

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

12th FEBRUARY 2014

Agenda Item	18
Report No	PED 20/14

HIGHLAND BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN: PROGRESS UPDATE

Report by Director of Planning and Development

SUMMARY

This paper provides a summary of progress made through the Highland Biodiversity Action Plans since 2006. It also informs Members of a change in partnership working from the Highland Biodiversity Partnership to the Highland Environment Forum, and updates Members of the current consultation over the new Highland BAP.

1. Background & Introduction

- 1.1 The Highland Biodiversity Partnership was established in 2006 to provide guidance and support to local biodiversity groups, and make progress on the key strategic biodiversity issues in the Highlands. It provided a link between local and national biodiversity groups and policies, and oversaw delivery of the Highland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).
- 1.2 Since then, the Council has prepared two successive Highland BAPs on behalf of the Partnership, covering the periods 2006-09 and 2010-13. The Plans identified key biodiversity issues, and proposed actions and projects that Members could undertake collectively and individually to address them.
- 1.3 The Highland Environment Forum was established in 2009 by the Highland Council and its Community Planning Partners to support the successful delivery of the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA). Both Forum and Partnership were suffering from a reduction in participation from members and, as many of the members and agenda items were the same, they were amalgamated into a single Highland Environment Forum last year.

2. Highland Biodiversity Action Plan: Progress Update

- 2.1 Local Action: Since the establishment of the Highland Biodiversity Partnership in 2006, three large projects have been delivered, representing a spend of over £290,000:
 - Highland BAP Implementation Project (2004-07);
 - Communities Project for Highland Biodiversity (2007-10); and
 - Highland Biodiversity Groups Capacity Building Programme (2009-13).

- 2.2 Between them, these partnership projects provided funding and support to enable the Local Biodiversity Groups in Highland to deliver 86 local projects, and hold 220 public events with over 4,891 participants. Further information on these projects, the Highland BAP and the seven Local Biodiversity Action Plans is available from www.highlandbiodiversity.com.
- 2.3 Strategic Work: The 2010 Highland BAP identified 24 strategic projects that Partnership Members wished to deliver by 2013. A summary of these projects and progress made to deliver them is at Appendix 1. Almost half (11/24) of the projects proposed in the 2010 BAP have been delivered or are underway and making good progress, with key successes being made under the headings of invasive non-native species (reported at the January PED meeting) and awareness-raising.
- 2.4 The Council helps to support a network of seven Local Biodiversity Groups; a number of conferences and networking events have been held, and the Council's Biodiversity Officers maintain a website containing reports, information, news and details of forthcoming events.
- 2.5 Highland Seashore Project: This three year, £104,000 project is managed by the Biodiversity Officers on behalf of the Highland Environment Forum, with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Highland Council and the Crown Estate.
- 2.6 In its first year, the project delivered:
- five Seashore Life Workshops, training 45 people in identification and survey techniques;
 - resources including surveyors packs, recording forms, identification guides, a seashore guidebook, posters, a pop-up quiz, puppets; and
 - six Seashore Road-show events, involving 1,726 attendees.
- 2.7 The training and seashore events will continue this year, and the Project Co-ordinator is working with Countryside Rangers and Local Groups to deliver a Seashore-themed Arts & Cultural Heritage Festival, which was launched in mid January with a Schools Competition.
- 2.8 Blockages to Action: Some progress has been made on four strategic projects identified in the 2010 Highland BAP (biological data management, volunteering, planning guidance & training, and a wildflower nursery). Lack of funding and lack of national guidance are the main blockages to action here.
- 2.9 No progress has been made on nine projects, specifically under the headings of sustainable use of habitats and species, and Local Nature Reserves. The latter issue is dependent on communities wishing to designate local areas, but the actions suggested under the sustainable use heading need partnership action and support to take them forward. Securing funding for future native woodland or land management projects will be difficult in the current financial climate. However, the Scotland Rural Development Programme is currently

under review, and there may be opportunities for delivery of biodiversity work in the next phase, which is due to run from 2014 to 2020.

3. Partnership Arrangements – Update on Highland Environment Forum

3.1 The first meeting of the expanded Highland Environment Forum was held on Tuesday 24 September 2013. The meeting was chaired by Cllr George Farlow, and a draft minute is at Appendix 2.

3.2 Members agreed the following four priority work areas:

- Climate Change Declaration: A Working Group was set up to review and agree how the Declaration should be taken forward.
- Biodiversity: A Working Group was set up to update and review the Highland Biodiversity Action Plan, and oversee the consultation process.
- Wildlife Crime: A representative from Scottish Natural Heritage is going to investigate the current situation with partner organisations, and will report back on key issues and recommendations to the next Forum meeting.
- Wildfire: A representative from the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service is going to report back on progress made nationally with the Wildfire Forum and a new Wildfire Manual.

3.3 The Forum is currently administered by the Highland Environmental Network for a trial period of one year (as approved by Members at the PED Committee meeting on 15 August 2012). Chairing duties will be shared between the partners. It will meet twice annually, although the Working Groups will meet more frequently to take forward specific priorities. Progress will be reported to the Community Planning Partnership and an appropriate Council Committee on an annual basis.

3.4 The next Highland Environment Forum meeting is on Tuesday 18 March, and it will be chaired by SNH Board Member Ian Ross.

4. Highland Biodiversity Action Plan Review

4.1 The Forum is currently consulting on the next Highland Biodiversity Action Plan, which will cover the period 2014 to 2020. This is a longer period than before, to bring it in line with other public documents such as the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and the Scotland Rural Development Programme.

4.2 It is proposed to divide the new Plan into six sections, with the following objectives:

- To improve the management and sharing of biological records, and encourage the collection of new records, especially targeting under-recorded species.
- To encourage local groups and volunteers to carry out practical biodiversity projects.
- To raise awareness of biodiversity and related issues, and help children and young people to learn about local nature and wildlife.
- To spread good practice and work together to address issues surrounding

- invasive, non-native species in Highland.
 - To encourage planners, developers and land managers to take biodiversity into account during building and maintenance works.
 - To promote the use of land management grants to help local biodiversity, and spread best practice through codes, guides and events.
- 4.3 A survey monkey questionnaire has been issued to Forum Members as a pre-consultation exercise, and the results will inform discussion at a workshop session at the forthcoming Highland Biodiversity Conference on Wednesday 26 February (a copy of the Conference Programme is at Appendix 3).
- 4.4 The public consultation over the Highland BAP 2014-2020 will be launched on Saturday 8 March at the Highland Biodiversity Exchange, a networking event specifically designed to help members of the Local Biodiversity Groups meet and learn from each other's experiences. It is envisaged that the new Plan will be launched in Summer 2014.

5. Fit with the Programme for the Highland Council 2012-17 and the Single Outcome Agreement

- 5.1 These actions support actions 7, 8, 11, 13 and 18 under the "Working Together to Empower Our Communities" heading in the Administration Programme 2012-17. The Local Biodiversity Groups have a strong input from volunteers, and many of the projects are focused on working with communities and raising awareness amongst the general public.
- 5.2 Strengthening the Highland Environment Forum, and reviewing and updating the Highland BAP will help the Council deliver SOA National Outcome 12 "We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations", as well as a number of other national outcomes. The local outcome is "Our natural heritage is protected and enhanced enabling it to deliver economic, health and learning benefits".

6. Equality, Legal and Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 There are no equalities, climate change or Carbon Clever implications arising from this paper.
- 6.2 The Highland Council, like all public bodies in Scotland, has a duty to conserve biodiversity under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2006. Further, there is a legal requirement under the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Act) 2011 to report on its biodiversity actions.

7. Risk Implications

- 7.1 If the Highland Environment Forum ceases to meet, partners will find it more difficult to deliver the environmental outcomes of the Single Outcome Agreement, and the opportunity will be lost for partners to work together to mutual benefit.

7.2 If the Highland BAP is not reviewed and updated, it will be harder to attract funding for strategic biodiversity projects and Local Biodiversity Groups will find it more difficult to engage with national biodiversity policy and initiatives.

7. Resource Implications

7.1 At the November 2012 PED meeting, Members agreed to an annual management charge of £12,000 from the Council's biodiversity budget to support the Highland Environment Forum.

7.2 This now forms part of a larger project which includes a biodiversity conference, several local events and the management of the Highland BAP consultation exercise. This represents a contribution of £6,000 from the Council's biodiversity budget in the financial year 2013-14, which is matched by Scottish Natural Heritage. A contract has been let to the Highland Environmental Network for a period of one year to undertake this work.

7.3 Any new projects arising from the Highland BAP Review that require additional resources in terms of staff time or financial contributions will be brought to future meetings.

Recommendation

Members are invited to:

- (a) note progress made by the Highland Biodiversity Partnership towards delivering the Highland Biodiversity Action Plan (2010);
- (b) approve the revised structure and reporting procedures associated with the Highland Environment Forum; and
- (c) comment on the Highland BAP Review proposals and, if they wish, contribute towards the current Highland Biodiversity Action Plan consultation.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Planning and Development Service
Date: 30 January 2014
Author: Janet Bromham, Biodiversity Officer
Ref: JB (Ext 2274)

Background Papers:

Appendix 1: Highland BAP (2010-2013) Delivery Table

Appendix 2: Highland Environment Forum Draft Minutes (24 September 2013)

Appendix 3: Highland Biodiversity Conference Programme

Highland Biodiversity Action Plan www.highlandbiodiversity.com/highland-bap.asp

Highland BAP Consultation www.surveymonkey.com/s/SNC62CF

Highland BAP (2010-2013) Delivery Table

Suggested Action	Target & Lead Partner	Progress since 2010
1. Recording & Data Management 1.1 Project Facilitation	7 projects linking national partners with local biodiversity groups to be worked up by 2013 (Scientific & Technical Advisory Group)	STAG is no longer in existence but some local projects have been delivered e.g. Bumblebee Conservation Trust is working with the Caithness Biodiversity Group, Scottish Agricultural College and local land managers to deliver habitat improvements for great yellow bumblebees.
2. Local Biodiversity Groups 2.1 Capacity Building Programme 2.2 Volunteering	7 LBAP Project Plans, 7 funding bids, 21 events, 7 leaflets, 7 websites, 7 training courses to be delivered by June 2012 (Highland Council & Local Biodiversity Groups) 3 practical projects involving volunteers to be initiated by 2011, 7 local groups to have representation from local volunteers by end 2011 (Local Biodiversity Groups)	The Capacity Building Programme ran from 2009 to 2013 with funding from Leader, SNH, Highland Council and RSPB. The targets were met but local groups are still experiencing capacity issues. 27 biodiversity projects were delivered by volunteers from the local biodiversity groups through the Capacity Building Programme. Volunteering Groups are represented on the Caithness and E Ross Biodiversity Groups.
3. Invasive Non-Native Species 3.1 Mapping Project 3.2 Giant Hogweed Control Co-ordinator 3.3 Rhododendron Strategic Control Project 3.4 Invasive Species Apprentice - BTCV Natural Talent.	Database, maps & report to be delivered by March 2010 (Invasive Species Forum) Co-ordinator post February 2010 – March 2012 (Highland Council / SNH) One-year project to start in Summer 2010, funding sought for extension (Forestry Commission / SNH) One-year apprentice placement starting 2010 (Conon DSFB / British Trust for Conservation Volunteers)	Project completed on time – Database, maps and Report held by Highland Council and used by Invasive Species Forum to prioritise future work. This project began in 2009 and secured further funding from SNH and Highland Council to continue until 2016. Very positive results - In 2013 both the Nairn and Wick Rivers had control programmes in place, so all known areas of Giant Hogweed in Highland are being controlled. The Highland Rhododendron Project employed a Project Officer from 2010-12, now the project continues without one. 14 Sols (Statement of Intent) for Rhododendron control were submitted to the Scotland Rural Development Programme by the time the scheme shut. The project has prioritised key areas of control and funded Rhododendron surveys to expedite future SRDP applications. The first apprenticeship was very successful, so much so that the Cromarty Firth Fishery Trust currently has another apprentice in post.
4. Biodiversity Awareness 4.1 Awareness Raising 4.2 Nature Detectives	Regularly updated website, 1 Forum event, 1 newsletter & 4 press releases per annum (Highland Council) www.highlandbiodiversity.com Primary School Booklet produced by June 2010, trialled with Easter Ross Ranger in 2010/11 & if successful, rolled out to other Highland schools in 2011/12 (Highland Council)	The website has been renewed, and continues to grow, news and events sections are regularly added to (as time allows). Annual forum events are held in Inverness & Nairn and Easter Ross, and biodiversity conferences and networking events are held each Spring. Project delivered, the booklets are now being used in 38 Highland schools, and Highland Council is working on a Gaelic version.

Appendix 1

Suggested Action	Target & Lead Partner	Progress since 2010
4.3 School Biodiversity Resources	1 Local Biodiversity Group to contact & work with a High School biology or geography teacher per annum (Local Biodiversity Groups)	No progress
4.4 Marine Sub Group	Presentation to the 2010 Highland Biodiversity Forum (Environmental Research Institute)	Delivered, the 2011 Biodiversity Forum focused on marine biodiversity, and a presentation on underwater biodiversity was given to the first meeting of the expanded Highland Environment Forum in Sept 2013.
4.5 Marine Biodiversity Project	Marine Awareness Raising Project to be presented to the Highland Biodiversity Partnership in December 2010 (Marine Sub Group)	Funding secured from Heritage Lottery Fund, Scottish Natural Heritage, Highland Council and the Crown Estate for a three year Highland Seashore Project running from January 2013 to December 2015 delivering multiple outputs.
4.6 Soil Biodiversity	Newsletter & website article, press release, presentation at 2011 Forum (Highland Biodiversity Partnership)	28 events were held by local biodiversity groups and partners as part of the Highland Soil Biodiversity Festival (May/June 2012), including a conference with speakers from around the UK.
5. Planning, Building & Infrastructure	Joint project to be agreed in 2010 (Highland Council / Transerv (now BEAR Scotland))	Following a successful trial in Caithness, Highland Council and BEAR Scotland are starting to incorporate wildflower friendly mowing regimes where operational constraints allow. Guidance has been produced for tractor drivers, and nearly 30 roadside sites have been identified by members of the public for their biodiversity value.
5.1 Road Verge Biodiversity Project		
5.2 Biodiversity & Planning Guidance & Training	European Protected Species Guidance Note launched early 2010, standard planning conditions produced with training for planners by end 2010 (Highland Council)	EPS Supplementary Guidance produced in 2011, formally adopted into the Highland-wide Development Plan in March 2013. Planners training on EPS and biodiversity has run annually since 2011. Case study document to be produced in Summer 2014.
6. Sustainable Use	7 lists agreed & guidance available by end 2010, training for potential applicants, agents & case officers in 2011 (Management Sub Group)	No progress, the Scotland Rural Development Programme is currently under review. The next stage of the SRDP is due to run from 2014-2020.
6.1 Local Habitats & Species Priorities Lists		
6.2 Developing Links Between Land Managers & Conservationists	7 meetings / guided walks & 7 articles in journals / newsletters over the 2011 / 2012 period (Highland Biodiversity Partnership)	No progress
6.3 Native Woodland Project	Project worked up and funding identified by 2012 (Management Sub Group)	No progress
6.4 Deer Management	Presentation & discussion at 2010 Partnership meeting (Deer Commission Scotland (now SNH))	No progress
6.5 Uncontrolled Muirburning	Presentation to 2011 Forum. Newsletter & website article, press release (Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service)	No progress

Appendix 1

Suggested Action	Target & Lead Partner	Progress since 2010
6.6 Wild Harvesting PhD	Potential universities to be contacted by end 2010 with a view to student starting work in 2011/12 (Management Sub Group)	No progress
7. Local Plant Sources 7.1 Highland Wildflower Nursery	Site identified by Spring 2010, Business Plan written by the end of 2010, Nursery started in 2011 (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (now The Conservation Volunteers))	Feasibility study undertaken showing the value of the proposal, the need for it and its great potential. TCV took on this project but, despite their best efforts, failed to secure funding. The Caithness Biodiversity Group operates a wildflower nursery with Key Community Supports in Thurso. Tree nurseries are operating at Little Assynt (Coigach & Assynt Living Landscape Project) and Kinrag (Highland Aspen Group).
8. Local Nature Reserves 8.1 LNRs	1 Local Nature Reserve (or equivalent e.g. community woodland) to be created per annum (Highland Biodiversity Partnership)	No progress, Merkinch remains the only LNR in Highland. Guidance and support is available from the Council Biodiversity Officers but designation relies on community groups wishing to designate their local area.
8.2 Community Gardens	List to be drawn up by end 2010, future Forum to focus on gardening for wildlife in communities (Highland Biodiversity Partnership)	No progress

Almost half of the projects proposed in the 2010 BAP (11/24, shaded green) have been delivered or are underway and making good progress, with key successes being made under the headings of 'Invasive Non-Native Species' and 'Awareness Raising'. Some progress has been made on a further four projects (shaded orange), with lack of funding and national guidance being the main blockages to action.

However, no progress has been made on nine of the 24 Highland BAP projects (shaded red), specifically under the headings of 'Sustainable Use of Habitats and Species', and 'Local Nature Reserves'. The latter issue is dependant on communities wishing to take it forward but the actions suggested under the 'Sustainable Use' heading need partnership action and support to make any progress.

**Highland Environment Forum:
Minutes of the meeting held on Tues 24 Sept 2013, Council Chamber, Dingwall**

Present

Cllr George Farlow - Chair	Highland Council
David Glass	Caithness Biodiversity Group
John Hutchison (VC)	Community Land Scotland
Jon Hollingdale	Community Woodlands Association
Alison Craig	Changeworks (Home Energy Scotland)
Giles Brockman	Forestry Commission Scotland
Ro Scott	Highland Biological Recording Group
Stephen Carr	Highland Council Chief Executives Unit
Daniel Greig	Highland Council Chief Executives Unit
George Brown	Highland Council Dive Unit/Marine Surveyor
George Hamilton	Highland Council Planning & Development Service
Janet Bromham	Highland Council Planning & Development Service
Vanessa Halhead	Highland Environment Network
Carol Masheter	Highland Environment Network
Scott Hay	Highlands, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service
Fran Lockhart (VC)	John Muir Trust
Ian Wilson	National Farmers Union
Jenny Wares	National Health Service Highland
Robert Dewar	National Trust Scotland
Kenna Chisholm	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Scotland
Alistair Duff	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
George Hogg	Scottish Natural Heritage
Debbie Greene	Scottish Natural Heritage
Patrick Baird	Scottish Wildlife Trust
Tom Forrest	Wester Ross Environmental Network
Reuben Brown	Wester Ross Environmental Network
Martin Wright (VC)	University of the Highlands & Islands

Apologies

Andy Ford	Cairngorms National Park Authority
Hamish Trench	Cairngorms National Park Authority
David Cameron	Community Land Scotland
Susan Walker	Crofting Commission
Martin Johnson	HIE Inner Moray Firth
Judi McDonald	Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Welcome & Introduction

Cllr George Farlow welcomed everyone to the meeting. Janet Bromham outlined that the purpose of this initial meeting was to discuss the potential role of Highland Environment Forum as an effective environmental delivery partnership. The Forum will be administered by the Highland Environmental Network for an initial period of one year, this support is jointly funded by Highland Council and SNH.

Keynote Presentation: Highland Marine Environment - George Brown, Seasearch, North Scotland / Highland Council Diving Unit

George presented a spectacular display of photographs he has taken in local coastal waters. The images represented the diverse and spectacular range of species that he sees while carrying out local water survey work for Seasearch.

Due to the range of sea bed including rock and mud flats sea lochs and deep waters Scottish coastal waters play home to a vast and beautiful range of warm and cold water species including: Large variety of Sponges, Worms & Sea slugs, Starfish, Crustaceans, Molluscs, Jellyfish, Hydroids, Corals and Anemones

While some species are on decline others, possibly due to global warming are becoming more prevalent or were not previously found in the area. However there is significant evidence of the devastation caused by dredging and pollution, creating waste lands which may never fully recover.

Cllr Farlow thanked George for the fascinating display. The question was raised as to how we can better raise awareness of what's in the Scottish waters and the great need to protect it. Marine Protected Areas were discussed as one potential option. Janet Bromham also mentioned the Highland Seashore Biodiversity Project a 3 year project to help to raise the awareness and enthuse people as to the wonderful wildlife we have around our coasts.

Background & Purpose of Highland Environment Forum - George Hogg, SNH

George Hogg outlined the potential role of the Forum playing a key role in delivering the [Highland Single Outcome Agreement](#). The SOA outlines how public sector bodies work together to serve the Highland people and wider community. The document sets out the joint commitments made by the [Highland Community Planning Partnership](#) and the Scottish Government to an agreed set of outcomes. 15 local outcomes have been agreed by the Community Planning Partnership based on the needs and issues identified in the Area. These are cast against the 15 national outcomes.

There are six national themes and a seventh theme of Environment has been added for the Highlands, to recognise the importance of our area. Environmental outcomes are:

- Manage sustainably the outstanding natural heritage of the Highlands
- To optimise the economic, health and learning benefits.
- To increase and develop the use of renewable energy.
- A carbon neutral Inverness in a low carbon Highland by 2025
- Reducing fuel poverty
- Supporting communities to be resilient to extreme weather events.
- Improving access to the outdoors.

It is also recognised that the Environment has a role to play in delivering many of the other outcomes.

Government are actively encouraging greater use of main stream budgets and resources rather than looking to new or specific funding. It was also highlighted that future public sector support and funding will require partners to align services and activities with the objectives of Single Outcome Agreement. This new approach reinforces the need for effective delivery partnerships.

Highland Environment Forum Governance - George Hamilton, Highland Council

George Hamilton presented the Governance paper circulated prior to the meeting. Members discussed the aims of the aims and principles of the Forum.

It was agreed that the aim of the Forum will be to work in partnership to support the Environment outcomes of the Single Outcome Agreement as well as other environmental topics/issues as agreed by the Forum members.

The Forum will report to the Community Planning Partnership. The Forum will meet twice annually which will be reviewed after a year, as will the effectiveness of the Forum and the

related Working Groups. Working Groups will meet more frequently and communication options will also be explored including utilising Highland Environmental Networks (HEN's) website and social media. Topics identified as work areas will be reported back to the Forum by the lead organisation.

It was recognised that not all members will have the capacity to play an active role on a Working Group however their input and expertise might be critical for a short period. Also, that potentially lead organisation/s could source funding for some key initiatives or projects. It was clarified the Council does not intend to be the lead of the Forum or the Working Groups though it was recognised that it would take the lead role on specific projects.

Governance Agreement: After discussion it was agreed to go forward with the Aims and Governance Agreement with the following amendments:

- Membership: Membership will also open to National Bodies and other non environmental bodies that share common aims or issues.
- Chairperson: Once the Forum is established members will elect a new Chairperson from the membership, the Chair will rotate on an annual basis.
- Working Groups: Non Forum members can be involved in working groups or projects. There will be two lead organisations for each working group.
- Voting: One vote per organisation/group. The minimum number of members required at a meeting to take a vote is 10.

Priorities for Future Work - George Hamilton, Highland Council

George presented the paper and members discussed a number of the priorities, which had been identified from previous Highland Environment Forum and Biodiversity Partnership meetings. It is anticipated that new priorities will emerge as the forum and its membership develops. The following actions were agreed:

Review of the Highland Climate Change Declaration: Highland Council Chief Executives Unit will lead on this working group. Members will include the Home Energy Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage and Wester Ross Environmental Network and Highland Environmental Network. Meetings will be arranged date TBC.

Biodiversity: Highland Biodiversity Action Plan Review (to include geodiversity). Working group members will include: Highland Council Planning & Development Service (lead), Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Scottish Wildlife Trust, Highland Biological Recording Group and the Caithness Biodiversity Group. Meetings will be arranged with partners in November.

Biosecurity: The Highland Invasive Species Forum will continue to meet annually to provide networking opportunities and exchange expertise. The next meeting takes place on 27th September 2013.

Wildlife Crime: Scottish Natural Heritage will lead on Wildlife Crime and report back on proposed actions or a way forward at the next meeting in March 2014.

Wildfire Reduction: Scott Hay, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service will report back to the March meeting on developments including the Scottish Wildfire Forum which meets on 21st October as well as a new Wildfire Manual which is currently being produced.

AOCB – none

Date of next meeting – The meeting will take place on 18th March 2014.

HIGHLAND BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE

Highland Environment Forum

9.30am – 4pm, Wednesday 26 February 2014
Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness



Appendix 3:

Highland Biodiversity Action Plan: What have we achieved so far and what are our priorities for the future?

PROGRAMME

9.30 am	Registration <i>Tea / coffee & biscuits</i>
10.00 am	Welcome and Introduction Cllr George Farlow, Highland Environment Forum Chairman Ian Ross, Scottish Natural Heritage Board Member & Conference Chairman
10.10 am	Highland Biodiversity Action Plan: Review of Progress 2006-2013 Ian Ross, Highland Biodiversity Partnership Chairman (2005-08)
10.25 am	Species Action Framework & Lessons Learned in Highland Martin Gaywood, Scottish Natural Heritage
10.45 am	Ecosystem Approach: Landscape-scale Projects in Highland <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coigach & Assynt Living Landscape Project Viv Halcrow, Scottish Wildlife Trust• Flow to the Future Project & World Heritage Site Application John Henderson, Peatland Partnership• Cairngorms Futurescapes Project Hebe Carus, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
11.30 am	Cairngorms Nature: Reviewing the Cairngorms Biodiversity Action Plan Andy Ford, Cairngorms National Park Authority
11.45 am	Questions & Answers
12.15 pm	Lunch
1.00 pm	Introduction to Afternoon Session Ian Ross
1.05 pm	Highland Seashore Biodiversity Project Janet Ullman, Seashore Project Co-ordinator
1.20 pm	Scottish Wildcat Project Jenny Bryce, Scottish Natural Heritage
1.35 pm	Invasive Plants John Parrott, Coille Alba
1.50 pm	Questions & Answers
2.00 pm	Workshop Session: Introduction Janet Bromham, Highland Council <i>Tea / coffee to take to workshops</i>
2.15 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainable Habitat Management (Gillian McKnight, Scottish Agricultural College / Janet Bromham, Highland Council)• Local Biodiversity Projects (David Glass, Caithness Biodiversity Group / Carol Masheter, Highland Environment Network)• Highland Habitats & Species Projects (Ro Scott, Scottish Natural Heritage / Jonathan Willet, Highland Council)
3.30 pm	Workshop Feedback & Summary of main points for Highland BAP (2014-2020) Ian Ross & Workshop Representatives
3.50 pm	Conclusions and Launch of Highland BAP (2014-2020) Consultation Ian Ross
4.00 pm	Close