

National Park Authority Board Meeting



**Final Minutes of Meeting held at
1:30pm on 16th March 2015
National Park Headquarters, Balloch**

Present: Linda McKay (Convener) David Warnock (DW)
Owen McKee (OM) William Nisbet (WN)
David McKenzie (DMcK) George Freeman (GF)
Angus Allan (AA) Petra Biberbach (PB)
Lindsay Morrison (LM) Hazel Sorrel (HS)
James Robb (JR) James Stuart (JS)
Martin Earl (ME)
Colin Bayes (CB)

In Attendance: Gordon Watson (GW) Mairi Bell (MB)
Jaki Carnegie (JC) Catriona Morton (CM)
Stuart Mearns (SM) Sandra Dalziel (SD)
Scott Nisbet (SN) Sharon McIntyre (SMcl)
Tony McInnes (TM)

Apologies: Fergus Wood (FW) Bridget Jones (BJ)
David McCowan (DMcC)
Bob Ellis (BE)

Item	Action	Action by
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Convener opened the meeting and welcomed all those present. SMcl advised that apologies had been received from FW, DMcC and BE.</p> <p>The Convener offered formal congratulations to GW on his appointment as Chief Executive and welcomed new Member, James Stuart to his first Board Meeting.</p> <p>The Convener proposed that agenda items twenty-one and twenty-two would be handled as confidential items in closed session from which officers and members of the public would be excluded. Since there were no members of the public being present the Convener proposed to address these agenda items following agenda item five.</p> <p>DECISION: Members agreed to address agenda items twenty-one and twenty-two as confidential agenda items.</p>	

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2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>For the record, declarations of potential interests in agenda item 10 were received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WN, who advised that he has a financial interest in the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; • ME, who advised that he is a Director of the Rural Stirling Housing Association; and • OM, who advised that he is Vice Chair of the Rural Stirling Housing Association and a Director of Loch Lomond & the Trossachs Community Partnership. 	
3	<p>Minutes of Special Board Meeting held on 26th January 2015</p> <p>The minutes were proposed by GF and seconded by LM.</p>	
4	<p>Minutes of Board Meeting held on 8th December 2014</p> <p>The minutes were proposed by GF and seconded by CB.</p>	
5 21 & 22	<p>Matters Arising dated 8th December 2014</p> <p>JC introduced the report and provided an update on the open actions listed. JC advised that there is still a vacancy on the Planning & Access Committee. She also indicated that it is planned that the June Board meeting will be an off-site meeting.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the report.</p> <p>SD read the resolution to allow agenda item twenty-one and twenty-two to be held as a closed session.</p> <p>Agenda items twenty-one and twenty-two were held in a closed session.</p>	
6	<p>Elections for new (a) Chair of Planning & Access Committee; and (b) Depute Convener</p>	

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	<p>The Convener advised that a single valid nomination had been received, which proposed and seconded WN as Vice Convener, a secret ballot was not necessary.</p> <p>DECISION: Members approved WN's appointment as Vice Convener of the Board for a three-year term.</p> <p>WN thanked Members for their confidence in his appointment.</p> <p>The Convener informed members that as two valid nominations were received which proposed and seconded PB and DMcK for the position of the Chair of the Planning & Access Committee, a secret ballot would now take place.</p> <p>The Convener invited candidates to make a verbal statement prior to this vote taking place. Each candidate delivered a short verbal statement outlining their plans for the role if elected.</p> <p>A secret ballot of Members then took place.</p> <p>GW, SD and SMcl counted the votes and SD announced that PB had received the majority of votes and was therefore the new Chair of the Planning & Access Committee.</p> <p>SD advised Board Members that, as PB was formerly the Depute Chair of the Planning & Access Committee, she would contact Board Members to seek nominations for this position, so that the appointment could be made at the Board Meeting in June.</p> <p>DECISION: Members approved the appointment of PB as the Chair of Planning & Access Committee of the Park Authority for a three-year term.</p>	
7	<p>Special Board Meeting – Your Park & Live Park</p> <p>JC introduced this paper requesting Members' agreement to hold a Special Board meeting on Monday 27th April 2015 to consider a) the outcomes of a consultation on the 'Your Park' camping management proposals; and (b) the</p>	

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	<p>'Live Park' proposed Local Development Plan for public consultation.</p> <p>DECISION: Members approved the recommendation to hold a Special Board meeting on Monday 27th April 2015.</p>	
8	<p>Remuneration Committee</p> <p>JC introduced the paper, which proposed revisions to the original Remuneration Committee. JC asked Members to approve the proposed Terms of Reference and membership of the Remuneration Committee.</p> <p>Members discussed the proposed Terms of Reference and membership of the Remuneration Committee and advised that they would wish the following amendments to be made to the Terms of Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a representative from HR should be available to provide advice to Members at meetings of the Committee when required; - salary recommendations by the Remuneration Committee should be approved by the Board; and - the annual performance measures for the Chief Executive and the annual performance evaluation for the Chief Executive should continue to be carried out by the Convener. <p>DECISION: Members approved the proposed Terms of Reference and membership of the Remuneration Committee subject to the amendments referred to above.</p> <p>ACTION: Updated Terms of Reference document for the Remuneration Committee is to be circulated to members.</p> <p>Following on from discussing the Remuneration Committee the Convener welcomed members to advise if they would welcome changes to any of the other committees. There was a wide ranging discussion about Committee membership.</p> <p>GF highlighted that for Local Review Body meetings all Planning & Access Committee members should be able to act as a member of the Local Review Body. The exception to this is if the case being considered is within a</p>	SD

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	<p>member's constituency, then a member with no declaration of interest will form part of the committee. SD advised that when the Local Review Body standing orders are reviewed this update will be made.</p> <p>ACTION: SD to update Standing Orders for the Local Review Body to detail that all members of the Planning & Access Committee can sit on the Local Review Body, except if the case being considered is within a member's constituency.</p> <p>PB requested to leave the Delivery Group and JR requested to join the Delivery group.</p> <p>ACTION: Committee structure document to be amended as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HS appointed to the Planning & Access Committee. - AA stepped down from Audit Committee, and was appointed to the Planning & Access Committee. - JS appointed to the Delivery Group. - OM appointed to the Audit Committee. - JR appointed to the Delivery Group. - PB stepped down from the Delivery Group. 	<p>SD</p> <p>SD</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>2015/16 Annual Operational Plan</p> <p>The Convener advised that the papers for this item had not included a covering report, but this has now been tabled to Members at the start of the meeting. The Board is invited to approve the Annual Operational Plan.</p> <p>JC highlighted to members the key areas of focus in the Annual Operational Plan. JC highlighted that the plan aligned with Scottish Government priorities and the Park Authority will continue to measure our performance against the Scotland Performs National Outcomes.</p> <p>JC summarised the three corporate-wide key themes: (a) conservation; (b) being an innovative and creative public service; and (c) prioritising the delivery of our key and critical outcomes.</p> <p>CB indicated that the Delivery Group would welcome comments from the</p>	

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	<p>Board on any suggestions for enhancing Operational Plan reporting going forward.</p> <p>ACTION: Delivery Group to review the format of the Annual Operational Plan and reporting mechanisms.</p> <p>DECISION: Members approved the Annual Operational Plan.</p>	<p>JC and CB</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>2015/16 Budget</p> <p>JC introduced the proposed 2015/16 budget report and advised that this has been previously issued and discussed at Delivery Group. JC advised members that revenue Grant in Aid from Scottish Government has remained flat. JC explained that the proposed budget reflects £100k of over-programming on capital projects and a balanced budget in relation to revenue projects and operational costs. JC advised that this budget has been robustly reviewed by managers and heads of service. JC handed over to CM to provide a more detailed overview.</p> <p>CM advised that Members would now see that appendix one details a split between the capital budget and the revenue budget. CM indicated that we are planning to spend £184k less on projects during 2015/16 as a result of the increase in net operating costs. CM brought to Members attention the increase of £150k in salary costs, excluding the impact of capitalising staff costs for work completed on capital assets. The majority of the increase relates to the pay award (£100k) and £50k in relation to organisation restructure.</p> <p>CM indicated that in terms of operating expenditure this is a very tight budget and all non-essential items have been removed.</p> <p>CM advised that we have not budgeted for any additional costs arising from property surveys therefore there is a potential risk of an over-spend in this area which we would hope to manage by reviewing/reducing other costs.</p> <p>CM highlighted the breakdown on page 7 of the report of the £1.5 million project expenditure. CM advised that the £200k of capitalised salaries are</p>	

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	<p>shown as a place holder in Corporate Services and this will be allocated to specific capital projects over the year. This approach has been agreed with Audit Scotland. It is expected that much of this cost will be spent on Your Park.</p> <p>GW advised that in the creation of this budget the Executive have reviewed how the organisation can work differently and with partner organisations in order to meet Park Authority objectives.</p> <p>JR indicated that the production of a plan that looked further ahead such as three to five years would be valuable. CM indicated that our funding continues to be on an annual basis which makes long term forecasting difficult however she offered the possibility of scenario planning as a possible way forward.</p> <p>ACTION: CM to review the production of a business as usual forecasted budget for 2016/17.</p> <p>GF indicated that it would have been helpful to see the 2014/15 budget also split into revenue and capital. JC advised that this breakdown is available on the Delivery Group reports which can be viewed on the Board microsite.</p> <p>Members pointed out that the figure detailed for the Countryside Trust under 14.2.3 should be £27k and not £7k.</p> <p>ACTION: Financial Budget report for 2015/16 to be updated to show £27k instead of £7k under 14.2.3 for the Countryside Trust.</p> <p>CB advised that the budget had been presented to the Delivery Group and that they were in agreement that a rigorous process had been followed in the production of the budget and that they were aware that this was a tight budget.</p> <p>One Member expressed concern that the team co-ordinator position for Callander was no longer to be funded and asked if this could be reinstated. GW advised that due to pressure on the budget this could not be accommodated.</p>	<p>CM</p> <p>CM</p>

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	<p>The service level agreement of the Community Partnership was discussed. ME advised that he would welcome the opportunity for the Board to be updated on levels of service delivery as part of this arrangement.</p> <p>ACTION: GW to consider how to update Members on the value add of the Community Partnership.</p> <p>Members again indicated that they were keen to see future financial projections.</p> <p>GW advised that where possible fixed term employment contracts have been issued for capital projects to retain flexibility as this is pertinent to the budget.</p> <p>DECISION: Members approved the draft budget for 2015/16.</p>	GW
11	<p>Corporate Update</p> <p>The Convener invited GW to introduce the Corporate Update.</p> <p>GW advised that there has been good interaction with Scottish Government on various levels with a successful meeting taking place with Minister Dr Aileen McLeod and a further meeting which was scheduled for later this week with the Convener.</p> <p>GW noted that a meeting has also taken place with Bridget Campbell who succeeds Bob McIntosh in the role of Director of Environment and Forestry.</p> <p>GW brought to Members attention that the Park Authority Code of Conduct has been approved by Scottish Government. GW advised that this has been included in the papers issued to Members for this meeting as an appendix and is also available to view on the Park Authority website and Board microsite.</p> <p>GW noted that we have received confirmation from Scottish Ministers of the budget and Grant in Aid allocated for 2014/15; this is included in the meeting papers as appendix two.</p>	

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	<p>GW advised that a Rural Affairs, Food and Environment Delivery Board (RAFE) will be established and will take forward the Environment and Forestry (ENFOR) Review and also ensure that relevant elements of Brian Pack's recommendations are taken forward. Mr Lochhead will chair the RAFE Board himself, the Board Members will be the Chief Executives of the main delivery bodies in environment and agriculture, along with some non-executive members.</p> <p>GW advised that on the 21st and 22nd May the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority will be welcoming our colleagues from the Cairngorms National Park Authority to visit scenic routes projects and review running of the Ranger service. GW advised that a communication to Members will be issued shortly.</p> <p>ACTION: Communication to be issued to Members regarding the Cairngorms National Park Authority visit on Thursday 21st and Friday 22nd May 2015.</p> <p>GW advised that the development of a new website for the National Park has been brought forward as a result of the technical issues relating to the age of the content management system.</p> <p>GW highlighted that the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority has been confirmed as number 96 in the top 100 not-for-profit Best Companies to work for.</p>	<p>SMcl</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Planning & Access Committee Update</p> <p>PB, Depute Chair of the Planning & Access Committee, provided a verbal update. PB advised that since the last Board meeting on the 8th December 2014 three Planning & Access Committee meetings have taken place. At these meetings the applications have been in relation to the proposed construction of a track to access an agricultural shed and a change of use application.</p> <p>The Planning & Access Committee had considered two applications from</p>	

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	<p>Board members and Members were also updated on the annual Planning Performance Framework (PPF) 2013/2014.</p> <p>One Local Review Body meeting had taken place and there are no further Local Review Body meetings expected following this meeting.</p> <p>The next Planning & Access Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday 30th March 2015. This committee meeting will also provide a full briefing on the supplementary information for the Local Development Plan ahead of the Board meeting on Monday 16th March 2015.</p>	
13	<p>Audit Committee Update</p> <p>LM, Chair of the Audit Committee, gave a verbal update informing the Board that KPMG remain our internal auditors, and that after this year (2015/16) there will be a formal tender process. LM advised that the audits had progressed well, keeping to schedule, LM thanked JC and CM. LM noted that we have also been efficient and effective in closing out historical actions. Revisions will be made to the Corporate Risk Register and it is suggested that this will be presented at the June Board meeting. LM highlighted that KPMG has confirmed that significant assurance can be given on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's framework of governance, risk management and control which was welcomed by the Audit Committee.</p> <p>The Convener enquired as to the next steps in relation to the Best Value assessment. CM advised that this is currently being complied and will be presented as a paper included in the Annual Accounts in June. CM noted that the guidelines are comprehensive although we have been advised that our responses should be proportionate to an organisation of this size.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the contents of the report.</p>	
14	<p>Delivery Group Update</p> <p>CB, Chair of the Delivery Group, gave a verbal update on the work of the Delivery Group and indicated that they had considered in depth four key projects: LIVE Park, Pontoon, Your Park and the Gateway Centre. This</p>	

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	<p>included a consideration of the risks associated with each project.</p> <p>CB noted that as a result of the project management audit in November the Project Initiation Document (PID) process has been refined.</p> <p>CB advised that in relation to statutory compliance under health and safety lone working has been highlighted as an issue for office based staff and this will be reported on at the next Delivery Group.</p> <p>CB noted that the Delivery Group had reviewed the budget for this year and were aware of the projected £110k overspend.</p>	
15	<p>Conservation Update</p> <p>CB enquired as to whether the Park Authority will be involved in providing facilities at the Loch Lomond National Nature Reserve. GW advised that this project is not currently included in the budget which has been approved by Members today. However GW noted that the Park Authority will continue to be involved in the development of the project and engage in its development as part of the Management Board.</p> <p>GF highlighted the frustrations of the disruption of the work on the A82 Crainlarich Bypass. SN advised that this project is still ongoing and out with the control of the Park Authority.</p> <p>DW commended the work on the new access road into the RSPB Loch Lomond Reserve. DW noted that the work on the dry stone walling as a result of the National Heritage Grants Scheme has been welcomed and enquired as to the status of signage in this area. SN advised that the year end budget is already committed although this would be a consideration for future projects.</p> <p>The Convener advised that it is disappointing that the whole farm/estate plans will not be completed this year although understands the resourcing pressures. The Convener indicated that she would welcome more comprehensive information on the flood risk management plans in areas of the National Park. SN advised that the businesses involved in the project</p>	

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	<p>have been advised of the status of the project and confirmed that officers are considering the options for further training for Board members.</p> <p>CB confirmed that discussions have taken place with SEPA regarding training in the first instance for members of the Planning & Access Committee. SM confirmed that it is scheduled that this training for Planning & Access Committee members will take place in May.</p> <p>The Convener highlighted that the update paper refers to two illegal tree felling incidents taking place in Drymen. GW advised that these are ongoing cases therefore the targeting on the messaging for these cases requires to be carefully managed.</p> <p>ME returned to the value of receiving a further update flood risk management plans. The Convener advised that it would be good to note this as a valued topic for a business session.</p> <p>ACTION: SD to note that Members are interested in receiving an update on flood risk management plans in the National Park at a future business session.</p>	SD
16	<p>Visitor Experience Update</p> <p>MB advised that a highlight is the marketing of the Gateway Centre with the bespoke website and brochure. The tender for the Centre is open until the 18th June 2015 and there is evidence of positive interest. MB noted that a lowlight was that there has not been a tender submission for the operation of Waterbus services from Loch Lomond Shore lagoon pontoon. Difficulties have been advised in relation to sourcing a boat. MB noted that the Park Authority are still aiming for the services to be piloted from the pontoon during the 2015 season. MB advised that Waterbus services have been in operation on the Luss to Balmaha route for the past four years. MB advised that loch cruises are traditional in this area therefore providing the Waterbus service is looking to attract new markets.</p> <p>GW also advised that there have been issues in establishing a corresponding lease at Balmaha pier. MB highlighted that open access to the pier is</p>	

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	<p>essential for the pontoon to be a success.</p> <p>GF and JR highlighted that keeping the community councils informed of developments at Luss pier would be beneficial.</p>	
17	<p>Visitor Management Update</p> <p>DW commended the work of the rangers in relation to the delivery of the winter repair and maintenance programme.</p>	
18	<p>Rural Development Update</p> <p>SM advised that the focus has been on the development activity of LIVE Park there has also been an increase in the number of pre-planning applications as a result of confidence in the local economy.</p>	
19	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Convener advised members that register of interest documentation had been circulated for updating.</p>	
20	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The Convener advised that, as agreed today the date of the next meeting, will be a Special Board Meeting on Monday 27th April.</p>	

Signed _____

Linda McKay
Convener