

Camping bye-law bingo!

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3. Your Park Update

The consultation of "Your Park" is one of the responsibilities of the Board, will be part of this year, so it has been on this today.

Firstly, I would like us to note any declarations

I will ask Sandra Dalziel; Governance & Legal

[NOTE: Sandra has prepared a script on her declaration turns out to be a conflict during the explained at the meeting.]

I will now ask for any Declarations of Interest.

"I declare a potential interest. I own a adjoining land] which is within the bound Trossachs management zone".

Are there any other declarations of interest?

[NOTE: you should expect declarations from Earl. They have been provided with suggested

I would now like to invite Gordon Watson to give the Park project is progressing.

Extract from Convener's notes for the secret Board Briefing session on 8th December 2014 which for commentary on this see below

At 16.42 yesterday, just five hours after my last post which explained how I was still waiting for the further information from the secret Board Briefing sessions which the Information Commissioner had told the Park to send to me on 11th January, it arrived! Funnily enough, there was a similar delay in the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority releasing the slides from the secret Board Briefing sessions back in November but again a few hours after I had made this public in a post, bingo ([see here](#))!

I did get a letter from Gordon Watson, the Chief Executive, though, headed [Compliance with Decision Notice 209-2016 Response](#) – you need to read to the last line to find the apology the Information Commissioner asked the LLTNPA to make. Most of the letter is the Park's explanation for why it did not declare it held this information at the first time of asking. I am sceptical about this. In my last post I commented that it defied belief that Gordon Watson, who was in charge of the development of the byelaws, and then, as Chief Executive, must have been involved in the attempt to claim that written information about the secret Board Briefing sessions was exempt from Freedom of Information laws, did not know there was more information available. The information I received yesterday provided direct evidence to substantiate my scepticism – among the new information is a lengthy cover paper prepared for the Secret Board Briefing Sessions on 15th September 2014 ([see here](#)) and the author is.....Gordon Watson!

The short extract above on Declarations of Interest provides more evidence of just how warped LLTNPA Board Meetings became during the development of the camping byelaws ([see here for full convenor briefing](#)). First, the Convener, Linda McKay, even for a non-public Board Meeting which the Park claims is not minuted (they refused me minutes under FOI on the basis there were none), is provided with a script which she reads out – quite extraordinary!. Second, note how Linda McKay has been provided in bold with the exact words she should use in her own declaration of interest. Now I thought declarations of interest are meant to be the responsibility of individual Board Members. It seems though in the LLTNPA staff provide a script to every Board Member telling them what they should say. One wonders why Board Members have so little understanding of the Code of Conduct for Ethical Standards in Public Life that they need to be told what to declare? Third, its worth asking why there was such an emphasis on declarations of interest when according to the Park no minutes were taken of any of these Board Briefing sessions and these meetings never took any decisions? It cannot too be right that on the one hand the Park recognised that discussions could lead to conflicts of interest but then never recorded whether these took place. There have been fundamental failures in governance in the way the camping byelaws were developed and in which the LLTNPA has been operating.

Its worth noting too that this extract refers to two further sets of scripts which have NOT been provided under FOI: the script from Sandra Dalziel on her role and the scripts for individual Board Members telling them what they should declare. Maybe all electronic records relating to them have been destroyed but I suspect if the Information Commissioner had the powers they could find them

somewhere on the LLTNPA's IT system. There is good reason to believe that the Park has still not provided all the written information that relates to these meetings; still there is plenty more to comment on meantime.

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

1. Camping bye laws
2. Freedom of Information
3. Governance
4. LLTNPA
5. secrecy

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