

Cairngorms National Park Authority
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31 March 2023

Local Government, Housing and Planning
Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Inquiry into Community Planning

Dear Ariane

Thank you for your letter of 3 March 2023 seeking the Park Authority view of the community planning process. I have addressed your questions below.

1. How a national body such as the Cairngorms National Park engages with CPPs at a local level and works in partnership with other members.

The Cairngorms National Park Authority leads on the coordinated management of the National Park, the boundary of which is defined in legislation. The National Park covers parts of five different local authority areas - Highland, Moray, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Perth and Kinross. This particular geography does present some challenges in terms of how we interact with each community planning process.

The Park Authority works closely with a range of partners through the processes associated with the National Park Partnership Plan. The Park Authority has a legal duty to prepare a National Park Partnership Plan for the area every five years - this is a key mechanism to ensure that the four Park aims are being delivered collectively and in a coordinated way. This plan is also agreed by Scottish Ministers and all public bodies have to 'have regard to' the plan. Partnership working is at the core of the Park Authority.



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The Park Authority works with the CPP structures that cover the Park on issues where there is a need for joining up delivery at a local level.

2. Whether there are any challenges or barriers to that engagement being effective.

The biggest single challenge to the Park Authority is providing sufficient staff resource (as a small public body) to attend and service the many meetings that are established through the community planning processes in each of the five local authority areas. Each Local Authority does community planning in a different way so trying to find a common approach is difficult.

There could be greater clarity in guidance about how community planning (carried out on Local Authority boundaries) and National Park Partnership Plan coordination (carried out on the National Park boundary) are carried out in areas where there is potential overlap. This could be timely given the Scottish Government's commitment to at least one new National Park in Scotland.

3. Your views on the whether the Act is meeting its objective of reducing inequalities, and the effectiveness of Local Outcome Improvement Plans and locality plans.

The Park Authority does not have a view on the overall effectiveness of the Act in reducing inequalities.

4. Whether the statutory partners as set out in Schedule 1 of the Act needs revisiting.

This could be helpful, along with clarification of what each party is expected to contribute to the process and to delivery, once the Plans are agreed.

5. Whether there is sufficient leadership at a local or national level to support community planning.

There are a lot of different partnership mechanisms at a local level and how they all integrate does need clarity and more focussed leadership.

I trust this is helpful but please let me know if you require any further Information.

Yours sincerely



Grant Moir
CEO, CNPA



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