

LOCH LOMOND AND THE TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

NOTES OF STRATEGY GROUP MEETING 03/2013

**HELD IN THE ROBERT GRIEVE SUITE, CARROCHAN, CARROCHAN ROAD, BALLOCH
ON 13TH AUGUST 2013 AT 10:30**

Present: Linda McKay (Chair)
Owen McKee (OM)
Colin Bayes (CB)
Lindsay Morrison (LM)
Kate Sankey (part)
Fiona Logan (FL), Chief Executive Officer
Jaki Carnegie (JC), Director of Corporate Services
Gordon Watson (GW), Director of Operations
Jane Filshill, Executive Assistant (Notes)

2. Visitor Management in the National Park

GW presented discussion paper to Strategy Group for review and consideration. FL advised of the feedback received following recent Ministerial visit which was relevant to visitor management discussions.

- Members advised that it would be helpful to consider the options for a Park-wide approach to visitor management.
- Members recommended that where a park-wide approach was not legally or feasibly possible other options should be considered. Members agreed that the paper requires to be developed further to include policy thoughts.
- Members agreed that options should be considered by the Board.

ACTION: GW to investigate feasibility of a park-wide approach to Visitor Management.

ACTION: GW to present revised paper to November Strategy to enable further exploratory discussions to be held.

ACTION: GW to provide camping management verbal update at informal Board session on 9th September 2013.

NOTES OF STRATEGY GROUP MEETING 04/2013

**HELD IN THE TROSSACHS ROOM, CARROCHAN, BALLOCH
ON 11TH OCTOBER 2013 AT 11AM**

Present: Linda McKay (Chair)
Owen McKee (OM)
Colin Bayes (CB)
Lindsay Morrison (LM)
Gordon Watson, Director of Operations (GW)

Bridget Jones, Head of Visitor Management (part) (BJ)
Peter Stevenson, Governance Manager (Notes) (PS)

3. Camping Management in the National Park

BJ joined the meeting at this point and outlined the areas for the informal Visitor Management discussion at the Board Business Session on 28th October. She confirmed that staff had met with a few key partners to brief them on the issues and early thinking.

- Members advised that a useful approach to the Business Session discussion on 28th October would be to outline all the possible options and to advise where officers had a clear preference. GW clarified that the discussion on the 28th was to informally agree a general direction of travel rather than make a decision on the preferred option.
- Everyone agreed that throughout the process it will be important to ensure that communications are clear that a key objective of any change is to continue to welcome and provide an excellent visitor experience within the Park.

The Chair thanked BJ for her presentation and asked Members to reflect on the discussion and contact BJ with any further comments.

Note of Strategy Group 01/2014 held on Wednesday 19th February 2014,

Present: Linda McKay (Chair)
Owen McKee (OM)
Colin Bayes (CB)
Lindsay Morrison (LM)
Fiona Logan, Chief Executive (FL)
Gordon Watson, Director of Operations (GW)
Jaki Carnegie, Director of Corporate Services (JC)
Jane Filshill, Executive Assistant (Notes) (JF)

1. Visitor Management

The Chair advised paper presented was different to that expected, Chair believed a range of propositions for consultation would have been presented following discussions held during December Board. Members agreed with the Chair and in conclusion it is evident more time is needed to develop further. FL acknowledged the project is not at the stage hoped for at the present time. GW advised of preferred pre-consultation process to allow sufficient feed in to allow credible propositions to be presented for consideration by Board and of sensitivities surrounding the overall consultation.

- Members agreed that it is important to take the time to get the process correct.
- Members agreed Visitor Management Options report be prepared and presented at March Informal Business Session.

- Members agreed Executive to give further thought on timescales and resources and report back to Strategy Group.

Actions:

- GW to prepare board engagement report for March Board detailing prioritised list for needed engagement, detailing partner/landowner discussions. Engagement report to emphasise the need for confidentiality amongst members due to sensitive nature.
- GW to prepare an informal options presentation to inform Members of visitor management solutions under consideration.
- FL to review timescales and resources for Visitor Management Consultation and report back to Strategy Group.

Note of Strategy Group 02/2014 held on
Wednesday 7th May 2014

Present: Linda McKay (Chair)
Owen McKee (OM)
Colin Bayes (CB)
Lindsay Morrison (LM)
Fiona Logan, Chief Executive (FL)
Gordon Watson, Director of Operations (GW)
Jaki Carnegie, Director of Corporate Services (JC) part
Nicola Arnott, Committee Officer (Notes) (NA)

GW advised that engagement with communities has commenced in relation to visitor management options.

National Park Visitor Management Proposal

GW presented the paper on camping management and explained that informal views have been sought from communities and the appendix to the paper sets out the NPA's preferred option.

Engagement and options

It was noted that feedback from communities is very supportive of visitor management. The principle of presenting a preferred option rather than several options for consultation was discussed and the benefits and risks of this approach were highlighted. CB expressed concern that some parties may feel aggrieved that they will not be able to have more input. The Chair emphasised the importance of seeking the views from a diverse range of groups including those of parties that are less supportive of visitor management as this level of engagement would be expected from the Minister.

Feedback on Map and Zoning

LM asked how the zones were identified and GW advised that they are evidence based high pressure areas. The boundaries were discussed in terms of whether

these are fixed or whether changes could be made a later date. The principle of zoning was discussed and it was noted that the emphasis is on car based camping in high pressure areas and the proposals do not seek to regulate true wild camping, such as camping by walkers on the West Highland Way in areas that are not accessible by cars.

The number of zones was discussed and the potential difficulties in communicating exemptions in the different zones were raised. LM indicated concern around zones and asked for consideration to be applied to the communication. FL stated that the three zones kept the concept simple in presentation terms.

Timing of camping provision

The provision of camping facilities in the zones was discussed and it was acknowledged that different approaches would be appropriate for different communities. There was consensus that a reasonable period of time for implementation would be required in order to ensure that the private and public sector partners address market opportunities.

The resource required to enforce the byelaw was discussed. FL advised that the patrol of East Loch Lomond has taken considerable Ranger resource to implement. It was acknowledged that an appropriate lead in time for full implementation would be required. The strategy for timing and implementation was discussed in relation to gaining Scottish Government support.

GW advised that the idea of grants to encourage camping provision by the private sector has been suggested. Incentives were discussed and OM advised that it will take time for the private sector to respond to opportunities as Loch Lubnaig is likely to be used to judge commercial success/viability of service provision. There was consensus that a level of public sector intervention was likely to be required to bring forward camping provision in the zoned areas. GW reported that there has been interest from some NGOs in provision of facilities.

Use of Exemptions

The use of exemptions was discussed. FL gave the example of West Loch Lomond which could be implemented quickly as there is strong local support for visitor management in this area.

CB noted that the proposal does not appear to address motor home provision at the zoned areas and that he would welcome more emphasis on motor home provision.

ACTION: GW to take this point on board and add narrative about motor home provision to the proposal.

The timing of presentation to the board was discussed and FL suggested that that the proposal could be presentation to the Board Business Session in June, followed by a special meeting of the Board at the end of the summer.

ACTION: Visitor management paper to be presented at the Board Business Session in June.

ACTION: Dates to be agreed for a special formal meeting of the NPA Board at the end of summer to consider a formal paper on visitor management.

The Chair recommended that cognisance is given to the costs of resourcing, implementation, budgets and prioritisation of project spend in relation to visitor management in due course.

Note of Strategy Group 03/2014 held on
Wednesday 20th August 2014

Present: Linda McKay (Chair)
Owen McKee (OM)
Colin Bayes (CB)
Lindsay Morrison (LM)
Fiona Logan, Chief Executive (FL)
Gordon Watson, Director of Operations (GW)
Jaki Carnegie, Director of Corporate Services (JC)
Sandra Dalziel, Governance Manager (SD)
Sharon McIntyre, Committee Officer (Notes) (SM)

Visitor Management

The Chair highlighted there is strong ministerial support for the Your Park visitor management proposals, although raised some concerns relating to the project timeline outlined in the papers.

GW presented a paper on Your Park and noted that it was intended to (a) provide some narrative about the project; (b) offer an overview of how the project is being managed in terms of risk management; and (c) outline the proposed timelines from today until the proposals are presented to the Board.

GW advised that the team has been actively talking to the relevant communities and the project team is now working with Scottish National Heritage (SNH) and other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) such as the Woodland Trust, Friends of Loch Lomond and the Ramblers. When discussing the project with third parties, reference is being made to visitor management options, rather than focussing on the proposed byelaw. The project team is aware of the parties that are likely to be opposed to the proposals and the Executive/project team is having valuable conversations with these third parties ahead of presenting to the Board and the public consultation.

Communication Plan

GW advised that there is a communication plan in place for the Your Park project which is intended to build awareness around the camping issues within the National Park.

FL noted that social media provides a helpful tool to highlight the camping issues within the National Park. In particular, positive comments have been posted via social media regarding the camping management on East Loch Lomond.

The Chair noted that there was a risk identified in the papers regarding staff resource in delivering the communication plan and requested an update on this. GW advised that the New Campaign Manager has started in post and that the team is also working closely with a PR company to ensure that the communication plan can be delivered.

LM suggested that any communications relating to Your Park should identify a monetary figure regarding the expected level of associated infrastructure investment. This figure could be based on proposed capital spend by the Authority and its partner organisations.

ACTION: FL to liaise with project team to ensure that potential capital investment by Authority and partners is quantified, so that the figures can be included in the narrative relating to the project.

Project Timeline and Resourcing

GW confirmed that the proposed timeline for the Your Park project was outlined in the papers. GW advised that due to the size of the organisation, the same project team would also be developing the byelaw and managing implementation. The resource implications relating to introduction of any byelaw will be considered more fully when the project moves into the operational phase.

The Chair requested that the Strategy Group revisit the proposed timeline for the byelaw sign off by Scottish Ministers.

There was some discussion about whether it will be necessary to allow time for the Board to sign the byelaw off, if it has been approved by Scottish Ministers. It was noted that final sign off by the Board would be necessary if any substantial changes are made to the byelaw by Scottish Ministers.

The Chair queried whether there was any scope to reduce the time reserved for staff to review consultation responses. FL advised that previous experience of public consultations showed that objections are normally received close to the deadline for submission and that we cannot predict in every instance what feedback we will receive, some of which may need serious consideration.

It was agreed that efforts would be made to pre-empt potential objections via early engagement and that the project timetable would be updated.

An additional Board meeting could be scheduled in February 2015 (dates to be agreed) to seek approval from the Board prior to submitting the byelaw to Scottish Government. The expectation is that it should then be possible for the Board to sign the finalised byelaw off by June 2015.

Work on the development of new camping provision and upgraded/new sites work as well as the practical operational arrangements to communicate and manage the introduction of byelaws will continue.

The group then discussed the resource implications for delivery of both the byelaw consultation and for the roll-out of the Park-wide byelaws. Timings were discussed and it was agreed that further consideration would be given to the proposed timeline as full operational plans are developed.

ACTION: FL/GW to update the project timeline for the Your Park project for full board consideration.

ACTION: SD to arrange Board meeting for February 2015 to review the byelaw proposal.

ACTION: Chair to ensure that the Minister is kept updated with our progress in correspondence with the revised project timeline.

ACTION: SD to ensure that Your Park remains on the agenda for the Strategy Group to allow on-going updates on the project.

Feedback on Map and Zoning

The types of proposed facilities and the zone boundaries identified in the papers were discussed briefly.

It was highlighted that given the sensitive nature of the Your Park proposals all Members should ensure that any conflicts of interest are raised and declared in advance of the Board meeting on the 6th October 2014.

ACTION: The September Board Business Session will undertake a dry run of any declarations of interest. Members to advise of any conflicts of interest, SD to update records and announce accordingly at Board meeting.

LM suggested that more information about the proposed zones should be included in the consultation narrative. OM highlighted that the location of proposed facilities is likely to be of interest to local businesses.

ACTION: GW to ensure that each zone has data and narrative regarding areas outside the designated zones being “open for business”.

Note of Strategy Group 04/2014 held on

12:45pm Wednesday 12th November 2014,

Present: Linda McKay (Chair)
Owen McKee (OM)
Colin Bayes (CB)
Lindsay Morrison (LM)
Fiona Logan, Chief Executive (FL) part
Gordon Watson, Director of Operations (GW) part
Jaki Carnegie, Director of Corporate Services (JC) part
Sharon McIntyre, Committee Officer (Notes) (SM) part

Your Park

GW presented an overview of the update on Your Park. Following discussion it was agreed to:

- Consider how to address potential displacement concerns raised by Killin Community Council.
- To speak to Loch Lomond Association about the Your Park Consultation.
- Consider the wording of the boundaries in the Byelaw when the loch shore levels are low exposing the loch bed.
- Encourage strategic partners to express their backing for Your Park through supportive consultation responses.

There followed discussions about the balance that will need to be struck within the proposed new provision sites. Consideration will be given to provision for camping and motor homes and the locations throughout the visitor management areas.

ACTION: It was agreed to invite... to attend a future informal Board session, possibly lunch, to hear about his experiences of ...

Note of Strategy Group 01/2015 held on
2pm Wednesday 14th January 2015

Present: Linda McKay (Chair)
Colin Bayes (CB)
Lindsay Morrison (LM)
Gordon Watson, Chief Executive (GW) part
Jaki Carnegie, Director of Corporate Services (JC) part
Sandra Dalziel, Governance Manager (SD) part
Sharon McIntyre, Committee Officer (Notes) (SM) part

Your Park

GW presented an overview of the Your Park consultation following the closure of the consultation at midnight on Tuesday 13th January 2015.

GW indicated that further media analysis would be available shortly and this will be distributed to strategy group members.

ACTION: GW to circulate updated media analysis to strategy group members.

It was agreed that the Board meeting on 23rd February 2015 would be an informal meeting to brief Members on the consultation responses and to allow discussion on the feedback and the next steps to be taken.

GW advised that he is meeting with the minister on the 5th February 2015 and will seek to reassure the minister at this time on the Your Park project.

ACTION: 23rd February 2015 Board Meeting to be an Informal Business Session on Your Park.

Note of Strategy Group 01/2015 held on
3pm Wednesday 1st April 2015

Present: Linda McKay (Chair)
Colin Bayes (CB)
Lindsay Morrison (LM)
Petra Biberbach (PB)
Willie Nisbet (WN)
Gordon Watson, Chief Executive (GW)
Jaki Carnegie, Director of Corporate Services (JC)
Sharon McIntyre, Committee Officer (Notes) (SM)

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chair advised that she owns a residential property within the proposed management zone.

3. Your Park

GW presented an overview of Your Park in relation to the provision of camping facilities within the National Park. This provided information on the approach of camping pitches and permits.

GW to update Your Park project team on actions below:

ACTION: In relation to figures on camping provision, this should be presented as rounded figures.

ACTION: The role of Loch Lubnaig in the camping provision figure for Zone 2 should be clarified.

ACTION: Members commented that moving forward it should be highlighted that we are working with landowners, that we are facilitators and that we have commitment from our partners such as Scottish Natural Heritage and the Forestry Commission.

GW presented an overview of the communication strategy for Your Park.

ACTION: Members suggested the perspective of young people should be welcomed and suggested that this could be achieved through our work with the John Muir Trust.

ACTION: It was suggested that a briefing note on Your Park should be prepared for local MSP's and circulated.

ACTION: Members queried whether information on Public Health should be included in our approach to highlight the issue of human waste when no facilities are provided.

JC advised members that this year we have received two complaints and six freedom of information requests associated with Your Park. JC advised that members should not engage directly, as any queries need to be handled in accordance with our complaints and information request processes.