

More evidence of the conspiracy to undermine access rights

Description

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Phase 1: pre-Board pap

Communications phase	Messaging	Comr
Pre-Board papers going live	<div>Holding statement:</div> <div>Officers are busy analysing consultation responses and will present a recommendation to our Board in the spring.</div>	<div>**No c</div> <div>public</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"></div>

This slide from 13th/15th April shows that the LLLTNPA had already taken a decision before the public consultation. How else could the Park have told the Community Councils prior to the Board Meeting which of their

Following the Scottish Information Commissioner’s decision ([see here](#)) that the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park should have to disclose the presentations given to the Board at its secret

meetings to develop the camping byelaws and undermine access rights, the Commissioner's staff said they would check that the Park had given me ALL the slides. I thought this was being needlessly thorough but then lo and behold late on Friday afternoon I received this email from the LLTNPA:

Dear Mr Kempe

I refer to my email of 8th November 2016. I inadvertently missed some slides, which are now attached. The additional slides are:

Slide Presentation 23 February 2015 – Slide 3

Slide Presentation 13 & 15 April 2015 – Slides 29, 31, 33 and 35

In my covering letter, I explained that a personal email address has been redacted from a slide, for the avoidance of doubt, this is slide 8 from Slide Presentation 23 February 2015.

Yours sincerely

Now, most normal organisations save their slide shows as one document, not as a series of separate slides and the only explanation I can think of is that the member of staff involved was told to remove certain slides, which included the ones above, from the slideshow. This is reinforced by fact they are all about the same thing, the manipulation of due process and public opinion. All praise therefore to the Information Commissioner's Office for the thoroughness of their staff in detecting this. Every camper should be grateful to them for this. Freedom of Information processes may be slow and bureaucratic but the Information Commissioner's Office is one of the most important safeguards we have against arbitrary authority and abuse of power.

What do the missing slides tell us?

The slides provide proof us that the LLTNPA approved the camping byelaws BEFORE the Board Meeting on 27th April (no wonder the Your Park item was over in less than half an hour). The Park is supposed to take decisions in public but the current Board makes decisions in private and contrary to proper governance. Legally it may well have acted ultra vires. No wonder the LLTNPA did not want this information to become public and thank goodness for the Scottish Information Commissioner who clearly stated the information should be made public because it was important our public authorities should be accountable for what they do.

Communications approach

Phase 2: Board papers

Communications phase	Messaging	Comments
Board papers live but prior to Board meeting	<p>Having considered the consultation responses received, officers have made a recommendation to our Board to approve proposals that included amended camping byelaws and management zones.</p> <p>Progress on camping development plans outlining our proposed investment in improving camping infrastructure in the management zones will also be presented to the Board.</p> <p>The Board will consider these at the Board meeting on 27th April.</p>	<p>**No public consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">

The messaging “officers have made a recommendation to our Board” and this would be considered a
Board had already taken a decision

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Communications approach

Phase 3: Board meeting decision

Communications phase	Messaging	Comm
Board meeting and decision	Today, the National Park Authority Board gave approval for officers to present a set of camping byelaws and management zones to Scottish Government Ministers for approval.	<div><div><div>**Recommendation made.*</div><div>spokes</div></div><div>Blog and Board d</div><div>Your Pa</div><div>Reactive coordinat</div><div>behalf o</div></div>

Again the messaging is a lie. The decision was taken beforehand and that's the only reason the mes
Board Session. We know, thanks to the Commissioner for Standards in Public Life investigation that
rehearsed who would say what that afternoon.

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Running order

1. Overview of events, media & develop consultation close
2. Overview of the consultation respons
3. Headline issues/arguments
 - Discussion
4. Main Areas of Change Suggested by
 - Discussion

The significance of this slide from 23rd February is the word “discussion”. This shows that this session was proposing but included a discussion of how the Board would respond. In other words it was a decision.

While the slides are now public, questions remain about what other information is being kept secret

In response to the Information Commissioner’s decision the LLTNPA has now made all the information I requested available on the FOI section of its website <http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/park-authority/freedom-of-information/>. I believe the LLTNPA has tried to cut its losses rather than the information being released slide by slide. Why do I think this? Well all the missing slides are on the website so obviously this was put up after the Scottish Information Commissioner had been in contact and after I started blogging about this. I hope people will look at the slides and start raising asking their political representatives if our National Parks should be allowed to take decisions in this way. I will continue commenting on what the slides tell us about the corruption at the heart of the National Park over the next few weeks and following the slides up with further FOI requests.

The biggest single secrecy issue is that I do not believe the LLTNPA has declared all the information it has. While it provided the slides from the secret meetings that took place from 15/9/14 until 21/9/15 there are no slides or apparently any other written information from the earlier meetings that took place on 9/9/13, 28/10/13, 9/12/13, 17/3/14 and 16/6/14. The LLTNPA has clearly claimed to the Scottish Information Commission that there is NO written information for any of these meetings. The Information Commissioner can only force public authorities to disclose information which they admit to existing. I am afraid I don’t believe that briefing meetings, some of which devoted over an hour to briefing Board Members on camping issues, were conducted with no written information other than agendas ([see here](#)). Perhaps the LLTNPA has destroyed the information but the lack of it is I believe a further strong indication that there has been a conspiracy to undermine access rights.

What needs to happen

- Scottish Ministers should suspend the proposed camping byelaws because of the LLTNPA’s failure to follow due process and because it has taken decisions ultra vires
- Scottish Ministers need to require all Board Meetings of our National Parks to be held in public, papers to be published at least a week beforehand, all sessions to be recorded and broadcast like the Scottish Parliament (a podcast recording would cost almost nothing) and then properly minuted.

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

1. access rights
2. camping
3. Camping bye laws
4. Freedom of Information
5. LLTNPA
6. secrecy

Date Created

November 14, 2016

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