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# CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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## DRAFT MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING held in the Albert Hall, Ballater on Friday 28 September 2018 at 10.30am

### PRESENT

Peter Argyle (Convener)	John Latham
Rebecca Badger	Eleanor Mackintosh
Geva Blackett	Xander McDade
Carolyn Caddick	Ian McLaren
Angela Douglas	Willie McKenna
Dave Fallows	Gordon Riddler
Pippa Hadley	Brian Wood (Deputy Convener)
Janet Hunter	Judith Webb
Gregor Hutcheon	

### In Attendance:

Grant Moir, Chief Executive,  
Murray Ferguson, Director of Planning & Rural Development,  
David Cameron, Director of Corporate Services,  
Pete Mayhew, Director of Conservation & Visitor Experience,  
Gavin Miles, Head of Planning & Rural Development,  
Will Boyd Wallis, Head of Land Management  
Pete Crane, Head of Visitor Services,  
David Clyne, Recreation & Access Manager,  
Lindsay Coleman, Minute-Taker

**Apologies:** None

### Welcome and Introduction

1. Peter Argyle, the Convener, welcomed everyone to the meeting in Ballater.
2. The Convener reported that positive and useful discussions with Jeremy Roberts (RSPB), Chris Donald (SNH), Graeme Prest (FCS) and Thomas MacDonnell (Wildland) on Cairngorms Connect had taken place the night before. It had been a very inspirational evening.
3. He also reported on the successful Europarc conference in Aviemore last week where over 600 delegates attended from 39 countries. The Key Note speakers were inspiring, the field trips went really well and everyone had an enjoyable time. In particular he felt the launch of the Youth Manifesto was excellent. The Convener then stated on behalf of the Board, his deep appreciation of the staff's hard work at

this conference. Many people had commented on their commitment, cheeriness and assistance and he wanted to say thank you on behalf of the Board.

4. There were no apologies.
5. **Actions:** None

### **Minutes of Last Meetings held on 15 June 2018 – for approval**

6. The draft Minutes of the last meeting held on 15 June 2018 were agreed with no amendments.

### **Matters Arising**

7. The Convener provided an update on the Action points from the minutes of the meeting on 15 June 2018:
  - Action Point at Para 4 (i.) – Closed – Informal discussion session with Volunteer Rangers will be repeated in future.
  - Action Point at Para 9 (bullet point 7) – In Hand – The Board Informal session and visit to the East Cairngorm Moorland Partnership has been scheduled to take place on 23 November 2018.
  - Action Point at Para 9 (bullet point 8) – In hand – Board Business discussion on New Mountain Hare Guidance has been scheduled to take place on 23 November 2018.
  - Action Point at Para 7 (bullet point 4) – On hold – Deer movement concerns from SNH not yet received.
  - Action Point at Para 18 (ii.) – Closed – LDP MIR Consultation Responses were uploaded for viewing on the corporate website on 22nd June 2018 and viewable by the public from 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2018.
  - Action Points at Para 18 (iii.) – Closed – Murray Ferguson gained access to information on HIE's business panel.
  - Action Point at Para 27 (iii.) – Closed – VisitScotland's reports on the marketing campaigns have been circulated to the Board as and when produced.
  - Action Point at Para 38 (i.) – In Hand – Hill Tracks as an item of discussion will be added to the agenda of an early meeting of Cairngorms Upland Advisory Group (CUAG).
  - Action Point at Para 16 (i.) – Closed – Cairngorms Nature Action Plan consultation and infographic links circulated to the Board.
  - Action Point at Para 16 (ii.) – Closed – Amendments made to Cairngorms Nature Action Plan consultation document prior to its launch.
  - Action Point at Para 20 (i.) – In hand – Presentational format of National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022 Delivery Update will be reviewed for the next time this paper is presented.
  - Action Point at Para 24 (i.) – Closed – Presentational comments on risk register considered.
  - Action Point at Para 41 (i.) – Closed – Declarations of Interest flow chart to be included in Board Induction packs going forward.
  - Action Point at Para 41 (ii.) – Closed – Copies of declarations of Interest flow chart laminated for Board meetings.

- Action Point at Para 49 (i.) – In Hand – Kate Christie would be writing to members on home designation as their workplace in October 2018.
8. A member asked whether a meeting would be possible with the author of the recent Hare Report which alleges that the hare population has been decimated, along with the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust and gamekeepers, so that the Board can hear their evidence. Grant Moir, Chief Executive has arranged for SNH to come to a future board event to discuss hare issues in the Cairngorms.

### **Declarations of Interest**

9. Angela Douglas declared an Indirect Interest in
- Paper 3 Reason: her profession is forestry and that she is looking at a forest and woodland framework but she doesn't feel that she has a conflict of interest.

### **Election of Board Convener (Paper 1)**

10. David Cameron, Director of Corporate Services, as the Authority's nominated Proper Officer, conducted the election for the position of Convener of the Board.
11. David invited nominations from the Board for the Convener position. Peter Argyle was nominated by Janet Hunter and seconded by Eleanor Mackintosh. Xander McDade was nominated by Rebecca Badger and seconded by Gordon Riddler. There were no other nominations.
12. The nominees were invited to make a statement in support of their nominations, and both nominees made their statement to the Board.
13. The Election was conducted by a process of a secret ballot.
14. The result of the ballot was as follows: Peter Argyle with 6 votes, Xander McDade with 11 votes with 0 votes deemed invalid. Therefore Xander McDade was elected as Convener of the Board for a term to last three years.
15. The Convener congratulated Xander McDade on behalf of the Board.
16. **Actions: None.**

### **CEO Report (Paper 2)**

17. Grant Moir Chief Executive introduced Paper 2 which highlights the main strategic work streams that are being directed by Management Team. He highlighted the following areas:
- a) Cairngorms Nature – The draft Cairngorms Nature Action Plan consultation is now finished and staff were reviewing the wide range of responses. This will be discussed by the Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group at the informal session on

the 23<sup>rd</sup> November and the final version will be presented to CNPA Board members on 6th December.

- b) Stakeholder Engagement - There have been two Ministerial visits to the Park this summer. The Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment, Mairi Gougeon visited Grantown, Tomintoul and Ballater on 24 July. First Minister Nicola Sturgeon opened the Tomintoul Discovery Centre on 5 August but was also there regarding BT Broadband coverage.
- c) Future Dates – The next direct elections to the CNPA Board will take place on 21 March 2019. There will be an evening held in Nov / Dec for people to attend to find out more about the role and becoming a candidate.

**18. The Board noted the Paper.**

**19. Actions: None**

**Forest and Woodland Strategy (Paper 3)**

- 20. Will Boyd Wallis Head of Land Management introduced Paper 3 which requests approval of the final draft of the Cairngorms National Park Forest Strategy.
- 21. The Board discussed the paper and made the following comments and observations:
  - a) John Risby, Highlands and Islands Conservator for Forestry Commission Scotland, thanked Will for the invite today and said this strategy is different to others he has seen in that it truly faces up to the issues. He wanted to give credit to Will and his team for this work.
  - b) A member asked that should a press release be sent out, there is a quote that makes it clear that this is to help people who would like to develop forestry.
  - c) It was agreed that a few words will be added into the community section of the strategy emphasising the cultural importance of individual trees too.
  - d) A member asked about the lifespan of the document and whether it would be reviewed at certain points in time to see if it was delivering. Will and Grant agreed that 10 years would be an appropriate time scale for a forestry strategy but that we would report annually on progress.
  - e) The letter from Dave Morris raised several points. Overall the letter congratulated the team on an excellent strategy but Dave had concerns that there will be problems delivering it, primarily because of deer management and the grant funding system. John Risby hopes that there will be improvements to regeneration grants in the future which may help.
  - f) Two thirds of the respondents in the survey do not work in the forestry profession which is very positive to see. It is important that the strategy shows the opportunities for the landowners by providing clarity about the support that is available to them. The contents reflect that the strategy is not for landowners alone.
  - g) A member suggested that it may be beneficial to highlight the next steps that will demonstrate that the strategy will actively be used. He also pointed out the importance of engaging local residents and supporters so that they may get involved with elements too. Will confirmed the strategy will be used regularly by CNPA and FCS conservancy staff; when considering forestry applications in the Park. The strategy will be used as a reference to guide not just for forestry

operations, but also for e.g. encouraging volunteering such as tree planting and other community events.

- h) A member requested that Angus is added to the list of other neighbouring local authorities that have forestry strategies, as they have a woodland and forestry framework dated 2011.
- i) Will was congratulated by the Convener.

**22. The Board approved the final draft of the Cairngorms National Park Forest Strategy.**

**23. Actions:                      None**

**A9 Dualling Project – Dalraddy to Slochd: Provision for Non-Motorised Users (Paper 4)**

24. Murray Ferguson, Director of Planning & Rural Development introduced Paper 4 which provides information on the proposals from Transport Scotland for the section of the A9 Dualling Project from Dalraddy to Slochd and a proposed response from the Cairngorms National Park Authority.

25. The Board considered the detail of the paper and discussed the following points:

- a) Peter Crane circulated the Board paper to the local Outdoor Access Forum and asked if they would support it. One person disagreed but everyone else was supportive. He also discussed that with the increase in electric bicycles and transport for less-abled people, there is an opportunity for a route through the National Park that is accessible to everyone but would need to be tarmacked.
- b) It was agreed that being the Access Authority, it is vital to object to this plan.
- c) It was agreed that getting the support of Highland Council is crucial. . It was suggested that the Convener or Chief Executive write or contact the Convener at the Council.
- d) It was suggested that Transport Scotland is made to come to the table for discussion.
- e) It was also noted that Aviemore, Carrbridge and Boat of Garten Community Councils will be objecting.

**26. The Board**

- a) **Noted the overall programme of works.**
- b) **Agreed to object to the proposals between Aviemore and the junction to the north of Carrbridge due to the inadequate provision for non-motorised users and inconsistency with the overall Scheme objectives for the A9 dualling programme.**

**27. Action:**

- i. **The Chief Executive and the Convener to pursue this with The Highland Council.**

## **Active Aviemore and Active Glenmore (Paper 5)**

28. Pete Crane, Head of Visitor Services and David Clyne, Recreation and Access Manager introduced Paper 5 which asks the Board to review the Authority's ongoing support for two areas of specific work that aims to increase levels of active travel and improve the access infrastructure in both Aviemore and Glenmore.
29. The Board considered the detail in the Paper and agreed to the recommendations.
30. **The Board:**
  - a) **Noted the successful first stage outputs of both Active Aviemore and Active Glenmore projects to date.**
  - b) **Agreed that the CNPA should continue to be a key partner supporting the ongoing development and delivery of both projects.**
31. **Action: None**

## **AOCB**

32. Grant asked that anyone who is unable to attend the next Planning meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> October should speak to him at the end of this meeting.
33. A request was made that at the next Board meeting where forums and committees are reviewed; there is a special look at the CLOAF. The Chief Executive said that this would be a separate paper at that meeting.
34. Gordon Riddler said thank you to the staff for their patience and guidance for the eight years he has been on the Board.
35. The Convener said a big thank you on behalf of the Board, to the four members stepping down, Gregor Hutcheon, Angela Douglas, Gordon Riddler and Brian Wood; in particular for their contribution to the work of the Board. Each person responded with a few words.
36. **Action: None**

## **Date of Next Meeting**

37. Next formal Board meeting to be held on 7 December 2018, Dee & Spey Meeting rooms, CNPA HQ, Grantown-on-Spey.
38. The public part of this meeting concluded at 12.00.