

LLTAF STATEMENT – 12 March 2024

The Forum appreciates the significant and often novel challenges that the NPA has faced over the last 4 years and accepts that the LLTAF may not be the top priority for the Board and the NPA. It also recognises that good access work continues to be done by NPA Access Officers.

However, the Forum remains a legally mandated body and, as such, is very concerned that, even before the start of the pandemic, the NPA has not been taking the actions necessary to ensure that the LLTAF continues to be able to support the NPA to the standards which had come to be expected. Concerns include:

- **Membership numbers** – In 2019 the LLTAF should have had 13 members plus a Board representative. In May 2019, there were 10 members plus a Board representative. By August 2019 this had dropped to 9 members plus a Board representative and by October 2019 it had dropped further to 8 members plus a Board representative. Numbers ultimately dropped to 6 members. Understandably, other priorities prevailed in 2020/21. At the request of the NPA, in April 2022, the Forum provided a letter stating its views of what might be done to advance recruitment. Indicative programs for recruitment have been provided to the Forum but, as far as is known, no additional recruitment action has yet been taken beyond the current membership.
- **Terms of Reference** – Updated TOR were presented to the LLTAF in February 2020. The document was rejected by the Forum for multiple reasons with the main ones being the unnecessary length and the appearance of designating the LAF as a “Park” committee. It was also felt that the style and length could be detrimental to attracting the pragmatic type of person that the Forum needs. In a letter of the 11 August 2022 to Mr K Auld, copied to Mr G Watson and Ms S Hilder, it was noted with concern that there did not seem to have been any substantive progress with the TOR. The Forum was told that recruitment could not be initiated until the TOR had been completed and approved. The Forum suggested that interim appointments against the extant TOR could be made but this was not followed up. This was also addressed in the Forum’s letter of August 2022.
- **Meetings** – The NPA stated that no “formal” meeting of the LLTAF could take place during the Pandemic as meetings must be “open to the public” and this was not possible on safety grounds. Consequently, there were no formal meetings of the LLTAF in 2020. This led to adverse social media comment of detriment to the Park and the LLTAF. The Forum had suggested on multiple occasions that virtual meetings could be open to the public, and provided easier access for those living some distance from Balloch, and this was the mechanism used by other LAFs to continue holding formal meetings.

The Forum wishes only to be given the means to provide a very high quality service to the NPA and all access users, as used to be the case. While the remaining members of the LLTAF are experienced and able to support any reasonable request from the NPA, there is no doubt that restoring the LLTAF to full complement would have multiple benefits.

It is requested that this statement of concern is conveyed to senior Park management and the Board.

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