

National Park Authority Special Board Meeting



**Final Minutes of Meeting held at
2:00pm on 15th June 2015
Clydebank Town Hall Chambers**

Present: Linda McKay (Convener) Owen McKee (OM)
William Nisbet (WN) (Vice Convener) David McCowan (DMcC)
Petra Biberbach (PB) David Warnock (DW)
George Freeman (GF) Fergus Wood (FW)
David McKenzie (DMcK) James Stuart (JS)
James Robb (JR) Martin Earl (ME)

In Attendance: Park Authority Staff:
Gordon Watson (GW) Scott Nisbet (SN)
Jaki Carnegie (JC) Anna MacLean (AM)
Stuart Mearns (SM) Sandra Dalziel (SD)
Bridget Jones (BJ) Sharon McIntyre (SMcI)

Apologies: Colin Bayes (CB) Hazel Sorrel (HS)
Bob Ellis (BE) Lindsay Morrison (LM)
Angus Allan (AA)

Item	Action	Action by
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Convener opened the Meeting by welcoming members of the public.</p> <p>SMcI advised of apologies from CB, BE, AA, HS and LM.</p> <p>The Convener proposed that agenda item eighteen would be handled as a confidential item in closed session from which officers and members of the public would be excluded. SD read the resolution to allow agenda item eighteen to be held in closed session.</p>	
2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>The Convener invited declarations of interest. No declarations of interest were made.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of Meeting held on 16th March 2015</p> <p>WN indicated that on page two of the minute, this should refer to the <i>Rural</i> Stirling Housing Association and not the <i>Royal</i> Stirling Housing Association. OM noted that in relation to this section of the minute he is the Vice Chair of the Rural Stirling Housing Association. WN has a financial interest in the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.</p>	

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	<p>ACTION: Minutes of meeting held on 16th March 2015 to be updated to reflect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OM is Vice Chair of the Rural Stirling Housing Association and not the Royal Stirling Housing Association. - WN has a financial interest in the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. <p>The minutes were proposed by JS and seconded by DW.</p> <p>DECISION: Subject to these amendments the minutes of Meeting held on 16th March 2015 were agreed.</p>	SMCl
4	<p>Minutes of Special Board Meeting held on 27th April</p> <p>PB highlighted that she recalled the status of the Loch Lomond islands in relation to the Your Park proposals being discussed at the Special Board Meeting and, given public interest in this area, requested that this discussion be referenced in the minutes. GW advised that he recalled confirming at the Special Board Meeting that the Loch Lomond islands were not included within the current Your Park proposals, but the Loch Lomond islands would continue to be monitored by the Park Authority's Ranger Team. Members agreed to this amendment to the draft minute.</p> <p>ACTION: Minutes of Special Board Meeting held on 27th April 2015 to be amended to note that GW confirmed that the Loch Lomond islands were not included within the current Your Park management zones, but the area would continue to be monitored by our Ranger Team.</p> <p>The Convener advised that openness and transparency were important to the Authority, and asked SD to clarify why some additional information had been included in minute regarding declarations of potential interest.</p> <p>SD advised Board members that after the Special Board Meeting on 27th April, the Park Authority had received a Freedom of Information request requesting clarification about which Board members owned a property within the proposed management zones, forming part of the Your Park proposals (agenda item 3). The Authority provided this information to the requester, which confirms the information already in the public domain via the Register of Interests and previous minutes.</p> <p>SD confirmed that officers' inclusion of the information was intended to be helpful clarification. However, subsequent correspondence from the same</p>	SMCl

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	<p>requestor has suggested that this could be seen as misleading.</p> <p>The Convener proposed that the minute of the Special Board Meeting be amended to reflect the declarations as made at the meeting and any additional information should be shown separately. Members agreed to this amendment.</p> <p>ACTION: Minutes of Meeting held on 27th April to be amended to remove any additional information that was included from the public Register of Interest, which was not expressly stated by those Members with property within management zones.</p> <p>DECISION: Subject to the amendments outlined above, the minutes of the Special Board Meeting held on 27th April were agreed.</p>	SMcl
5	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>JC introduced the report and provided an update on the two open actions. JC advised that review of the Local Review Body Standing Orders will be addressed at the next Strategy Group meeting to ensure that all Members of the Planning & Access Committee are able to sit on the Local Review Body. In relation to the production of a business as usual forecasted budget for 2016/17, an update will be prepared for the Quarter 2 Board Report.</p> <p>GF requested clarification on where he could source the 2014/15 budget detailing the capital and revenue split. JC indicated that she would look into this point and provide an update.</p> <p>ACTION: JC to provide update to GF on 2014/15 budget capital and revenue split.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the report.</p>	JC
6	<p>Election for Depute Chair of Planning & Access Committee</p> <p>SD introduced this report informing members that one valid nomination for the Depute Chair of Planning & Access Committee was received for GF. SD outlined that members are invited to approve GF's appointment as the Depute Chair of Planning & Access Committee of the Park Authority for a</p>	

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	<p>three-year term. Members agreed unanimously with recommendation. GF thanked members for their support.</p> <p>DECISION: Members approved GF's appointment as Depute Chair of Planning & Access Committee for a three-year term.</p>	
7	<p>2014/15 Annual Report and Accounts</p> <p>7.1 Annual Report 7.2 Annual Accounts</p> <p>JC introduced the Draft Annual Report and the Annual Accounts. JC indicated to members that they are invited to approve the Draft Annual Report and note the Annual Accounts.</p> <p>GW informed members that the Annual Report and the Annual Accounts are normally one report although these documents have been separated this year. The Annual Report this year has been produced with a focus on increasing the accessibility of this document.</p> <p>GW advised members that the Accounts remain in draft form pending final approval and completion of the audit by Audit Scotland. GW welcomed questions from members.</p> <p>JC noted that the Annual Report is focused on Scottish Government outcomes and explains in a user friendly manner the work of the Park Authority.</p> <p>The Convener advised that this report would prove useful in supporting the Board monitoring role.</p> <p>The Annual Report was praised by members for being a very approachable document.</p> <p>The Convener welcomed the use of user friendly terminology throughout the document. The Convener advised that where updates are given in the report it would be beneficial if the outcomes were also reported, for example on</p>	

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	<p>page 17 of the report in relation to controlling invasive non-native species.</p> <p>DMcK raised that there is variability in the way in which members' claim expenses and wished to include reference to the variability of the claiming of expenses in this section of the Annual Accounts. Members agreed that the inclusion of text to this section of the Annual Accounts would be beneficial.</p> <p>ACTION: JC to review 'Analysis of Board Members' Fees and Expenses' section of the Annual Accounts and to take a view on the inclusion of a statement reflecting members' varied position in the claiming of expenses.</p> <p>FW suggested that the 'Sale of Goods' of £5,684k was disappointing. GW noted this although then advised that this had been a focus for the Head of Commercialisation until this work was deferred.</p> <p>JC informed members that attention has been on the Association of National Park Authorities (ANPA) sponsorship since focusing solely on goods for sale is a difficult market.</p> <p>Members highlighted the difference in travel and subsistence costs from £21,231k to £35,555k and in published materials from £12,423k to £24,683k in comparison with the previous year. JC advised that a further breakdown of these two areas can be provided.</p> <p>ACTION: JC to provide a further breakdown of the figures in relation to the increased costs for travel and subsistence and published materials in 2015 in comparison to 2014.</p> <p>Members also noted that there was a decrease in the planning fees received from £292,262k to £223,049k. GW explained that this was the result of an increase in the applications for hydro schemes prior to the feed in tariff changing.</p> <p>Members requested further information on the deficit of £1,218k identified on the covering paper. JC to provide update to Members.</p> <p>ACTION: JC to provide information on the deficit of £1,218k for the 2013/14</p>	<p>JC</p> <p>JC</p>

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	<p>accounts.</p> <p>Members noted that it would be useful to have guidance notes in this document and that the language was difficult in places. GW advised that this can be reviewed although the format of this report follows the guidance issued by Scottish Government.</p> <p>Members enquired as to the Strathclyde Pension Scheme and if this had resulted in an increased level of risk moving to a defined contribution method. GW explained that employee contributions had also increased and that there was no increased risk.</p> <p>DECISION: Members agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve the Annual Report. - Note the draft Annual Accounts for 2014/15 (subject to final External Audit clearance). - Note that we anticipate the Audit Committee to recommend the accounts are signed by the Chief Executive following consideration of the final draft by the Audit Committee on the 23rd June 2015. - Note that the Board will be informed of any material changes to the accounts following final clearance by External Audit. 	JC
8	<p>Annual Health and Safety Report</p> <p>JC introduced the report outlining that this is the first time the Annual Health and Safety Report has been presented to the Board. JC outlined that this report is normally reported to the Delivery Group on a quarterly basis and to the Executive on a monthly basis. JC advised that following the meeting members would be issued with a copy of the Health and Safety policy for their reference.</p> <p>ACTION: Health and Safety Policy to be issued to Board members.</p> <p>JC informed members that it was actually a good sign that the number of incidents had increased, as previously incidents were not being reported. The Park Authority has actively encouraged the reporting process to staff therefore this explains the increase in the number of incidents.</p> <p>Members discussed the high figure reported for injury. JC advised that the majority of these are the result of tick bites. JC informed members that this has been a key focus in terms of health and safety and all staff members have been made aware of the risks associated with ticks.</p>	SMcl

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	<p>Members identified that the total in the table for 2013/14' recording the 'number of accidents/incidents/near misses' does not total the contents of the table. JC to check information reported and to provide an update to members.</p> <p>ACTION: JC to issue members with updated table reporting the number of accidents/incidents/near misses for 2013/14.</p> <p>The Convener indicated that the Annual Health and Safety Report should be a regular feature of Board business and requested that the material also clearly set out Board member as well as staff responsibilities in relation health and safety.</p> <p>ACTION: Health and Safety Report to be added to June Board agenda for 2016.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the report.</p>	<p>JC</p> <p>SMcl</p>
9	<p>2015/16 Corporate Risk Register</p> <p>JC introduced this report. The Convener informed members that the Corporate Risk Register is approved annually by the Audit Committee prior to being presented to the Board for final approval.</p> <p>JC advised that this is the second year that this report has come to the Board and is a process of risk mitigation for the forthcoming year.</p> <p>Members discussed the scoring of the Corporate Risk Register and the format of the risk register. The Convener suggested that it would be good for the Audit Committee to provide guidance on the scoring and management of each of the levels of risk identified.</p> <p>ACTION: Audit Committee to review the Corporate Risk Register in terms of providing guidance on the scoring and management of each of the levels of risk identified.</p> <p>DECISION: Members agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve the 2015/16 Corporate Risk Register. - Note that the new register will be monitored, reviewed and revised in line with the agreed process by the Executive and the Audit Committee. 	<p>Audit Committee</p>
10	<p>Commercialisation Update</p>	

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	<p>GW introduced the report outlining that WN represented the Park Authority at the 2014 Association of National Park Authorities Annual General Meeting in Tenby.</p> <p>GW advised that Tony McInnes had been involved in this project as Head of Commercialisation although, following his resignation Grant Moir, Chief Executive of the Cairngorms National Park Authority is representing the Scottish Park Authorities in the interim.</p> <p>GW and WN updated members that Association of National Park Authorities are in the final stages of creating National Parks Partnership Ltd and are currently seeking tax advice on the proposed structure of the new entity to ensure its tax efficiency.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the report.</p> <p>AM left the room.</p>	
11.	<p>Mountains and The People Project</p> <p>BJ introduced the report informing members that this is the fruition of four years of work on this project with Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust (COAT) and Cairngorms National Park Authority. BJ emphasised that this project will aim to combat the erosion of our front line hills and offer engagement through volunteer, educational and skills training opportunities.</p> <p>WN and JR highlighted that they attended a superb presentation regarding this project.</p> <p>Members wished to express their appreciation to COAT for their efforts in successfully securing the Heritage Lottery Fund bid.</p> <p>ACTION: Positive feedback to be provided to COAT from Park Authority Board regarding the Mountains and The People Project.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the report.</p> <p>AM returned to the room.</p>	JC
12.	<p>Organisational Update</p> <p>GW introduced the Organisational Update outlining that positive meetings have taken place with Minister Dr Aileen McLeod and Bridget Campbell, Director of Environment and Forestry.</p>	

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	<p>GW advised that following the initial meeting of the Rural Affairs, Food and Environment Delivery Board (RAFE), chaired by Mr Lochhead, digital alignment will be the focus for the RAFE partner organisations.</p> <p>GW brought to members' attention a range of strategic meetings that have taken place with our partners under section 3.2.1 of the report.</p> <p>ME and OM highlighted that there have been recent issues in Crianlarich in relation to gold panning although noted that this is a popular leisure pursuit and national organisations are showing an interest in this area. GW agreed that this is a complex issue and that the Park Authority is trying to encourage a positive solution with partners including Police Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage.</p> <p>GW informed members that the appeal case of Michael Leonard against the Park Authority was dismissed. GW noted that this was a significant case for the Park Authority. Members asked whether we would be able to reclaim any costs in relation to this case, GW advised that this will be reviewed. SD outlined that it is unlikely that there will be an appeal to the Supreme Court.</p> <p>GW advised that the Park Authority is also involved in two cases of illegal tree felling and a case at Drumlean Estate.</p> <p>DECISION: Members noted the report.</p>	
13.	<p>Planning & Access Committee Update</p> <p>PB, Chair of the Planning & Access Committee, provided a verbal update. PB informed members that the last Planning & Access Committee considered the application of two sheds and an access track. A briefing session took place with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and a further briefing session is planned to take place with Historic Scotland.</p> <p>FW raised a point in relation to the case at Drumlean Estate. This was retracted by the Convener.</p> <p>Members discussed the importance of keeping community councils updated on planning issues and engaging with local communities.</p>	
14.	<p>Audit Committee Update</p> <p>In the absence of the Chair of Audit Committee the Convener invited the</p>	

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	<p>Depute Chair to provide an update. DMcC advised that the Audit Committee will be meeting next week to sign off the Annual Accounts and will take into consideration the Board recommendations in relation to the Corporate Risk Register.</p> <p>DMcC advised that KPMG and Audit Scotland were satisfied that the Executive had promptly actioned any points raised from their review.</p> <p>DMcC informed members that the areas of work that the Audit Committee will be taking forward are the fixed asset register and new software to accompany this when it becomes available.</p>	
15.	<p>Delivery Group Update</p> <p>In the absence of the Chair of Delivery Group the Convener invited the Depute Chair to provide an update. DW informed members that at the last meeting on the 20th May members reviewed four key projects: LIVE Park, Waterbus Services, Your Park and the Gateway Centre.</p> <p>DW informed members that there has been an increase in the number of freedom of information requests and complaints and the Delivery Group are confident that these are being managed effectively. DW went on to confirm that any significant complaints will be reported to the Delivery Group.</p> <p>DW updated members on the following topics covered at Delivery Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issues in relation to lone working have been resolved. - Staff absences have increased to an average of eleven days per person per year, with four members of staff on long term leave. - The Business Session prior to the Board meeting focused on equality and diversity, a topic reported on to Delivery Group. - Delivery Group has noted the projected overspend of the Park Authority this year. <p>DW informed members that the next meeting of the Delivery Group is Thursday 20th August 2015.</p>	

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16.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Convener highlighted to members that the National Parks Conference will be taking place in Dartmoor this year in October. The Convener advised members that David Warnock will be attending and welcomed any other further interest from Board members.</p> <p>The Convener noted that the Board had recently welcomed colleagues from Cairngorms National Park Authority to the Park. The Convener highlighted that this visit had received great feedback from Cairngorm colleagues and invited Board members to consider whether a future visit to Cairngorm should be considered. Members welcomed this suggestion.</p> <p>ACTION: Board member visit to Cairngorms National Park Authority to be confirmed with Cairngorms National Park Authority.</p> <p>The Convener advised that Board training would take place in the autumn.</p> <p>The Convener informed members that updates to the committee standing orders will be an agenda item at the next Board meeting.</p> <p>The Convener advised that Board member annual reviews will commence shortly and that she will be in touch with members regarding these meetings.</p> <p>The Convener informed members that SD will be finishing for maternity leave shortly and that Amanda Aikman will commence in the role of Governance Manager on Wednesday 1st July 2015 to provide maternity cover.</p> <p>The Convener invited any other business from members. FW wished to make members aware of the junior Kinlochard Highland Games which are taking place on the 20th July. WN advised members that the Royal Highland Show is taking place at Ingliston should members wish to attend.</p>	Executive
17.	<p>Date of Next Meeting: Monday 21st September 2015</p> <p>The Convener advised that the date of the next meeting will be Monday 21st September 2015.</p>	
18.	<p>Confidential</p> <p>The Convener asked members of the public to leave the room to allow</p>	

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	agenda item eighteen to be held in closed session. Agenda item eighteen was held in closed session.	

Signed _____

**Linda McKay
Convener**