for 2019/20 states that, "based on the reviews undertaken during the period, and in the context of materiality: the risk management activities and controls in the areas which we examined were found to be suitably designed to achieve the specific risk management, control and governance arrangements. Based on our verification reviews and sample testing, risk management, control and governance arrangements were operating with sufficient effectiveness to give reasonable, but not absolute assurance that the related risk management, control and governance objectives were achieved for the period under review".

**The Governance Report was authorised for issue by the Accountable Officer on 21 October 2020.**



**Grant Moir**

Chief Executive and Accountable Officer  
21 October, 2020

# REMUNERATION AND STAFF REPORT

The Remuneration and Staff Report is subject to audit except for the sections on pay policies, staffing and recruitment, and Board members' expenses which are reviewed by the auditor for consistency with the audited accounts.

## Pay policy

The fees and expenses paid to Board members comply with guidance issued by Scottish Ministers. Board members' fees are approved annually by the Scottish Government through the Authority's interaction with appropriate Public Sector Pay Policies.

Staff salary levels, including the Chief Executive, are reviewed by the Staffing and Recruitment Committee and the overall pay remit established by the Authority is subject to agreement with its sponsoring department within Scottish Government, the Environment and Forestry Directorate, Natural Resources Division, in consultation with the Scottish Government Finance Pay Policy Team. Approval is normally annually, unless a multi-year arrangement has been agreed. The remit for 2019/20 was on an annual basis, and is within the terms and conditions set out in the Scottish Government Public Sector Pay Policy.

Members of staff covered by this report hold appointments which are either open-ended or fixed term. Early termination, other than for misconduct would result in the individual receiving compensation. As fixed term contracts normally end automatically when the agreed end date is reached, unless the contract is for 4 years or more which may lead to the employee being treated as permanent, provision is made for the expected redundancy costs incurred on an individual basis.

## Performance management

Performance of all staff members is monitored and reviewed through the staff appraisal arrangements. A new performance management approach was adopted on the 25 March 2020 which is based on regular, proactive, open and constructive dialogue between a staff member and their line-manager focusing on objective setting and performance, training and development requirements, and general wellbeing with a particular focus on mental health.

Performance management will be achieved by regular and frequent Performance Development Conversations (PDCs) throughout the year between all staff and their line manager, giving "real-time" and two-way feedback. The feedback is to help staff act/work more constructively and support their growth and are expected to be an appropriate mix of "recognition" (acknowledging strengths and skill which have contributed to success) or "guidance" (given with the intention of increasing effectiveness or success in the future). The PDCs will be frequent, "in the moment" and in person, strengthening the working relationship between staff and their line-managers, and reinforcing the meaningfulness of the feedback given through immediacy of connection to performance to which feedback is linked.

The new policy has been designed to be a key tool in achieving optimal operational effectiveness throughout the Park Authority as we acknowledged that a high level of organisational performance is directly dependent on the skills, talent, engagement and well-being our staff.

## Staffing and recruitment

The Park Authority has a Staffing and Recruitment Committee, comprising 6 Board members supported by relevant senior staff, which meets throughout the year. Its membership and remit are agreed annually by the Board.

The Committee's remit includes:

- oversight and monitoring the Park Authority's human resource policies, including in particular the pay and grading, performance appraisal and the associated performance related pay systems when appropriate;
- advising the Board on annual pay awards;
- providing an interface between staff representative group(s) and the Board, and participation in arbitrating on staffing issues as set out in the Authority's procedures, and as otherwise required; and
- oversight of recruitment of senior staff (Directors and Chief Executive) including agreeing the job descriptions, adverts and salary, to take responsibility for interviewing and selecting the successful candidates and seeking the endorsement of the Board, and, in the case of the Chief Executive, of Scottish Ministers.

For the purposes of this report, persons in senior positions having authority or responsibility for directing or controlling the major activities of the Park Authority are taken to comprise the Board members, and the Chief Executive and Directors (the Management Team).

In reaching its recommendations, the Committee has regard to the following considerations:

- the need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified people to exercise their different responsibilities;
- to take account of regional/local variations in labour markets and the effects on the recruitment and retention of staff;
- funds available to the sponsoring department as set out in the Scottish Government's departmental expenditure limits;
- to take account of Scottish Government policies for improving the public services including the requirement to meet the output targets for the delivery of departmental services; and
- The Scottish Government's Public Sector Pay Guidance.

## Staff involvement

The Park Authority has a Staff Consultative Forum (SCF) in place, through which it ensures effective two-way communications with staff and Prospect Trade Union representatives in resolving any issues arising and consulting on new initiatives. The SCF comprises a maximum of five staff representatives, one place amongst these representatives being reserved for a nominee of staff who are members of Prospect Trade Union with which the Authority has a voluntary recognition agreement. During 2019/20 key matters on which staff were consulted through the Staff Consultative Forum were:

- pay awards for the years commencing 1 April 2019 and 1 April 2020;
- internal communication and consultative mechanisms;
- implementation of the staff survey and evaluation of the results;
- review and update of a range of employment policies;

- development of phase three of the Organisational Development Strategy;
- review of facilities and working arrangements as the staff group develop their use of the office extension;
- refreshing the process of staff consultation and terms of reference of the SCF.

To complement the standard consultative processes in place through the SCF, the Park Authority has also established a series of subject-specific, fixed-life staff working groups to help implement the Organisational Development Strategy.

## Equality and diversity

The Park Authority is an equal opportunities employer with policies against discrimination and to ensure no unfair or illegal discriminatory treatment or barriers to employment or advancement. We are committed to meeting our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Park Authority is accredited as a Positive about Disability employer.

The equalities policies ensure that all staff should be treated equally irrespective of their sex, marital/civil partnership status, age, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, work pattern, employment status, gender identity (transgender), caring responsibility or trade union membership. Employment and promotion are on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

At the end of the financial and operational year our gender split of staff, including project staff was:

Table 3 (subject to audit)	Male		Female	
	2020	2019	2020	2019
Chief executive and directors	4	4	-	-
Staff	24	26	44	49
	<b>28</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>49</b>
			<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	Male		39%	38%
	Female		61%	62%

## Staff union time

The disclosures relating to the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 by public bodies is contained in Appendix II.

## Board members' fees and expenses

The Park Authority has a non-executive Board and no member has any pension entitlement. The expenses disclosed in Table 4 below are not subject to audit.

Table 4 (subject to audit except expenses)	Beginning of current term	End of term or date stood down	2020		2019	
			Fees £	Expenses £	Fees £	Expenses £
<b>Scottish Government appointees</b>						
Angela Douglas	01 10 14	30 09 18	-	-	3,579	680
Janet Hunter	08 09 15	07 09 23	7,683	1,449	7,532	1,413
Gregor Hutcheon	01 10 14	30 09 18	-	-	3,099	59
Douglas McAdam	01 11 18	31 10 22	7,845	2,101	3,205	977
Anne Rae MacDonald	01 11 18	31 10 22	7,329	1,133	3,205	526
Dr F McLean	01 11 18	31 10 22	7,846	719	3,205	563
William Munro	01 11 18	31 10 22	7,520	1,281	3,205	788
Gordon Riddler	01 10 14	30 09 18	-	-	2,938	307
Dr Gaener Rodger	01 10 18	31 10 22	7,847	823	3,045	457
Judith Webb	01 02 19	31 01 23	7,629	4,491	7,052	2,240
Brian Wood	01 10 14	30 09 18	-	-	5,556	601
<b>Local Authority nominees</b>						
Peter Argyle	08 09 15	07 09 22	7,738	1,443	14,798	762
Carolyn Caddick	01 10 17	30 09 22	7,629	1,489	7,693	934
Pippa Hadley	01 10 17	30 09 22	7,220	419	7,693	554
John Latham	01 10 12	30 09 22	7,792	-	7,372	285
Xander McDade	01 10 17	30 09 22	22,668	3,211	14,799	4,650
Ian Maclaren	01 10 17	30 09 22	7,738	1,954	7,693	1,819
Derek Ross	01 11 18	31 10 22	6,975	1,211	3,205	467
Walter Wilson	01 10 17	18 06 18	-	-	1,245	74
<b>Locally elected</b>						
Rebecca Badger	20 03 15	19 03 19	-	-	7,693	305
Geva Blackett	31 03 17	19 03 23	11,334	1,188	8,777	4,064
Deirdre Falconer	20 03 19	19 03 23	7,835	918	-	-
Dave Fallows	22 03 19	21 03 23	-	-	7,693	861
John Kirk	28 03 19	19 03 23	7,909	-	-	-
Eleanor Mackintosh	22 03 19	21 03 23	11,334	1,180	11,112	1,519
William McKenna	22 03 19	19 03 23	7,847	92	7,693	174
			<b>167,718</b>	<b>25,102</b>	<b>153,087</b>	<b>25,079</b>

A register of Board member's interests can be found on the National Park's website at <https://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/190416BoardMembersRegisterOfInterests.pdf>

## Board members' Attendance at Meetings

Table 5		committees	public	Board Business	Planning
			6	11	11
<b>Scottish Government appointees</b>					
Janet Hunter	A		6	9	9
Douglas McAdam	-		6	9	11
Anne Rae MacDonald	F		5	9	7
Dr Fiona McLean	S		6	11	11
William Munro	F		5	10	11
Dr Gaener Rodger	A		6	10	10
Judith Webb	A		6	7	6
<b>Local Authority nominees</b>					
Peter Argyle	A		6	10	11
Carolyn Caddick	S		6	9	11
Pippa Hadley	A		6	9	10
John Latham	A		5	11	11
Xander McDade	F,S		6	9	10
Ian Maclaren	F,S		6	11	11
Derek Ross	S		5	7	7
<b>Locally elected</b>					
Geva Blackett	S		4	7	8
Deirdre Falconer	-		5	8	11
John Kirk	F		6	11	11
Eleanor Mackintosh	F		6	11	11
William McKenna	S		6	11	11

Committees: F – Finance and delivery; A – Audit and risk; S – Staff and recruitment: appointments are shown as at 31 March 2020

## Senior Management Team salary and pension entitlements

The Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 requires appointments to be made on merit and on the basis of fair and open competition. The members of the senior management team hold appointments which are open ended. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in the individual requiring compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Senior Management Team of the Park Authority.

## Senior Management Team remuneration

	Table 6 Single total figure of remuneration (subject to audit)					
	Salary		Pension benefits		Total	
	2019/20 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000	2018/19 £'000
Grant Moir	80-85	80-85	33	32	110-120	110-115
David Cameron	65-70	60-65	29	23	90-95	85-90
Murray Ferguson	60-65	60-65	25	14	85-90	75-80
Dr Peter Mayhew	55-60	50-55	27	21	80-85	70-75

No member of the management team received either a bonus payment or benefits in kind in the year (2019: £nil).

\*The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increases due to inflation or any increase or decrease due to a transfer of pension rights.

**Pay multiples** (subject to audit)

The Authority is required to disclose the relationship between the total remuneration of its highest paid director and the median remuneration of its staff (the mid-point of banded remuneration, using the full time equivalent remuneration). Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, and any benefits in kind and severance payments. It does not include employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent value of pensions.

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid director in the Park Authority in the financial year 2019/20 was £80-85,000 (2018/19: £80-85,000). This was 2.6 times (2018/19: 2.7) the median of staff remuneration which was £32,337 (2018/19: £30,077).

No member of staff received remuneration in excess of the highest paid director in either the year or the previous year.

**Senior Management Team pension entitlements**

Table 7 (subject to audit)	Accrued pension at age 65 as at 31 03 2020 £'000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age £'000	CETV at 31 03 2020 £'000	CETV at 31 03 2019 £'000	Real increase in CETV £'000
Grant Moir	10-15	0-2.5	137	113	13
David Cameron	35-40	0-2.5	611	565	18
Murray Ferguson	25-30 + lump sum 65-70	0-2.5 lump sum 0-2.5	542	496	17
Peter Mayhew	0-5	0-2.5	54	28	20

**Civil Service Pensions**

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. From 1 April 2015 a new pension scheme for civil servants was introduced – the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme or **alpha**, which provides benefits on a career average basis with a normal pension age equal to the member’s State Pension Age (or 65 if higher). From that date all newly appointed civil servants and the majority of those already in service joined **alpha**. Prior to that date, civil servants participated in the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The PCSPS has four sections: three providing benefits on a final salary basis (**classic**, **premium** or **classic plus**) with a normal pension age of 60; and one providing benefits on a whole career basis (**nuvos**) with a normal pension age of 65.

These statutory arrangements are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions payable under **classic**, **premium**, **classic plus**, **nuvos** and **alpha** are increased annually in line with Pensions Increase legislation. Existing members of the PCSPS who were within 10 years of their normal pension age on 1 April 2012 remained in the PCSPS after 1 April 2015. Those who were between 10 years and 13 years and 5 months from their normal pension age on 1 April 2012 will switch into **alpha** sometime between 1 June 2015 and 1 February 2022. All members who switch to **alpha** have their PCSPS benefits ‘banked’, with those with earlier benefits in one of the final salary sections of the PCSPS having those benefits based on their final salary when they leave **alpha**. (The pension figures quoted for officials show pension earned in PCSPS or **alpha** – as appropriate. Where the official has benefits in both the PCSPS and **alpha** the figure quoted is the combined value of their benefits in the two schemes.) Members joining from October 2002 may opt for either the appropriate defined benefit arrangement or a ‘money purchase’ stakeholder pension with an employer contribution (**partnership** pension account).

Employee contributions are salary-related and range between 4.6% and 8.05% for members of **classic**, **premium**, **classic plus**, **nuvos** and **alpha**. Benefits in **classic** accrue at the rate of 1/80<sup>th</sup> of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years initial pension is payable on retirement. For **premium**, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60<sup>th</sup> of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike **classic**, there is no automatic lump sum. **classic plus** is essentially a hybrid with benefits for service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per **classic** and benefits for service from October 2002 worked out as in **premium**. In **nuvos** a member builds up a pension based on his pensionable earnings during their period of scheme membership. At the end of the scheme year (31 March) the member’s earned pension account is credited with 2.3% of their pensionable earnings in that scheme year and the accrued pension is uprated in line with Pensions Increase legislation. Benefits in **alpha** build up in a similar way to **nuvos**, except that the accrual rate is 2.32%. In all cases members may opt to give up (commute) pension for a lump sum up to the limits set by the Finance Act 2004.

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over pension age. Pension age is 60 for members of **classic**, **premium** and **classic plus**, 65 for members of **nuvos**, and the higher of 65 or State Pension Age for members of **alpha**. (The pension figures quoted for officials show pension earned in PCSPS or **alpha** – as appropriate. Where the official has benefits in both the PCSPS and **alpha** the figure quoted is the combined value of their benefits in the two schemes, but note that part of that pension may be payable from different ages.)

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website [www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk](http://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk)

### Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV)

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member’s accrued benefits and any contingent spouse’s pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their

total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the member has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their buying additional pension benefits at their own cost. CETVs are worked out in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

**The real increase in the value of the CETV**

This reflects the increase in CETV that is funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in the accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

**Average number of persons employed**

The average number of whole-time equivalent persons employed during the year was:

Table 8 (subject to audit)	Permanently employed staff	Others	2020 Total	2019 Total
Senior management team	4	-	4	4
Staff (whole time equivalent)	54	12	66	65

During the year no staff were seconded to the Authority from other parties (2019: nil) nor were any members of the staff seconded to other parties (2019: nil).

**Exit packages and compensation for loss of office (subject to audit)**

During the year were no exit packages agreed under the Civil Service Compensation Scheme or voluntary exit packages (2019: none).

**Sickness absence**

The average numbers of days lost to sickness absence during the year 8 per employee (2019: 4.9). (These figures exclude any absences due to special leave arrangements for the Covid-19 emergency.)

## Staff costs and Board Members' Fees

Table 9 (subject to audit)	Permanently employed staff and Board Members £,000	Others £,000	2020 Total £,000	2019 Total £,000
Board members fees and costs	171	-	171	156
Senior Management	379	-	379	352
Staff	2,604	296	2,900	3,055
	<u>3,154</u>	<u>296</u>	<u>3,450</u>	<u>3,211</u>
<b>Board members</b>				
Fees	168		168	153
Social security costs	3		3	3
	<u>171</u>		<u>171</u>	<u>156</u>
<b>Senior Management</b>				
Salaries	270		270	261
Social security costs	32		32	31
Pensions	77		77	60
	<u>379</u>		<u>379</u>	<u>352</u>
<b>Staff</b>				
Salaries	1,910	222	2,132	2,071
Social security costs	179	18	197	202
Pensions	515	56	571	430
	<u>2,604</u>	<u>296</u>	<u>2,900</u>	<u>2,704</u>

## Number of staff with salaries above £60,000

Table 10	2020	2019
£80,001 - £90,000	1	1
£70,001 - £80,000	-	-
£60,001 - £70,000	2	2

# PARLIAMENTARY ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

## Fees and charges

During the year the Authority received 60% of planning fees for called in planning applications to the 5 local authorities within the National Park boundaries.

## Losses and special payments

There were no special payments in the year to 31 March 2020, or the previous year. There was a gain on the disposal of non-current assets in the year of £350 (2019: £nil).

## Gifts

There were no gifts made during the year. In 2019 £404 was spent in recognition of retiring Board members service when retiring members were presented with a framed photograph of one of the icon scenes of natural beauty within the National Park.

## Significant remote contingencies

In addition to contingent liabilities reported within the context of IAS 37, the Authority is not aware of any liabilities for which the likelihood of a transfer of economic benefit in settlement is too remote to meet the definition of a contingent liability.

**The accountability report was authorised for issue by the Accountable Officer on 21 October 2020.**



**Grant Moir**  
Chief Executive and Accountable Officer  
21 October, 2020

# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY, THE AUDITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND AND THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

## Report on the audit of the financial statements

### Opinion on financial statements

We have audited the financial statements in the annual report and accounts of Cairngorms National Park Authority for the year ended 31 March 2020 under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. The financial statements comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows, the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) as adopted by the European Union, and as interpreted and adapted by the 2019/20 Government Financial Reporting Manual (the 2019/20 FReM).

In our opinion the accompanying financial statements:

- give a true and fair view in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers of the state of the body's affairs as at 31 March 2020 and of its net expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with IFRSs as adopted by the European Union, as interpreted and adapted by the 2019/20 FReM; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

### Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)), as required by the [Code of Audit Practice](#) approved by the Auditor General for Scotland. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We were appointed by the Auditor General on 31 May 2016. The period of total uninterrupted appointment is four years. We are independent of the body in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. Non-audit services prohibited by the Ethical Standard were not provided to the body. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern basis of accounting

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the body has not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about its ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

## Risks of material misstatement

We have reported in a separate Annual Audit Report, which is available from the [Audit Scotland website](#), the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement that we identified and our conclusions thereon.

## Responsibilities of the Accountable Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Accountable Officer Responsibilities, the Accountable Officer is responsible for the preparation of financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with the financial reporting framework, and for such internal control as the Accountable Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Accountable Officer is responsible for using the going concern basis of accounting unless deemed inappropriate.

## Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. The capability of the audit to detect fraud and other irregularities depends on factors such as the skilfulness of the perpetrator, the frequency and extent of manipulation, the degree of collusion involved, the relative size of individual amounts manipulated, and the seniority of those individuals involved. We therefore design and perform audit procedures which respond to the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial

statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## **Other information in the annual report and accounts**

The Accountable Officer is responsible for the other information in the annual report and accounts. The other information comprises the information other than the financial statements, the audited part of the Remuneration and Staff Report, and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon except on matters prescribed by the Auditor General for Scotland to the extent explicitly stated later in this report.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read all the other information in the annual report and accounts and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

## **Report on regularity of expenditure and income**

### **Opinion on regularity**

In our opinion in all material respects the expenditure and income in the financial statements were incurred or applied in accordance with any applicable enactments and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers.

### **Responsibilities for regularity**

The Accountable Officer is responsible for ensuring the regularity of expenditure and income. We are responsible for expressing an opinion on the regularity of expenditure and income in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000.

## **Report on other requirements**

### **Opinions on other prescribed matters**

In our opinion, the audited part of the Remuneration and Staff Report has been properly prepared in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Performance Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and that

report has been prepared in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers; and

- the information given in the Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and that report has been prepared in accordance with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

We are required by the Auditor General for Scotland to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the audited part of the Remuneration and Staff Report are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We have nothing to report in respect of these matters.

### **Conclusions on wider scope responsibilities**

In addition to our responsibilities for the annual report and accounts, our conclusions on the wider scope responsibilities specified in the Code of Audit Practice are set out in our Annual Audit Report.

### **Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the parties to whom it is addressed in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 and for no other purpose. In accordance with paragraph 120 of the Code of Audit Practice, we do not undertake to have responsibilities to members or officers, in their individual capacities, or to third parties.

**John Boyd**, for and on behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP

Grant Thornton UK LLP  
110 Queen Street  
Glasgow  
G1 3BX

Date: 21 October, 2020

# PART 3 – FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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## Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

for the year ended 31 March 2020

	notes	£'000	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Operational plan income	3	3,199		1,936
Other operating income	3	270		301
<b>Total operating income</b>	6		<b>3,469</b>	<b>2,237</b>
Board members and staff costs	3	(3,450)		(3,211)
Operational Plan expenditure	3	(4,267)		(2,941)
Other operating costs	3,5	(649)		(670)
			<b>(8,366)</b>	<b>(6,822)</b>
<b>Operating expenditure before depreciation</b>			<b>(4,897)</b>	<b>(4,585)</b>
Depreciation and impairment charges	8		(149)	(119)
<b>Comprehensive net expenditure for the year</b>			<b>(5,046)</b>	<b>(4,704)</b>

No activities were discontinued during the year.

The notes on pages 56 to 67 form part of these accounts.

# Statement of Financial Position

as at 31 March 2020

	notes	2020		2019	
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Non-current assets</b>					
Property, plant and equipment	8	640		714	
Intangible assets	8	31		41	
Investments	7	-		-	
<b>Total non-current assets</b>			671		755
<b>Current assets</b>					
Trade and other receivables	9	865		634	
Cash and cash equivalents	10	457		948	
<b>Total current assets</b>			1,322		1,582
<b>Total assets</b>			1,993		2,337
<b>Current liabilities</b>					
Trade and other payables	11	(1,005)		(1,270)	
<b>Total current liabilities</b>			(1,005)		(1,270)
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			988		1,067
<b>Taxpayers' equity</b>			988		1,067

The Accountable Officer authorised the financial statements for issue on 21 October 2020.



**Grant Moir**

Chief Executive and Accountable Officer

21 October 2020

The notes on pages 56 to 67 form part of these accounts.

## Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 31 March 2020

	notes	2020		2019
		£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>				
Net expenditure for year		(5,046)	(4,704)	
Adjustment for non-cash transactions	8	149	119	
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables		(229)	296	
(Decrease)/increase in trade and other payables		(285)	137	
<b>Net cash outflow from operating activities</b>			(5,411)	(4,152)
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>				
Purchase of property, plant & equipment	8	(41)	(170)	
Purchase of intangible assets	8	(6)	(12)	
Reclassified as capital grant	8	-	5	
Proceeds from the disposal of assets		-	-	
<b>Net cash outflow from investing activities</b>			(47)	(177)
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>				
Grants from sponsoring Directorate	4		4,967	4,765
<b>Net (decrease) increase in cash</b>			(491)	436
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April</b>			948	512
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March</b>			457	948

The notes on pages 56 to 67 form part of these accounts.

## Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity

for the year ended 31 March 2020

	notes	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
<b>Balance at 1 April, 2019</b>		1,067	1,006
Grants from sponsoring Directorate	4	4,967	4,765
Net expenditure	SCNE	(5,046)	(4,704)
Movement for year		(79)	61
<b>Balance as at 31 March, 2020</b>		<b>988</b>	<b>1,067</b>

The notes on pages 56 to 67 form part of these accounts

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 March 2020

## 1. Basis of preparation of accounts

The accounts are prepared in accordance with the direction issued by Scottish Ministers under section 25(b) of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, Government Financial Reporting Manual (FrM) issued by HM treasury, as adopted and interpreted by the Scottish Government, which follows generally accepted accounting practice as defined in International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adopted by the European Union and the Companies Act 2006 to the extent that it is meaningful and appropriate in the public sector context. The accounts direction is included as Appendix I to the accounts.

The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis as the Board and Accountable Officer believe that future liabilities will be met from grant in aid from Scottish Government and future grants and income from partner bodies.

The accounts are prepared in sterling under the historical cost convention, and cover the period from on 1 April 2019 and ended on 31 March 2020.

## 2. Accounting policies

Where FrM permits a choice of accounting policy, those which are considered to be most appropriate in giving a true and fair view have been adopted, and have been applied consistently to all material transactions throughout the financial year.

### 2.1 Significant judgements and estimates

Preparation of financial statements requires management to make significant judgements and estimates. The items in the financial statements where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- **LEADER irregularities** – as accountable body for the Cairngorms Local Action Group, which will deliver the Local Development Strategy, the Park Authority is liable for any funding advanced that may not be recoverable (irregularities) from funds made available from the EU through the LEADER rural development program.
- Based on management's experience of the previous LEADER programme an estimate of the small percentage of costs found to be irregular has been used to make a provision against irregularities in the current 2014-2020 programme. As LEADER funds are committed and advanced the level of provision for irregularities will be closely managed and adjustments made in future accounting periods when warranted.

### 2.2 Non-current assets – property, plant and equipment (PPE)

Assets capitalised are held in the financial statements at depreciated historic costs as a proxy for current value due to the types of tangible assets capitalised, and the short useful economic lives.

The minimum level for the capitalisation of individual non-current assets, other than information technology, is £500. Information technology systems are capitalised where the pooled value exceeds £500. Substantial improvements to leasehold properties are also

capitalised. Assets in the course of construction are carried at cost and are transferred to the appropriate asset heading once completed and in use.

All PPE is reviewed annually for impairment and adjustments are made if necessary.

### 2.3 Non-current assets – intangible assets

Intangible assets capitalised, purchased computer software costing more than £500, are held in the financial statements at depreciated historic costs as a proxy for current value due to their short useful economic lives.

Intangible assets are amortised on a straight line basis over their estimated useful lives.

### 2.4 Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on all non-current assets at rates calculated to write down the cost or valuation by equal instalments over their estimated useful lives once the asset is brought into use. Depreciation is applied in the following ranges:

- park entry markers 25 years
- operational plant and equipment 5 years or over length of lease on land for “Scenic Routes” assets
- information technology 3 – 5 years
- leasehold improvements over the length of the lease, or shorter period depending on the nature of the asset capitalised as a leasehold improvement

### 2.5 Financial instruments and exposure to risks

The Park Authority’s cash operating and capital expenditure is met from DEL, cash budget allocation from the Scottish Government, from other income sources and from contributions from partners to jointly fund projects. The Park Authority has no powers to borrow money or invest surplus funds. Other than financial assets and liabilities which are generated in day-to-day operational activities, the investment in National Parks Partnerships LLP, whose fair value is assessed as nil, the Park Authority holds no complex financial instruments.

#### Liquidity risk

The Authority’s revenue resource and capital expenditure requirements are financed by Scottish Government or funding from European Union Departments, executive agencies of other public bodies or the National Lottery Heritage Fund and project partners. The Park Authority is therefore not exposed to material liquidity risks.

#### Credit risk

The Park Authority’s funders are Scottish Government or European Union Departments, executive agencies of other public bodies or the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The Authority is therefore not exposed to any material credit risk.

#### Foreign currency risk

The Authority is not exposed to foreign currency risk.

The Park Authority’s financial assets and liabilities are categorised by groups under IFRS 9 as

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
<b>Financial assets</b>		
Trade and other receivables	865	634
Cash and cash equivalents	457	948
	<u>1,322</u>	<u>1,582</u>
<b>Financial liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	1,005	1,270

The carrying value of the financial assets and liabilities noted above is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value. The investment in National Parks Partnerships LLP was previously measured at cost less any impairment. IFRS 9 Financial Instruments does not allow for measurement at cost. The capital contributions are non-refundable. The investment is measured at a fair value through profit and loss. The fair value is assessed as nil, which is the same as the carrying value as in the prior year.

## 2.6 Trade receivables

All material amounts due at 31 March 2019 have been brought into the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure irrespective of when actual payments were received.

## 2.7 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include imprest cash in hand and deposits held at call with banks.

## 2.8 Trade payables

All material amounts outstanding at 31 March 2020 to third parties for goods or services received by the year end have been brought into the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure irrespective of when actual payments were received.

## 2.9 Income and expenditure recognition

Operating income is income directly related to the operational activities of Park Authority and includes planning fees and project grants and recoveries from partners

Where income or expenditure has been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a receivable or payable for the corresponding amount is recognised in the Statement of Financial Position.

Where cash has been received or paid in advance of the activity or expenditure, no income or expenditure is recognised and the amount payable or receivable is recognised in the Statement of Financial Position.

## 2.10 Scottish Government funding and grant-in-aid

The Authority receives grant-in-aid from the Scottish Government to finance its net expenditure.

The authority receives a budget from the Scottish Government, (Departmental Expenditure Limit or DEL) to fund non-cash expenditure (depreciation) and the cash costs of acquiring tangible and intangible assets and operating expenditure. Taxpayers' Equity is credited with

the DEL cash allocation and charged with the net expenditure on the DEL cash allocation in the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity.

## **2.11 Pension costs**

Present and past employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) which is a defined benefit scheme. The Authority recognises the expected cost of providing pensions for their employees on a systematic and rational basis over the period during which they benefit from their services by payment to the PCSPS of amounts calculated on an accruing basis. Relevant disclosures are reported in Note 12. Liability for the payment of future benefits is a charge to the PCSPS.

## **2.12 Leases**

Operating leases rentals are charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure in the month in which the payment relates and are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position.

## **2.13 Value Added Tax (VAT)**

Most of the activities of the Authority are outside the scope of VAT, and in general output VAT does not apply and input tax on purchases is not recoverable. Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the relevant expenditure category or is included in the capitalised purchase cost of when incurred.

## **2.14 Short-term employee benefits**

A liability for accrued unused annual leave, flexi-time and time off in lieu of leave (TOIL) is recognised to 31 December, the end of the holiday year. The movement for the year is charged or credited to net expenditure.

## **2.15 Interest in other entities**

IFRS 12: Disclosure of interests in other entities, requires disclosure on interests in subsidiaries, joint arrangement, associates and unconsolidated structured entities. The Authority is a Designate Member of National Parks Partnerships LLP, which was incorporated on 11 June 2016. The Authority, along with the 14 other National Parks, holds an equal share in the LLP. The investment does not meet the criteria of a subsidiary, joint, venture or associate and has been recognised as an investment.

## **2.16 Changes in Accounting Standards**

### **2.16.1 Standards, amendments and interpretations effective in 2019/20**

IFRS 16, Lease, was published by the International Accounting Standards Board in January 2016. The standard requires lessees to recognise leases on the Statement of Financial Position as an asset which reflects the right to use the underlying asset and a liability which represents the obligation to make lease payments. This has not been adopted in the 19/20 FREM and has now been put back a further year for implementation, for accounting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2021 for public bodies. For the Park Authority, the standard will be effective for the year ending 31 March 2021 and the impact has not yet been quantified.

## 2.16.2 Standards, amendments and interpretations early adopted this year

There are no new standards, amendments or interpretations early adopted this year.

## 2.17 Assets held on behalf of others

When the authority holds an asset on behalf of a third party and may have a future beneficial right if certain conditions are not met, both the asset and liability are recognised in the Statement of Financial Position.

## 3 Segmental reporting

IFRS 8: Segmental Reporting, requires operating segments to be identified on the basis of internal reports about components of the Park Authority's work. The categories reported for 18/19 are from the National Park plan for the 3 years to 2022. No restatement has been made to the segmental disclosure for 17/18 which relates to the previous Corporate Plan.

<b>2020</b>	<b>Board member and staff costs</b> £'000	<b>Operational plan expenditure</b> £'000	<b>Other operating costs</b> £'000	<b>Operational plan income</b> £'000	<b>Other income</b> £'000	<b>Net segmental expenditure</b> £'000
<b>Conservation</b>						
Habitat restoration	138	-	26	(6)	(1)	<b>157</b>
Priority Species	384	344	72	(312)	(9)	<b>479</b>
Moorland management	227	122	43	-	(85)	<b>307</b>
Catchment management	15	51	3	-	(1)	<b>68</b>
	<b>764</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>(318)</b>	<b>(96)</b>	<b>1,011</b>
<b>Visitor experience</b>						
Glenmore	7	234	1	(158)	(1)	<b>83</b>
Infrastructure	96	574	18	(383)	(7)	<b>298</b>
Active Cairngorms	99	298	19	(17)	(11)	<b>388</b>
Visitor experience	345	138	65	(47)	(1)	<b>500</b>
	<b>547</b>	<b>1,244</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>(605)</b>	<b>(20)</b>	<b>1,269</b>
<b>Rural Development</b>						
Planning	547	123	103	-	(110)	<b>663</b>
Economic strategy	27	502	5	(561)	(1)	<b>(28)</b>
Tomintoul & Glenlivet regeneration	158	1,457	30	(1,598)	(1)	<b>46</b>
Community support	136	260	26	(111)	(1)	<b>310</b>
	<b>868</b>	<b>2,342</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>(2,270)</b>	<b>(113)</b>	<b>991</b>
<b>Corporate services</b>						
OD strategy	160	23	30	-	(2)	<b>211</b>
Facilities and accommodation	17	3	3	-	(3)	<b>20</b>
Service improvement	564	76	106	-	(23)	<b>723</b>
Governance & community	274	1	51	-	(3)	<b>323</b>
	<b>1,015</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(31)</b>	<b>1,277</b>
<b>Communications &amp; engagement</b>						
	256	61	48	(6)	(10)	<b>349</b>
	<b>3,450</b>	<b>4,267</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>(3,199)</b>	<b>(270)</b>	<b>4,897</b>

<b>2019</b>	<b>Board and staff costs £'000</b>	<b>Operational plan expenditure £'000</b>	<b>Other operating costs £'000</b>	<b>Operational plan income £'000</b>	<b>Other income £'000</b>	<b>Net segmental reporting £'000</b>
<b>Conservation</b>						
Landscape scale conservation	677	280	144	(116)	(43)	<b>942</b>
Deer management	34	25	8	-	-	<b>67</b>
Moorland management	82	47	19		(73)	<b>75</b>
	<b>793</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>(116)</b>	<b>(116)</b>	<b>1,084</b>
<b>Visitor experience</b>						
Infrastructure	143	143	33	(40)	(10)	<b>269</b>
Active Cairngorms	63	186	14	(15)	(47)	<b>201</b>
Visitor experience	147	210	34	(5)	(1)	<b>385</b>
	<b>353</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>(58)</b>	<b>855</b>
<b>Rural development</b>						
Housing for local needs	189	28	43	-	(71)	<b>189</b>
Community support	374	542	58	(538)	-	<b>436</b>
Support for Park economy	191	854	16	(959)	-	<b>102</b>
Service delivery	325	201	75	(83)	-	<b>518</b>
	<b>1,079</b>	<b>1,625</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>(1,580)</b>	<b>(71)</b>	<b>1,245</b>
<b>Corporate services</b>						
OD strategy	88	-	20	-	-	<b>108</b>
Facilities & accommodation	21	9	5	-	-	<b>35</b>
Service improvement	436	73	100	-	(20)	<b>589</b>
Governance & community	154	36	35	-	(36)	<b>189</b>
Europarc conference	6	259	1	(177)	-	<b>89</b>
	<b>705</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>(177)</b>	<b>(56)</b>	<b>1,010</b>
<b>Communications &amp; engagement</b>						
	281	48	65	(3)	-	<b>391</b>
	<b>3,211</b>	<b>2,941</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>(1,936)</b>	<b>(301)</b>	<b>4,585</b>

## 4 Grant-in-aid

	<b>2020 £'000</b>	<b>2019 £'000</b>
Grant-in-aid allocated to meet operational expenditure	<b>4,727</b>	4,565
Grant-in-aid allocated to meet capital expenditure	<b>240</b>	200
	<b>4,967</b>	4,765

## 5 Other operating costs

	2020	2019
	£'000	£'000
Office running costs	191	147
Board and staff costs (excluding salary/fee costs)	141	166
Information technology	66	74
Professional support fees	48	66
Land and buildings rentals	143	142
Vehicles and office equipment rentals	49	64
Independent auditor's fees	11	11
	<u>649</u>	<u>670</u>

## 6 Other income

	2020	2019
	£'000	£'000
Operational Plan income from EU sources	561	1,053
Operational Plan income from other sources	2,727	1,030
Planning fees and other income	111	154
	<u>3,399</u>	<u>2,237</u>

## 7 Investments

	2020	2019
	£'000	£'000
Balance as at 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020	-	-

The Authority holds an investment in National Parks Partnerships LLP (formerly National Park Partnerships LLP) together with the other 14 UK National Parks.

The investment was fully impaired as at 31 March 2018, as the capital contributions cannot be withdrawn or paid back.

## 8 Tangible and intangible assets

	Leasehold improvements	Assets in the course of construction	Park entry markers	Operational plant and equipment	ICT	Tangible Total	Intangible Software
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Cost</b>							
At 1 April, 2019	229	-	57	576	201	1,063	82
Additions	12	-	-	13	34	59	6
Transfers	(2)	-	-	5	(3)	-	-
Disposals	(1)	-	-	-	(35)	(36)	-
At 31 March, 2020	238	-	57	594	197	1,086	88
<b>Depreciation</b>							
At 1 April, 2019	(99)	-	(27)	(107)	(116)	(349)	(41)
Charge for year	(27)	-	(2)	(69)	(35)	(133)	(16)
Disposals	1	-	-	-	35	36	-
At 31 March, 2020	(125)	-	(29)	(176)	(116)	(446)	(57)
<b>Cost</b>							
At 1 April, 2018	139	195	57	380	256	1,027	73
Additions	9	91	-	33	37	170	12
Transfers	81	(281)	-	200	-	-	-
Reclassified	-	(5)	-	-	-	(5)	-
Disposals	-	-	-	(37)	(92)	(129)	(3)
At 31 March, 2019	229	-	57	576	201	1,063	82
<b>Depreciation</b>							
At 1 April, 2018	(80)	-	(25)	(96)	(173)	(374)	(29)
Charge for year	(19)	-	(2)	(48)	(35)	(104)	(15)
Disposals	-	-	-	37	92	129	3
At 31 March, 2019	(99)	-	(27)	(107)	(116)	(349)	(41)
<b>Net book value</b>							
At 31 March, 2020	113	-	28	418	81	640	31
At 31 March, 2019	130	-	30	469	85	714	41

## 9 Trade receivable and other current assets

	2020	2019
	£'000	£'000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Project income debtors	751	575
Prepayments and accrued income	114	59
	<b>865</b>	<b>634</b>

## 10 Cash and cash equivalents

	2020	2019
	£'000	£'000
Balance as at 1 April:	948	512
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	(491)	436
Balance as at 31 March:	<b>457</b>	<b>948</b>

The year end balances were held in commercial bank accounts or as imprest cash in hand.

## 11 Trade payables and other current liabilities

	2020	2019
	£'000	£'000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade payables	52	69
Accruals and deferred income	538	806
Staff benefits (holiday pay)	147	152
Provisions	92	96
Other liabilities	176	147
	<b>1,005</b>	<b>1,270</b>

Provisions carried are for redecoration of the Grantown office and for irregularities on Leader Programme claims. The 2019 Provision balance has been restated to separately disclose staff benefits (holiday pay) and provision, previously disclosed as a single line.

## 12 Pensions

The Authority is a member of the Principal Civil Service Pensions Scheme (PCSPS) which is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme. The Authority is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme. A full actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2012, details of it, and annual Resource Accounts, can be found at [www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk](http://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk).

For the year ended 31 March 2020 employer's contributions of £647,488 (2019: £489,472) were paid to the PCSPS. The contributions were payable at one of four rates, from 20% to 24.5% of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The scheme's Actuary reviews employer contribution every four years following a full scheme valuation. The salary band and contributions rates were revised for 2019/20 and will remain unchanged until 2023/24. The contribution rates reflect benefits as they are accrued, not when the costs are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

All employees have the opportunity to join the scheme, and can also opt to open partnership pension accounts, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. There were no contributions due to partnership pension providers during 2019/20 or the previous year.

### I3 Capital commitments

	<b>2020</b>	2019
	£'000	£'000
Contracted capital commitments at 31 March 2020 not otherwise included in the financial statements		
Property, plant and equipment	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>

### I4 Commitments under operating lease

	<b>Land and buildings</b>		<b>Motor vehicles and other equipment</b>	
	<b>2020</b>	2019	<b>2020</b>	2019
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Not later than one year	<b>143</b>	143	<b>44</b>	26
Later than one and less than five years	<b>568</b>	568	<b>80</b>	29
Later than five years	<b>2,400</b>	2,532	-	-
	<b>3,111</b>	3,243	<b>124</b>	55

### I5 Contingent liabilities

The Park Authority is the lead body for Heritage Lottery Fund supported projects (Tomintoul & Glenlivet Landscape Partnership, the Great Place Badenoch Project, and the Capercaillie Framework Project) as well as being the Accountable Body for Cairngorms LEADER which administers the European funded project (LEADER) on behalf of the Cairngorms Local Action Group. Given the nature of these arrangements advances are made to projects and grant applicants which in turn are reclaimed from the funders. It is possible that funds advanced may fall to be irrecoverable. At this time there is uncertainty whether any liability will arise or its value.

## 16 Related party transactions

The Authority is a Non-departmental Public Body of the Scottish Government. The Authority's sponsoring body is the Natural Resources Division, Environment & Forestry Directorate.

The Scottish Government and the Natural Resources Division, Environment & Forestry Directorate are regarded as related parties with whom there have been various material transactions during the year in the normal course of operations.

In addition, the Authority has had a small number of material transactions with other Scottish Government departments and other central or local government bodies: Aberdeenshire Council, Angus Council, Creative Scotland, Crown Estate Scotland, Disclosure Scotland, Forestry Scotland, Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Historic Environment Scotland, Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park, The Moray Council, Nature Scotland, Transport Scotland, Perth and Kinross Council, and Visit Scotland.

	19/20		18/19	
	Payments £,000	Receipts £,000	Payments £,000	Receipts £,000
Geva Blackett trustee of Braemar Community Limited – claims to the LEADER programme	3	-	7	-
Derek Ross, David Cameron, trustees of the Cairngorms Trust – support payments and contributions to sustainable transport within the National Park and for Covid-19 recovery	84	-	-	-
Janet Hunter, David Cameron trustees of The Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland (OATS) - payments for path maintenance and funding of the Mountains and the people project	158	-	160	80

There were no payments outstanding at either year end. There were no receipts outstanding at 31 March 2020 (2019: £80,000).

No Board member, senior manager or other related parties have undertaken any material transactions with the Authority during the year.

## 17 Post balance sheet events

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic became apparent in late March 2020 when the UK entered lock down. The timing was such that we were able to complete our financial year end with little or no impact on the planned outturn, and on our operational objectives. We therefore believe the Covid-19 pandemic is a non-adjusting event for the accounts to 31 March 2020.

It remains difficult to assess when normal ways of working will return and until then the Park Authority's has implemented a full scale Business Continuity Plan which matches the Scottish Government's "roadmap" together with a Covid-19 specific risk register. As a result we have developed new working practices to promote effective remote working, and to work with partners and the Park users in a way which is safe and allows us to pursue the objectives set for 20/21. We have also worked to aid the recovery of the Park's communities, visitors and businesses.

In response to the challenges for 2020/21 the Directors, Operational Management Team and the Board have reviewed the strategic and operational delivery plans. As a result we have adapted our resource allocation and operational plans to manage and mitigate the impact of Covid-19 and consider we have adequate cash flow and resources to allow us to continue to provide our statutory and discretionary services throughout the 20/21 financial year.

# APPENDIX I

## Accounts Direction



### CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

#### DIRECTION BY THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS

1. The Scottish Ministers, in pursuance of The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, hereby give the following direction.
2. The statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2006, and subsequent years, shall comply with the accounting principles and disclosure requirements of the edition of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FRM) which is in force for the year for which the statement of accounts are prepared.
3. The accounts shall be prepared so as to give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year, and of the state of affairs as at the end of the financial year.
4. This direction shall be reproduced as an appendix to the statement of accounts. The direction given on 20 April 2004 is hereby revoked.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. H. ...', written over a horizontal line.

Signed by the authority of the Scottish Ministers

*IR H ... R. Head of Countryside and  
Natural Heritage Division*

Dated 12 January 2006

## APPENDIX II

### Staff Union Time

The Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 the publication by public bodies to reproduce the information in the following statutory format:

#### 1 Relevant union officials

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	Full-time equivalent employee number
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1 (2019/20 -1)	<b>67.19</b> (2018/19 – 68.97)
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#### 2 Percentage of time spend on facility time

% of time	Number of employees
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0%	-
1-50%	<b>1</b> (2018/19 – 1)
51-99%	-
100%	-

#### 3 Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

Total cost of facility time	<b>£125</b> (2018/19 - £240)
Total pay bill	<b>£3,450.380</b> (2018/19 - £3,211,481)
% of total pay bill spend on facility time	<b>0.0004%</b> (2018/19 - 0.007%)

#### 4 Trade union activities

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a % of total paid facility time hours	<b>0.003%</b> (2018/19 - 0.003%)
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