

# Pentland Hills Regional Park Consultative Forum

## Notice of Meeting and Agenda

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Friday 24 August 2012, at 10.00 am  
in Swanston Golf Club, 111 Swanston Road, Edinburgh.

- 1 **Order of Business** - Including any notices of motion and any other items of business submitted as urgent for consideration at the meeting.
- 2 **Declaration of Interests** - Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.
- 3 **Welcome and Introductions**
- 4 **Minutes –**
  - 4.1 **Pentland Hills Regional Park Consultative Forum of 18 November 2011** (circulated) - for approval as a correct record
  - 4.2 **Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee of 16 December 2011, 16 March 2012 and 26 July 2012 (circulated)** – for information
- 5 **Annual Report 2011/12** (available on [www.pentlandhills.org](http://www.pentlandhills.org))  
- the Regional Park Manager will provide an overview on Annual Report
- 6 **Local Authority Funding Contributions and Revised Operating Arrangements for Regional Park** – the Parks and Greenspace Manager to update on arrangements for 2012/13  
(Report to Pentland Hills Joint Committee of 16 March 2012, for background information (circulated))
- 7 **Social Return on Investment Study** – the Regional Park Manager will report  
(Report to Pentland Hills Joint Committee of 26 July 2012, for information (circulated))  
  
(K Carrick, consultant for study, invited to meeting to facilitate a consultation workshop.)
- 8 **Events Management** - M Duncan (Access Officer, City of Edinburgh Council) will give an outline of proposals for events management.

- 9 Review of Consultative Forum Membership and Consultative Arrangements** - to invite members to discuss possible revisions to membership and interaction between the Joint Committee and Consultative Forum – report by the Parks and Greenspace Manager (circulated)
- 10 Member Updates** - opportunity for members to update the Consultative Forum, if any relevant matters arising from their own organisation/interests.

**Carol Campbell,**  
Acting Head of Legal and Administration Services, CEC, Clerk

Notes:

- (1) If you have any questions about the agenda or meeting arrangements, please contact D Emerson, Committee Services, City of Edinburgh Council, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1YJ; 0131 529 4230 e-mail [david.emerson@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:david.emerson@edinburgh.gov.uk) .
- (2) A copy of the agenda and papers for this meeting will be available for inspection at the reception office, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh. Copies will also be available at the meeting.
- (3) The agenda, minutes and public reports for this meeting can be viewed online by going to [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/cpol](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/cpol). Members and officers of the City of Edinburgh Council can also view them by going to the Council intranet home page and clicking on Committee Business.

## PENTLAND HILLS REGIONAL PARK CONSULTATIVE FORUM

### Membership:-

<i>Regional Park Joint Committee members :-</i>	
<b>City of Edinburgh Council</b>	Councillors Bill Henderson (Chair), Dominic Heslop and David Walker
<b>Midlothian Council</b>	Councillors Lisa Beattie, Jim Bryant, and Russell Imrie.
<b>West Lothian Council</b>	Councillor Frank Tonner
<b>Scottish Water</b>	Alan Fail
<b>Scottish Natural Heritage</b>	John O'Keefe

<i>Consultative Forum:-</i>	
<b>Farming</b>	Robert Barr (NFU)
<b>Pentland Produce</b>	Alex Moir
<b>Landowning</b>	Alastair Salvesen (Scottish Rural Property and Business Association)
<b>Ministry of Defence Estates</b>	Maj. (Ret.) K Torp-Petersen
<b>Scottish Wildlife Trust</b>	Ken Knowles
<b>Friends of the Pentlands</b>	John Stirling
<b>Fairmilehead Community Council</b>	Alison Elfick
<b>Kirknewton Community Council</b>	Caroline Gerrard
<b>Damhead Community Council</b>	Natalie Frankish
<b>Harperrig Management Group</b>	Graham Hamilton
<b>Walkers</b>	Euan Scroggie
<b>British Horse Society</b>	Constance Newbold
<b>Scottish Hill Runners</b>	Keith Burns
<b>Mountain Biking</b>	Jim Riach (Cycling Scotland)
<b>Disabled Users</b>	Ingrid Holmes-Smith (Thistle Foundation)
<b>Scottish Angling Society</b>	(vacant)
<b>Water Sports</b>	Cliff Smith (Scottish Canoe Association)
<b>Orienteering</b>	Janet Clark (Edinburgh Southern Orienteering Club)
<b>Scottish Water</b>	Alan Fail
<b>Scottish Natural Heritage</b>	John O'Keefe
<b>Sport Scotland</b>	Campbell Gerrard
<b>Historic Scotland (Archaeology)</b>	Deirdre Cameron
<b>Economic/Rural Development (Scottish Executive)</b>	Jim Mason
<b>Edinburgh and Lothians Tourist Board</b>	Sinead Feltoe
<b>Balerno Village Trust</b>	Allan Laing
<b>Regional Park Manager</b>	A McGregor
<b>City of Edinburgh Council</b>	K Logie (officer)
<b>Midlothian Council</b>	J Kinch(officer)
<b>West Lothian Council</b>	C Alcorn (officer)



## Committee Minutes

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# **Pentland Hills Regional Park Consultative Forum**

## **Bonaly Scout Hall, Edinburgh on 18 November 2011**

### **Present:-**

**The City of Edinburgh Council** – Councillors C Keir (Convener) and Paisley.

**West Lothian Council** – Councillor Carl John.

**Farming** – Bob Barr.

**Damhead Community Council** – Natalie Frankish.

**Kirknewton Community Council** – Caroline Gerrard.

**Harperrig Management Group** – Graeme Hamilton.

**Friends of the Pentlands** – John Stirling.

**Ministry of Defence Estates** – Major K Torp-Petersen

**Balerno Village Trust** – Alan Laing.

**Sportscotland** – Campbell Gerrard.

**Scottish Wildlife Trust** – Ken Knowles.

**Landowning** – Scott Patterson.

**In Attendance:-** Alan McGregor, (Regional Park Manager); Susan Falconer, Martin Duncan, Sara Rasmussen (Volunteer) (Pentland Hills RP Ranger Service); Ogo Onwuchekwa, Janice Long and Grant Ballantyne (Midlothian Council), Chris Alcorn (West Lothian Council), Keith Logie (City of Edinburgh Council) and David Emerson (City of Edinburgh Council).

## **1 Minutes –**

- 1.1 **Pentland Hills Regional Park Consultative Forum of 22 October 2010** – the minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record.

- 1.2 **Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee of 14 January 2011** – the minutes of the meeting were noted.

## **2 Midlothian Snowsport Centre – Draft Proposals**

Midlothian Council had prepared a 'stage one planning brief' to allow development of a 'Snowsport centre' at Hillend Ski Centre, the project being eligible for capital funding of £553,000 from SportsScotland and further monies through the Scottish Government's 'active schools programme'. The Council wished to consult on how this might impact on the Ski Centre and the Hillend Country Park. They were proposing to allow complementary commercial development, in order to make the scheme economically viable.

Olga Onwuchekwa, Commercial Services, explained the vision for improving the sports facility centre in terms of upgrading the sports facilities. It was intended to develop the centre to a wider extent, including provision for overnight accommodation, and to develop it as a 'sports destination'. She hoped that it would attract people to the region and that it would perhaps build upon other attractions of the Pentland Hills.

Janice Long, Planning Manager, explained the areas of the park under consideration for additional development (which could include an hotel and/or chalet type accommodation) and the planning principles and policies to apply. The sensitivity of the site was already recognised in existing planning designations, some of the land being Green Belt, but the Local Plan at the same time also recognised a need for potential development to improve Hillend Ski Centre which otherwise was unlikely to be economic to maintain. Studies had been made relative to 'screening' – the local authority had still to determine whether a strategic environmental assessment was required for the site.

During discussion, Bob Barr (Farming) indicated his reservations regarding the Pentland Hills being promoted for recreation purposes at a time when the park authority support to manage visitor use was in decline; the concept of the Regional Park, when established, always envisaged an appropriate level of support through the Ranger Service. He would be concerned were visitor use of the wider area to be encouraged or promoted by the local authority in connection with this development without any corresponding increase in their support for the Regional Park. Olga Onwuchekwa, in reply, indicated that she was conscious of this and that the whole issue of management of visitors, and whether additional pressure would be brought to other areas of the Regional Park, would need to be considered carefully once any development intentions were better known.

Campbell Gerrard (SportScotland) hoped that any ancillary development to be considered would be seen to encourage use of the Ski centre facilities and draw in visitors for activity that was related to sports use of the facilities: other development such as mountain biking, BMX and curling, could perhaps be considered. Officers of Midlothian Council asked questions from other members

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regarding the extent of additional development to be allowed; any additional provisions of retail, restaurant, etc, development were to be ancillary to the Snowsport centre use.

**Decision**

To note the points made in connection with the stage-one draft development brief, these to be taken into consideration by Midlothian Council, and that stakeholders were to be consulted by the Council.

(Reference – report by Parks and Greenspace Manager, 22 July 2011, submitted)

### **3 Paths Condition and Use**

Bob Barr (Farming) had asked that the condition of footpaths be raised, he being concerned that in some places these were being badly cut up or eroded. He was concerned in particular at the effects of mountain biking and horse-riding on the ground in wet weather.

The Regional Park Manager gave a presentation to illustrate some of the areas of concern on footpaths, and the types of damage that could occur from use by walkers, bikers, horse riding, and also that from standard agricultural use e.g. movements of cattle. The Rangers explained ongoing footpath maintenance work and educational activity directed at park users (leaflets, way-marking, information boards and contact with user groups). Some good progress was being made via the enlisting of help from user groups such as the mountain bikers, plus the established help on hand from Friends of the Pentlands. Whilst there was scope for more volunteer assistance, it could sometimes be expensive work, requiring major funding.

Members discussed the question of whether there should be restrictions on pathway use at certain time of the year or in certain weather conditions – a lot of the damage, as noted by the farmers, occurred during wet spells or in winter type conditions. There was currently a debate, nationally, about the intentions of the Outdoor Access Code and rights of landowners to protect property from damage: there was some evidence now to suggest that landowners were within their rights to take reasonable measures to safeguard land from damage.

Major Torp Petersen reported on a request, currently under consideration by the MoD, from the British Horse-riding Society for further access to routes at Dreghorn. He had some concerns about the matter in general i.e. the pressures to allow access against operational needs on Ministry of Defence land; the MoD Access Officer would be in consultation with the Regional Park on this matter.

**Decision**

To note that the Regional Park Manager would report further what action the park authority might be able to take, consistent with Access Rights, with a view to reducing damage or inappropriate use of paths in sensitive areas.

(Reference – Regional Park Manager’s operational report, 18 November 2011, submitted)

#### **4 Car Parking Charges**

Following the Joint Committee’s decision in principle to impose car parking charges at Threipmuir, Harlaw, Bonaly and Flotterstone, reports were being submitted to Edinburgh and Midlothian Council’s for permission to commence Traffic Regulation Orders to advertise the fact. There would be provision for objections, meaning that, if approved, the charges could not be introduced until 2013 at the earliest.

##### **Decision**

The information was noted.

(Reference – Regional Park Manager’s operational report, 18 November 2011, submitted)

#### **5 Dog Fouling Initiative/Green Dog Walkers Scheme**

The Ranger Service gave a presentation on initiatives being trialled at Harlaw, particularly around the car park area, to curb the nuisance of dog fouling. The scheme was based on more publicity being given to incidents of dog fouling and encouragement to owners to clean up behind their dogs. The exercise was being supported by the Environmental Warden Service.

As a longer term approach, a Green Dog Walkers Scheme was being introduced with the Rangers working with regular dog walkers to encourage responsible dog walking through peer group pressure and positive role model. Balerno Community Council was also keen to help out with the initiative. The Regional Park Manager also reported that the City of Edinburgh Council was reviewing its rules in regard to public park areas, with a tougher line to be taken.

Major Torp Petersen said that commercial dog walking was becoming an issue on MoD land: he felt that legislation was now necessary in order to be able to regulate the activity. Councillor Carl John suggested that the local ‘Connect’ magazine be used to publicise the measures.

##### **Decision**

To note the initiatives being taken by the Ranger Service.

(Reference – Regional Park Manager’s operational report, 18 November 2011, submitted)

## 6 Access Routes to the Regional Park

Under the study of improvement of access routes into the Pentlands, as carried out under the Central Scotland Green Network Development, four routes had been identified as having the potential for development i.e.

- Water of Leith to Bonaly Country Park
- Redford Road to Bonaly Country Park
- Bush Estate to Flotterstone
- Penicuik to Kirk Road End
- Selm Muir Wood to Little Vantage

The Regional Park authority was not responsible for funding or implementation of any of these plans – rather it would be up to any community group or organisation to apply – but the authority would be prepared to give support so far as was possible.

### **Decision**

To note the progress on the study.

(Reference – Regional Park Manager's operational report, 18 November 2011, submitted)

## 7 Memorial Request – Black Springs

In regard to permissions for memorial requests, the Regional Park Manager asked for the Committee's views on 'seating perches' proposed to be sited near to the Black Springs footpath.

Members were in agreement that suitably designed perches would be consistent with policy at this location in the Pentland Hills. **Noted.**

## 8 Protected Areas Review

The criteria for International Union of Nature Conservation category 5 'Protected Area Status' was being altered. The Regional Park Manager reported that, in association with other Regional Parks, he was working to put forward a case to try to retain the status for the Pentland Hills. The criteria was now tilted more towards 'nature conservation' than landscape protection.

Ken Knowles (Scottish Wildlife Trust) indicated his willingness to assist in this matter.

### **Decision**

To note the information.

(Reference – Regional Park Manager’s operational report, 18 November 2011, submitted)

## **9 Regional Park Funding and Service Review**

Keith Logie (Parks Development Manager) gave a resume of expected reductions in the budget available for parks in Edinburgh, against a background of decreased public sector funding.

The City of Edinburgh Council was now meeting the majority of the funding of the Regional Park, its proportion of spending having been increased greatly over the last three years to 73.6%, as a result of the loss of SNH funding support and Midlothian Council having reduced its contribution. It was inevitable that there would be a reduction in the service available through the Regional Park. At the moment, a post of senior Ranger, was not being filled. He would work with the Regional Park Manager on a service review.

Mr R Barr said that he noted the constraints but felt that the Regional Park needed to acknowledge its responsibilities in terms of the impact of its activities on landowners and farmers and the support implicit in the decision by public authorities to designate the area as a Regional Park in 1984.

### **Decision**

To note the position.

(Reference – Regional Park Manager’s operational report, 18 November 2011, submitted)

## **10 Wind Farm Proposals in the Pentlands**

John Stirling (Friends of the Pentlands) said that he was currently attending a public inquiry into the proposals for a wind farm at Harlawhead, as had been refused planning permission by West Lothian Council. Friends of the Pentlands were opposed to the proposals. He said that he had found it surprising that the Regional Park authority had not offered any objections, yet West Lothian Council had decided to refuse planning permission.

Officers responded to the question raised: essentially the Park Authority was a consultee in such matters and could only offer a view to the planning authority, as channelled through the Regional Park Manager. In general, however, officers could review the matter of how best a co-ordinated approach of planning advice could be supplied to the Joint Committee from the separate planning authorities that were responsible for the Regional Park.

### **Decision**

To note the information.

(Reference – Regional Park Manager's operational report, 18 November 2011, submitted)

## **11 Members Updates**

### **11.1 Balerno Village Trust – Micro-Hydro Scheme**

Alan Laing gave an update on the micro-hydro scheme being progressed by the Trust; it was now at the stage of application for planning permission. Noted.

### **11.2 Sportscotland – Mountain Biking Trail**

Campbell Gerrard reported on exploratory talks by the organisers to hold a World Cup mountain bike marathon event in the Regional Park. Sportscotland could be interested in support if it led to a more long term trail for mountain biking. The Regional Park Manager confirmed that he had had initial discussions with the organisers; whether the matter progressed would depend on funding for trail upgradings, and further consultations – the matter was still at a very provisional stage. Noted.

## **12 Date of Next Meeting**

Provisional date set for Friday 17 February 2012, at 10.00 a.m.

## Committee Minutes

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# **Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee**

**Regional Park Headquarters, Biggar Road, Edinburgh  
16 March 2012**

### **Present:-**

#### **Members –**

**City of Edinburgh Council** – Councillors Keir (Convener), Hart and Paisley.

**Midlothian Council** – Councillors Imrie and Thacker.

**West Lothian Council** – Councillor Carl John.

**Scottish Water** – A Fail.

**Scottish Natural Heritage** – J Winning.

### **In Attendance:-**

A McGregor (Regional Park Manager), K Logie, (City of Edinburgh Council), C Alcorn (West Lothian Council), J Kinch (Midlothian Council) and B Ritchie (City of Edinburgh Council).

Apologies

Councillor Thompson.

## **1 Minutes**

### **Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee of 16 December 2011**

The minute of meeting of the Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee of 16 December 2011 was approved as a correct record.

## **2 Local Authority Funding Contributions and Revised Operating Arrangements – 2012/2013**

The Regional Park Manager gave an update on the revenue funding contributions and revised operating arrangements for the Regional Park in 2012/2013. The effect of this would be to provide a balanced budget and give the Regional Park service a more sustainable foundation. From 2012/2013, the service provided in each local authority area would relate more closely to the respective funding contributions made.

With regard to the budgetary position, the contributions were as follows:

- Scottish Water (formally East of Scotland Water) was not party to the Minute of Agreement but had made a fixed annual financial contribution of £10,000 since the previous local government re-organisation 1996.
- In 2009/2010 after suspending its notice to withdraw from the Regional Park, Midlothian Council reduced its annual contribution to £52,600 (index linked).
- For 2012/2013, Midlothian Council's contribution would be £58,102.
- For 2012/2013, West Lothian Council had agreed to increase its financial contribution to £15,140 and to index link contributions for subsequent years.
- For 2012/2013, Scottish Water's contributions would remain at £10,000.

The City of Edinburgh Council, as the Managing Authority for the Regional Park would therefore receive a total funding contribution of £94,342 towards the Regional Park Budget for 2012/2013.

### **Decision**

- 1) To note the revised budgetary and operating arrangements for 2012/2013.
- 2) To request that the governance and committee arrangements for the Regional Park be reviewed in 2012/2013 and that proposals were presented to the Joint Committee for further consideration.)

(Reference – report by the Park and Greenspace Manager, submitted.)

### **3 Parks and Reserves – Places Managed for People and Nature: Scottish Natural Heritage Policy Statement**

The Joint Committee had previously considered a draft Scottish Natural Heritage Policy on Places Managed for People and Nature and noted the consultation response provided by the Regional Park Manager.

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) had prepared a finalised policy statement on parks, reserves and other places managed jointly for people and nature and about the implications for the Pentland Hills Regional Park.

Mrs J Winning (SNH) provided details of the statement and of possible implications for the Regional Park.

Key outcomes sought by the policy were as follows:

- Provision of places managed for people and nature that met local and national needs.
- Regular usage from all walks of life to boost the economy and support local skills and jobs.
- Good maintenance and management of the landscape, wildlife and visitor facilities.
- These places to be part of a strategic approach to increase participation and to promote health and sustainable tourism.
- Sufficient and targeted funding to support this.

#### **Decision**

- 1) To note the finalised Scottish Natural Heritage Policy Statement on Parks and Reserves – Places Managed for People and Nature.
- 2) To note the contribution that the Regional Park could make to meeting the Policy objectives.

(Reference – Pentlands Regional Park Joint Committee 14 January 2011 (item 5); report by Parks and Greenspace Manager, submitted.)

### **4 Regional Park Manager's Report**

The Regional Park Manager gave an update on operational matters. He referred in particular to the January storm event, a firearms incident, a successful ice rescue (whereby a dog was rescued) and activities and events in

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16 March 2012

2012. Other items included commercial dog walking, Hillend Country Park, sheep lambing in 2012, staff changes and service re-organisation and the proposed micro-renewable energy scheme at Harlaw.

Councillor Keir indicated that he thought that the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Regional Park should be in some way commemorated.

**Decision**

- 1) To note the contents of the Regional Park Manager's report.
- 2) The Regional Park Manager to consider an appropriate way to commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Pentlands Hills Regional Park.

(Reference – report by the Parks and Greenspace Manager, submitted.)

## **5 Car Park Charges Update**

The Joint Committee had previously agreed in principle to the introduction of car parking charges at the four sites of Threipmuir, Harlaw, Bonaly and Flotterstone, following consideration of the results of an informal consultation exercise. The Joint Committee had requested that papers be presented to appropriate Committees of City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) and Midlothian Council recommending that the required Traffic Regulation Order process be initiated. Officers of the City of Edinburgh Council reported this to the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee. The matter was then referred to full Council.

On 22 December 2011, the City of Edinburgh Council approved the initiation of the a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process for Threipmuir, Harlaw and Bonaly (CEC owned sites) and noted that Midlothian Council had not yet made a decision regarding Flotterstone.

Midlothian Council's Transportation Policy Officers had since considered the proposal in detail and had raised a number of fundamental concerns about its application to the Flotterstone Site. These were principally:

- Displacement of parking onto the A702 trunk road and associated road safety issues (confirmed by Bear Scotland).
- Displacement onto adjacent private parking.
- Increased congestion on the Lower Glen Road leading to reduced pedestrian safety and blockage for residential access and emergency vehicles.

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- Difficulty with providing effective enforcement measures.

For technical reasons, therefore, Midlothian Transportation Officers would not be recommending that a TRO was moved for Flotterstone. Estimated charges from Flotterstone represented 39% of the total estimated income from the scheme.

The Regional Park Manager concluded that it would not now be viable to proceed with the whole scheme in view of Midlothian's concerns and recommended that the Joint Committee reported this to the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee that TRO's for the Edinburgh site should not be pursued.

### **Decision**

- 1) To note that Midlothian Council would not be moving a TRO for Flotterstone.
- 2) To note that VAT would apply to the off street parking charges proposed.
- 3) To note that the scheme as proposed was no longer viable and recommend that a further report be made to City of Edinburgh Council's Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee, recommending that TRO's for the Edinburgh sites were not pursued.
- 4) The Regional Park Manger to investigate the use of donation boxes as part of the review the existing donation scheme for the Regional Park.
- 5) The Regional Park Manager to update the consultees for the proposed parking charges on the Joint Committee's decision.

(References – Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee 16 December 2011 (item 5): report by the Parks and Greenspace Manager, submitted.)

## **6 Fauch Hill Wind Farm - Presentation**

A planning application had been submitted by Fauch Hill Sustainable Energy (FHSE) to the Scottish Government for permission to construct and operate a proposed wind farm at Fauch Hill. The Regional Park Authority had been consulted on the matter by the Scottish Government and invited to submit a response.

The Regional Park Manger reported on the implications for the Regional Park, having regard to local planning policy and the stated aims of the Regional Park. Copies of the Environmental Statement (non technical summary), provided by the applicant were attached to the report.

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He indicated that the application for Fauch Hill was different from local planning matters in five distinct ways:

- The application to be determined by the Scottish Ministers.
- The Regional Park had been invited by the Scottish Government to make a representation.
- It was a large scale proposal immediately on the Regional Park boundary with significant landscape impacts.
- The proposed scheme clearly conflicted with local planning policy which sought to protect the landscape quality of the Regional Park and the wider Pentland Hills range.
- The scheme conflicted with the aims of the Regional Park.

The nature of wind farm developments meant that significant adverse effects could be anticipated, even if it was the case with this proposal, design and mitigation measures were incorporated. The proposal therefore fundamentally conflicted with the principal aims of the Regional Park and the local planning policy intended to protect its surrounding landscape.

The proposed scheme would however contribute to national targets for renewable energy, generate employment and provide a benefits package for investment in the local community. Other benefits included new amenity woodland and new access opportunities within the site and linking to the locality, including the Regional Park. Access proposals were described in a recreational development plan produced in December 2011 by Oatridge College on behalf of FHSE Ltd

Public enjoyment of the Regional Park was based on its essential character; one largely defined by its high quality landscape and opportunities for its enjoyment.

The Regional Park Manager proposed a draft response from the Park Manager concluding that that the Regional Park was not favour of the proposed wind farm at Fauch Hill.

Members discussed the proposals and the draft response from the Regional Park Manager.

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**Decision**

To endorse the draft consultation response from the Regional Park Manager that the Joint Committee was not in favour of the proposed wind farm at Fauch Hill and to submit these views to the Scottish Executive.

(References – Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee 16 December 2011 (item 2); report by the Parks and Greenspace Manager, submitted.)

**Declaration of Interest**

Councillor Carl John (West Lothian Council) declared a non-financial interest in the above item, as a member of the Planning Committee for West Lothian and a local ward member, and he took no part in the proceedings.

**7 Valedictory**

The Convener thanked the members and officers for their contribution to the work of the Joint Committee.

**8 Date of Next Meeting**

To be arranged following local government elections on 3 May 2012.

## Committee Minutes

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### **Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee**

**Regional Park Headquarters, Biggar Road, Edinburgh  
16 December 2011**

**Present:-**

**Members –**

**City of Edinburgh Council –** Councillors Keir and Paisley.

**West Lothian Council –** Councillor John.

**Scottish Natural Heritage –** J Winning.

**In Attendance:-**

A McGregor (Regional Park Manager), D Jamieson (City of Edinburgh Council), C Alcorn and C Norman (West Lothian Council), J Cook (Midlothian Council) and D Emerson (City of Edinburgh Council).

## **1 Minutes**

### **1.1 Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee of 22 July 2011**

The minute of meeting of the Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee of 22 July 2011 was approved as a correct record.

### **1.2 Pentland Hills Regional Park Consultative Forum of 18 November 2011**

The minute of meeting of the Pentland Hills Regional Park Consultative Forum of 18 November was noted.

## **2 Fauch Hill – Forthcoming Planning Application for Wind Farm**

The Committee agreed to hear a presentation on behalf of Fauch Hill Sustainable Energy regarding their intention to apply to the Scottish Government for planning permission to construct a wind farm at Fauch Hill, near Harperrig Reservoir, within West Lothian, the site being close to the Regional Park boundary. The company was in the process of consulting on the pre-application proposals. The application was of such a scale that it required to be considered by the Scottish Government under 'Section 36' procedures; West Lothian Council would be a statutory consultee; the Regional Park authority was also likely to be formally consulted, either directly by the planning authority or through West Lothian Council.

The representatives explained that the proposals as originally envisaged were for 43 turbines but which, after consultations, had been reduced to 23 turbines. The heights of turbines had also been reduced, to 125 metres. The plan represented a major investment of £200 million. They saw the site being developed as a 'gateway' to the Pentland Hills, with a hub of core paths, and involving facilities for visitors and including some retail elements. It was to be a recreational facility, based on principles of community involvement and sustainability. A Liaison Group had been set up with local interests and there was a good deal of local support from Community Councils for the concept. The company planned to work with Oatridge College in terms of realising skills development for young people. Following completion, they intended to establish a Community Trust which would realise in the order of £276,000 per annum over 25 years, to be applied as local community benefit for the area.

The company was now at the stage of submitting a formal application, having carried out initial consultations with interest groups. The application would require a strategic environmental assessment, and other extensive consultations with statutory consultees and other agencies.

The representatives answered a number of questions from members. Mr C Norman, Head of Development Control, West Lothian Council, was present and explained procedures likely to be required once a formal application had been submitted. The proposals would involve a fairly major examination of issues by the local authority and other statutory consultees. The plans were likely to have a major impact on the Regional Park, the site lying on or close to the boundaries, and the Joint Committee would be consulted.

### **Decision**

To note the presentation and the company's intention to submit an application for planning permission and on which the Regional Park authority would be consulted.

(Reference – publicity brochure by FESE, submitted; previous report by Regional Park Manager, submitted.)

## **3 International Union for the Conservation of Nature – UK Protected Area Review**

An update was given of the implications for the Pentland Hills Regional Park of an International Union for the Conservation of Nature review of 'protected area designations'. Currently, the Regional Park was listed with Category 5 protected area status but there was a risk that this could be lost under the new criteria which were now to be tilted towards 'nature conservation'. Any loss of designation could affect the perception of the general status of a Regional Park, as a protected area.

The Regional Park Manager was therefore working with officers in Scotland's other regional parks and Scottish Natural Heritage, in order to make a case to the International Union for retention of the protected area status.

### **Decision**

To note the report and receive a further update once the outcome of the Regional Park's submission was known.

(Reference – report by Parks and Greenspace Manager, submitted.)

## **4 Scottish Borders Council – Landscapes Designation Review**

Since the 1960s, the entire Pentland Hills range had been designated as an Area of Great Landscape Value. Following new national guidance, Scottish local authorities were to review their landscape designations to achieve a greater consistency in approach and all five authorities involved in the Park were currently at different stages of that process.

Scottish Borders Council was of the initial view, in its consultation paper, that the Pentland Hills would not qualify, raising the possibility that different parts of the Pentlands might have different levels of landscape protection over the range. As the Scottish Borders area adjoined the Regional Park, there could be implications for the status of the landscape protections within the Park. The Regional Park Manager had prepared a draft response on behalf of the

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16 December 2011

authority, arguing the need for a consistency of approach and the cross-boundary issues (allowance for which was included in the planning guidance); the other planning authorities were supportive and taking a similar approach.

**Decision**

- 1) To note the response by the Regional Park Manager.
- 2) To request an updated report once the outcome of the consultation exercise was known.

(Reference – report by the Parks and Greenspace Manager, submitted.)

## **5 Car Park Charges – Update**

The Regional Park Manager reported on progress with the proposal to introduce car parking charges at four car parks in the Regional Park.

The Transport Infrastructure and Environment Committee had initially considered a report on the need for Traffic Regulation Orders to be promoted but had asked that the report should be referred to the full Council for decision, there having been some concerns raised regarding parking over-spill issues and other matters: the matter was due to be considered by the Council at its meeting in December 2011. Midlothian Council was also due to consider a report from its officers on the principle (in respect of Flotterstone car park).

The effect was that, were the scheme was approved by the Councils, it would not be possible to introduce in 2012, given the times allowed for public consultations on the Traffic Regulation Orders, and it would be 2013 or later before introduced.

**Decision**

To note the position.

(Reference – report by the Regional Park Manager, submitted.)

## **6 Regional Park Budget 2012/13**

The Parks and Greenspace Manager, City of Edinburgh Council, gave a verbal update on the budget for 2012/13 and the negotiations held with the partner authorities. The proportion of support for the Regional Park being provided by the City of Edinburgh had increased greatly in recent years and could not be sustained by the Council in future years; against this background, negotiations were continuing with the partner authorities. The level of spending also perhaps

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16 December 2011

under-estimated the level of support provided in officer time not accounted for in the budget figure, and other 'below the line' costs in supporting the Regional Park.

As an aid to budget modelling and service for 2012/13, the Regional Park Manager had analysed the current service level agreements for the local authorities, identifying in detail the items of work and time commitments by the Park authority and with proposals for what could be provided by the authority next year. This would provide greater transparency and help the partners to focus on the service being given to their particular local authority areas. Next year would require reductions in certain areas, and therefore discussions would be needed on what levels of support could be sustained; indications were given in his paper in areas where cut-backs or increased local authority contributions necessary.

Mrs J Winning (SNH) referred to their being scope for possible access to grants for special project work in the Regional Park, for instance involving the use of volunteers.

### **Decision**

To note the position and that officers were continuing to negotiate on the budget for 2012/13.

## **7 Date of Next Meeting**

Friday 9 March 2012, at 10.00 am.

The Clerk was also asked to draw up a possible schedule of meetings for the next 12-month period.

## Committee Minutes

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# **Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee**

**Regional Park Headquarters, Biggar Road, Edinburgh  
26 July 2012**

**Present:-**

**Members:-**

**City of Edinburgh Council** – Councillors Henderson and Walker.

**Midlothian Council** – Councillor Imrie.

**West Lothian Council** – Councillor Toner.

**Scottish Natural Heritage** – J O’Keefe (substituting for J Winning)

**Scottish Water** – A Fail

**In Attendance:-**

A McGregor (Regional Park Manager); G O’Connor (Midlothian Council), C Alcorn (West Lothian Council) and D Emerson (City of Edinburgh Council).

## **1 Appointment of Convener and Vice-Convener**

The Joint Committee made appointments as follows –

Convener - Councillor Henderson (City of Edinburgh Council)

Vice-Convener - Councillor Heslop (City of Edinburgh Council)

## **2 Minutes – Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee of 16 March 2012**

The minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record.

## **2 Introduction to Pentland Hills Regional Park**

Following a welcome to members by the Convener, the Regional Park Manager was invited to give a background report to the Regional Park, explaining its aims, the governance arrangements, the Ranger Service and funding issues.

### **Decision**

To note the background report.

(Reference – report by Parks and Greenspace Manager, 26 July 2012, submitted.)

## **3 Social Return on Investment Study**

The City of Edinburgh Council intended to undertake a 'Social Return on Investment' study relative to the Regional Park. The exercise was intended to attempt to quantify and value the contribution to social welfare of local communities and stakeholders of the services provided through the Regional Park authority. The Council had allocated £6000 towards the cost of the study.

The Convener then invited K Carrick, from Greenspace Scotland, as consultant, to explain further the methodology of the study and the exercises involved, including the methods of attribute monetary values to the social benefits to individuals and stakeholders, to arrive at a 'ratio' of investment to return. The consultations with stakeholders would include landowners, farmers, community and user groups and visitors to the Park, to ascertain their expectations and their views as to what had been realised through the Regional Park.

The findings would be reported to the Joint Committee.

### **Decision**

To note the study and that the outcome would be reported to the Joint Committee in due course.

(Reference – report by the Parks and Greenspace Manager, 26 July 2012, submitted)

## **4 Review of Governance and Consultative Mechanisms**

The Parks and Greenspace Manager submitted a report proposing that the governance arrangements for the Regional Park be streamlined, in keeping with changes in the operation and funding of the Regional Park over recent years. In terms of committee meetings, he considered that there was duplication between

Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee  
22 July 2011

the business on agendas for the Joint Committee and the Consultative Forum and that it would be preferable for the two bodies to meet at the same time, as one body, in a re-formed 'Pentlands Partnership'. He also suggested that the representation on the Consultative Forum required to be reviewed, in terms of stakeholders and user groups.

It was also suggested that the frequency of inter-authority officer meetings be reduced, and also certain other meetings involving stakeholders.

Following discussion, members were of the view that in total the number of meetings should be reduced, commensurate with the reduced resources. They also agreed that all members of the Joint Committee should attend the Consultative Forum to discuss items together with stakeholders; however the Joint Committee should remain as a separate body of elected members and partner funders, as currently constituted.

### **Decision**

To agree –

1. that the Joint Committee should remain as currently constituted;
2. that the Joint Committee members be included in the Consultative Forum membership, in order that the two groups meet together to discuss forthcoming items of business, with a view to recommendations, or views expressed for the following consideration and final decision by the Joint Committee.
3. that meetings be reduced to 4 in total over a year, with two meetings of the Consultative Committee and two meetings of the Joint Committee per annum;
5. that a programme of meetings be arranged by the Clerk in consultation with the Convener, for the next year, with the Joint Committee to be scheduled to meet three weeks after a meeting of the Consultative Forum.
6. that the matter of representation on the Consultative Forum be referred to its next meeting on 24 August 2012, for views, with the Regional Park Manager authorised to implement any proposed changes, and
7. that the Parks and Greenspace Manager report to the next meeting of the Joint Committee on any finalised governance arrangements or required revisions to the Minute of Agreement.

(Reference – report by Parks and Greenspace Manager, 22 July 2011, submitted)

## **5 Annual Report 2011/13**

The Regional Park Manager had prepared and published the Annual Report 2011/13. The Annual Report, which described the main areas of work undertaken over the year, had been circulated to stakeholders and interested parties and was available to view on the Regional Park website.

### **Decision**

To note the Annual Report.

(Reference – Pentland Hills Regional Park Annual Report 2011/13.)

## **6 Date of Next Meeting**

A meeting of the Pentland Hills Regional Park Consultative Forum was scheduled for 24 August 2012.

The Clerk was asked to draw up a programme of meetings for both the Joint Committee and Consultative Forum for the next year.

## **Local Authority Funding Contributions and Revised Operating Arrangements – 2012/2013**

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### **Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee**

16<sup>th</sup> March 2012

#### **1 Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To report to the Joint Committee on revenue funding contributions and revised operating arrangements for the Regional Park in 2012/2013.

#### **2 Main Report**

##### **Efficiency Measures and New Operating Arrangements 2012/2013**

- 2.1 In view of the ongoing disparity between the operating budget of the Regional Park and the reduced contributions received from member authorities, a number of further efficiencies have been identified which will provide a balanced budget and give the Regional Park service a more sustainable foundation. These efficiency measures are as follows:
- The Regional Park HQ at Boghall Farm will be vacated in May 2012 saving around £24,000 in annual operating costs. Staff will be relocated to the Hermitage of Braid as their principal operating base. Further use will be made of existing facilities at Harlaw and Flotterstone as satellite workstations.
  - Countryside and visitor management services in the Regional Park will be provided by City of Edinburgh Council's Natural Heritage Service. This new service will be formed by merging countryside services staff employed by CEC – including those currently working exclusively in the Regional Park.
- 2.2 From 2012/2013, service provided in each local authority area will relate more closely to the respective funding contributions made. This is intended to provide greater transparency and to limit the Managing Authority's escalating costs for managing the Park, but it is proposed that a good level of service appropriate to the expectations of users and landowners in the Regional Park will be delivered.
- 2.3 Two existing key vacancies will be filled to provide the required staff establishment. There will be a larger 'pool' of staff able in part to support the Regional Park as part of their role. This will provide greater flexibility and help with weekend cover.

- 2.4 CEC will continue to act as the Managing Authority for the Regional Park. Existing mechanisms for the governance of the Regional Park will continue initially and be reviewed during 2012/2013.
- 2.5 The Regional Park will continue to be managed as a single geographical unit with co-ordinated services being provided across local authority boundaries. The Regional Park 'identity' will remain. Key services and projects will continue.
- 2.6 This approach will ensure that the Park continues to be managed consistently while operating efficiencies are realised.

### **Funding Contributions**

- 2.7 The current Minute of Agreement (MOA) was signed in 2005, and sets out the governance and financial basis for the Regional Park. The MOA set the initial funding contributions of the local authority partners at: City of Edinburgh Council £138,700; Midlothian Council £75,000; and West Lothian Council £10,760.
- 2.8 Scottish Water (formerly East of Scotland Water) is not party to the Minute of Agreement but has made a fixed annual financial contribution of £10,000 since the previous local government re-organisation 1996.
- 2.9 In 2009/2010 after suspending its notice to withdraw from the Regional Park, Midlothian Council reduced its annual contribution to £52,600 (index linked). For 2012/2013, Midlothian Council's contribution will be £58,102.
- 2.10 For 2012/2013, West Lothian Council has agreed to increase its financial contribution to £15,140 and to index link contributions for subsequent years.
- 2.11 For 2012/2013, Scottish Water's contribution will remain at £10,000.
- 2.12 City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), as the Managing Authority for the Regional Park will therefore receive a total funding contribution of £94,342 towards the Regional Park Budget for 2012/2013. The provisional Budget is shown in Appendix 1.

### **3 Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Local authority financial contributions will be index linked from 2012/2013 providing a more sustainable funding basis.
- 3.2 The management of the Regional Park cost centre will change from 1 April 2012. Employee costs, operational, premises and transport budgets will now sit within CEC's Natural Heritage cost centre. The Regional Park cost centre will account for income and overall expenditure on Regional Park activities. The cost of delivering the Regional Park's work up to the approved annual budget will be re-charged by the Natural Heritage team.
- 3.3 Midlothian and West Lothian Councils will see greater clarity about the relationship between their contributions and services provided in their areas of the Regional Park.
- 3.4 Circa. £24,000 per annum will be saved by vacating Boghall Farm.

#### **4 Equalities Impact**

4.1 There is no equalities impact.

#### **5 Environmental Impact**

5.1 The Pentland Hills Regional Park aims to protect and enhance the environment of the Pentland Hills. The financial and operational stability of the Regional Park Service plays an important role in looking after this important environmental asset for the people of Edinburgh and the Lothians.

#### **6 Recommendations**

6.1 It is recommended that the Joint Committee:

- a) notes the revised budgetary and operating arrangements for 2012/2013; and
- b) requests that the governance and committee arrangements for the Regional Park be reviewed in 2012/2013 and that proposals are presented to the Joint Committee for further consideration.

**David Jamieson**  
Parks & Greenspace Manager

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Appendices	Appendix 1 Provisional Budget 2012/2013
Contact/tel/Email	David Jamieson (Parks and Greenspace Manager, 0131 529 7055) Keith Logie (Parks Development Manager, 0131 529 7916) Alan McGregor (Regional Park Manager, 0131 445 3383)
Wards affected	All
Single Outcome Agreement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe.</li><li>2 We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.</li><li>6 We live longer, healthier lives.</li><li>10 We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need.</li><li>11 We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.</li><li>12 We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations</li><li>13 We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.</li><li>14 We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.</li><li>15 Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.</li></ol>
Background Papers	None

## APPENDIX 1: PROVISIONAL BUDGET 2012/2013

### Expenditure

Employee Costs:	227, 528
Premisis Costs:	35,171
Transport Costs:	7,500
Supplies and Services:	18,134
<b>GROSS EXPENDITURE:</b>	<b>288,333</b>

### Income

CEC Parks & Greenspace	193,991
CEC City Development	10,000
Midlothian Council	58,102
West Lothian Council	15,140
Scottish Water	10,000
Sales	1,100
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>288,333</b>

## Social Return on Investment Study - Pentland Hills Regional Park

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### Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee

26<sup>th</sup> July 2012

#### Purpose of report

- 1 To inform the Joint Committee of a study, recently commissioned by the City of Edinburgh Council which aims to demonstrate the social return on local authority investment in the Pentland Hills Regional Park.

#### Main report

- 2 Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis is a tool which accounts for the value of a service, project or activity. It enables social environmental and economic benefits of a service to be calculated. SROI demonstrates the overall impact of the service and compares its value to the amount invested. The study will provide a detailed report highlighting the ratio between the value of benefits generated and every pound invested.
- 3 The Pentland Hills Regional Park caters for over 600,000 visitors per annum. To date, performance measures have largely been based on outputs such as: paths maintained; signage installed; information produced; and number of visitors engaged with. There has been a reasonable assumption based on feedback that visitors, land managers and others value the service provided. This sense of value has not however, been previously tested or quantified. The Regional Park alongside all other local authority services is facing challenging budget pressures. It is important therefore that local authority partners are better able to quantify the return on funding contributions. An SROI analysis is one way of achieving this.
- 4 Greenspace Scotland has been commissioned to carry out an SROI analysis for the Regional Park. Greenspace Scotland has developed specialist expertise in this type of analysis and has recently completed SROI exercises for a number of projects including: Hailes Quarry Park improvements; 'Bums off Seats' (a walking initiative in Fife); and the Craigshill Greenspace Group working at Almond Park, West Lothian.

- 5 The study will be carried out between July and September 2012. The initial phase will involve identifying and consulting with the key stakeholders. The consultation will be used to identify what changes (outcomes) are experienced by stakeholders as a result of the Regional Park Service and to identify reliable indicators to measure this. Secondly, it will be determined what these outcomes are worth in financial terms. This will then allow the social return on investment ratio to be calculated.
- 6 The analysis will seek to identify those outcomes that are purely down to the service provided, rather than those that would have taken place without the provision of service. This will mean that that the benefit calculated relates directly to local authority funding for the Regional Park.
- 7 Greenspace Scotland will additionally provide a framework for future evaluation of services using an outcome based approach. This will allow the social return on investment to be monitored in the future.

### **Financial Implications**

- 8 The study will cost £6,000 and will be funded from within existing budgets by the managing authority as a pilot study which may be applied to other parks and green spaces within the City of Edinburgh. The study will not impact on the Regional Park's operational budget for 2012/2013.
- 9 The study is likely to inform future consideration of local authority funding contributions to visitor management services in the Regional Park.

### **Equalities Impact**

- 10 The study will be based on engagement with a cross section of stakeholders including visitors and recreational users. Stakeholder engagement will seek to include a representative sample of the full range of interests interacting with Regional Park Service. Specifically, the study will provide the opportunity to identify and engage with currently under-represented interests and support the local authority partners in meeting obligations under the Equalities Act 2010.

### **Environmental Impact**

- 11 The Regional Park has four principal aims. These aims guide the services provided and are primarily concerned with responsible recreational enjoyment and environmental stewardship:
  - To retain the essential character of the hills as a place for the peaceful enjoyment of the countryside.
  - To care for the hills, so that the landscape and habitat is protected and enhanced.
  - Within this caring framework to encourage responsible public enjoyment of the hills.
  - Co-ordination of these aims so that they can co-exist with farming and other land uses within the Park.

- 12 The SROI study will provide an objective assessment of the value of services provided in the Regional Park. It will therefore play a part in protecting the environment of the hills while providing a valued recreational resource.

## Recommendations

- 13 It is recommended that the Joint Committee:
- a) notes that a Social Return on Investment study has been commissioned as detailed in this report;
  - b) requests that the Consultative Forum be engaged as part of the exercise;
  - c) receives a further report on the findings following completion of the study.

**David Jamieson**  
Parks & Greenspace Manager

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Appendices            None

Contact/tel/Email    David Jamieson (Parks and Greenspace Manager, 0131 529 7055)  
Keith Logie (Parks Development Manager, 0131 529 7916)  
Alan McGregor (Regional Park Manager, 0131 445 3383)

Wards affected        All

Single Outcome Agreement

1. Edinburgh's economy delivers increased investment, jobs, and opportunities for all
2. Edinburgh's citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health
3. Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential
4. Edinburgh's communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric

Background Papers    None

## Pentland Hills Regional Park - Review of Consultative Forum Representation

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### Pentland Hills Regional Park Consultative Forum

24<sup>th</sup> August 2012

#### Purpose of report

- 1 To advise the Consultative Forum of proposed changes to the operation and membership of the Consultative Forum and to seek the Forum's views on revised membership.

#### Main report

- 2 At its meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012, the Joint Committee requested that proposals to streamline the governance and consultative mechanisms for the Regional Park be brought forward for consideration. At its meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> July 2012, the Joint Committee considered a number of recommendations (see Appendix 1).
- 3 Following consideration, the Joint Committee agreed that:
  - a) the Joint Committee should remain as currently constituted;
  - b) the Joint Committee and the Consultative Forum should continue to meet on separate dates, but that all Joint Committee Elected Members should attend the Consultative Forum - This will mean that forthcoming items of business can be discussed jointly and the views of the Consultative Forum be taken into account prior to a final decision by the Joint Committee at its next meeting. It is intended that this will give the Consultative Forum a stronger influence on the decision making process;
  - c) the Joint Committee meets twice yearly and the Consultative Forum meets twice yearly, meaning a total of four meetings per year;
  - d) the meeting dates and cycle be planned well in advance to support attendance and participation;
  - e) the matter of membership and representation on the Consultative Forum be referred to the Consultative Forum for comment at its meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> August and that the Regional Park Manager be authorised to implement any proposed changes; and

f) the Parks & Greenspace Manager report back to the next meeting of the Joint Committee on finalised arrangements and any required revisions to the minute of agreement.

### **Financial Implications**

- 4 Reducing the total number of meetings from eight to four and having the Joint Committee Members attend the Consultative Forum represents significant efficiencies in elected member, officer and stakeholder time required to administer the Regional Park while at the same time, promoting a closer partnership working.

### **Equalities Impact**

- 5 In reviewing the membership of the Consultative Forum, there is an opportunity to involve currently under represented interests. This will assist in the consideration of the Regional Park's role and effectiveness in dealing with inequalities allowing improvements to be made.

### **Environmental Impact**

- 6 The proposals will improve the governance and consultative mechanisms for the Regional Park and strengthen its ability to provide effective and efficient visitor and environmental management services in the Pentland Hills.

### **Recommendations**

- 7 It is recommended that the Consultative Forum:
  - a) notes the proposed changes;
  - b) is invited to consider existing membership and make recommendations for future representation and membership on the Consultative Forum.

**David Jamieson**  
Parks & Greenspace Manager

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Appendices      Appendix 1: Review of Governance and Consultative Mechanisms – Report to the Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee 26<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

Appendix 2: Existing Membership of the Consultative Forum

Contact/tel/Email      David Jamieson (Parks and Greenspace Manager, 0131 529 7055)  
Keith Logie (Parks Development Manager, 0131 529 7916)  
Alan McGregor (Regional Park Manager, 0131 445 3383)

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Wards affected      All

Single Outcome Agreement

1. Edinburgh's economy delivers increased investment, jobs, and opportunities for all
2. Edinburgh's citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health
3. Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential
4. Edinburgh's communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric

Background Papers

None

**Appendix 1: Report to the Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee 26<sup>th</sup>  
July 2012**

## Appendix 2: Existing Pentland Hills Regional Park Consultative Forum

<b>City of Edinburgh Council</b>	2 x Elected Members
<b>Midlothian Council</b>	1x Elected member
<b>West Lothian Council</b>	1x Elected Member
<b>Farming</b>	National Farmers Union
<b>Pentland Produce</b>	Scottish Agricultural College
<b>Landowning</b>	Scottish Rural Property and Business Association.
<b>Ministry of Defence Estates</b>	1 representative
<b>Scottish Wildlife Trust</b>	1 representative
<b>Friends of the Pentlands</b>	1 representative
<b>Fairmilehead Community Council</b>	1 representative
<b>Kirknewton Community Council</b>	1 representative
<b>Damhead Community Council</b>	1 representative
<b>Harperrig Management Group</b>	1 representative
<b>Walkers</b>	Ramblers Association
<b>British Horse Society</b>	1 representative
<b>Scottish Hill Runners</b>	1 representative
<b>Mountain Biking</b>	Cycling Scotland
<b>Disabled Users</b>	Thistle Foundation
<b>Scottish Angling Society</b>	1 representative
<b>Water Sports</b>	Scottish Canoe Association
<b>Orienteering</b>	Edinburgh Southern Orienteering Club
<b>Scottish Water</b>	1 representative
<b>Scottish Natural Heritage</b>	1 representative
<b>Sport Scotland</b>	1 representative
<b>Historic Scotland (Archaeology)</b>	1 representative
<b>Economic/Rural Development (Scottish Government)</b>	1 representative
<b>Edinburgh and Lothians Tourist Board</b>	1 representative
<b>Balerno Village Trust</b>	1 representative
<b>Regional Park Manager</b>	1 representative
<b>City of Edinburgh Council</b>	1 officer
<b>Midlothian Council</b>	1 officer
<b>West Lothian Council</b>	1 officer



## **Pentland Hills Regional Park - Review of Governance and Consultative Mechanisms**

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### **Pentland Hills Regional Park Joint Committee**

**26<sup>th</sup> July 2012**

#### **Purpose of report**

- 1 To recommend that the Joint Committee approves in principle a number of proposed changes intended to streamline the governance and consultative mechanisms for the Regional Park and refers the proposals to the Consultative Forum for comment.

#### **Main report**

- 2 At its meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> March 2012, the Joint Committee requested that proposals to streamline the governance and consultative mechanisms for the Regional Park be brought forward for consideration. This report makes a number of recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing arrangements.
- 3 There are four groups involved with the governance of and provision of advice to the Regional Park which are described below.

#### **The Joint Committee**

- 4 The Joint Committee is the primary decision making body and comprises of elected members from each of the partner local authorities: the City of Edinburgh Council (3 members); Midlothian Council (3 members) and West Lothian Council (1 member). Additionally, Scottish Water and Scottish Natural Heritage have one representative each, but in a non-voting capacity. The Joint Committee currently meets 3 to 4 times per year.
- 5 The Joint Committee was set up following local government re-organisation in 1996, as a means to enable the three local separate authorities responsible for the area of the Regional Park to combine to jointly fund and discharge their responsibilities. A Minute of Agreement as signed in 1996, and amended in 2004, provided for the funding and governance of the Regional Park. The Joint Committee was provided with certain delegated powers and was to make recommendations to the three authorities on the operation of the Regional Park.

- 6 The management and funding of the Regional Park has altered significantly over the years, with the City of Edinburgh Council now being the 'managing authority', providing the majority of the funding, and being employer of the Ranger Service staff. The experience of recent years suggests that the existing minute of agreement requires to be adjusted to better reflect the current operation and administration of the Regional Park.

### **The Management Group**

- 7 The Management Group comprises of officers from the three partner local authorities with representation from Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Water, and local Neighbourhood Service Teams. It serves to guide operational matters and prepare the business for the Joint Committee. The Management Group is currently chaired by a senior officer from the Managing Authority. The Management Group meets some weeks in advance of the Joint Committee and at a similar frequency.

### **The Consultative Forum**

- 8 The Consultative Forum is a larger group of stakeholders with the role of advising the Joint Committee (see membership at Appendix 1). The Consultative Forum has no executive decision making authority and acts in a purely advisory capacity. Under the existing arrangements, membership of the Consultative Forum is by invitation from the Joint Committee. Other interested parties can attend meetings and request to speak on approval from the Chair. The Consultative Forum meets up to 4 times per year, usually about 3-4 weeks following the Joint Committee.

### **Farmers and Landowners' Meeting**

- 9 A separate meeting for farmers and landowners is held periodically, usually annually. These meeting are less formal and the agenda covers topics that are of particular relevance and interest to land managers. This meeting, unlike the Joint Committee and Consultative Forum has no formal role and is not prescribed in the Minute of Agreement for the Regional Park. The last farmers and land owners' meeting was held in December 2010.

### **The Case for Review**

- 10 The current cycle and frequency of meetings goes beyond that needed for sound governance and requires a level of administrative activity that cannot be sustained in light of increasing pressure on service resources.
- 11 The agendas for the Joint Committee and the Consultative Forum are often very similar leading to similar business being covered twice in close succession.
- 12 The Joint Committee will routinely refer matters to the Consultative Forum before making a considered decision. This introduces delays into the decision making process.

- 13 The existing Consultative Forum does not at this stage represent the full range of interests. For example, water based recreation and mountain biking interests are under-represented. Several organisations who have a place on the Forum (see Appendix 1) have not sent a representative for some time. The current arrangement provides for one community council representative from each of the partner local authority area. There are other community groups who have a strong local interest in the Regional Park who have been unable to participate fully under the existing arrangements.
- 14 Farmers and landowners are key stakeholders in the Regional Park and have for some time, expressed an interest in being closer to the decision making process.

### **Proposals**

- 15 To address these issues and improve the governance and consultative arrangements, the following measures are proposed.
- 16 The Joint Committee and Consultative Form meets together in partnership. The benefits of this arrangement are that the Joint Committee has immediate and direct access to advice from stakeholders and that there is a significant reduction in administration and duplication of business. Stakeholders would benefit from being able to communicate their views directly to the Joint Committee.
- 17 This new joint working between the Joint Committee and the Consultative Forum might usefully be referred to as the 'Pentland Hills Regional Park Partnership'. This would better reflect the collaborative approach of joint working. However only elected members on the Joint Committee would have voting authority and the Joint Committee would retain the flexibility to 'retire' and discuss matters separately if necessary. The underlying governance structure would remain unchanged.
- 18 It is proposed that the membership of the Consultative Forum be reviewed and if necessary changes approved by the Joint Committee. The review would aim to make the Consultative Forum more inclusive and representative of the full range of interests in the Regional Park. The existing Consultative Forum would have a key advisory role when reviewing membership.
- 19 Farming and Landowner participation at the Pentland Hills Regional Park Partnership would take the place of the annual farmers and landowners meeting. The opportunity for farming and landowning interests to attend the Partnership as part of the Consultative Forum would improve engagement with the decision making process and make the consultative arrangements more effective. One-off farmers and landowners meetings can still be arranged if required, but would not be held annually as matter of routine. Farmers and landowners have an ongoing relationship with Regional Park staff throughout the year and can contact staff at any time.

## **Frequency of meetings**

- 20 It is proposed that the Pentland Hills Regional Park Partnership meets twice a year. This will ensure a fuller agenda at each meeting and reduce the current administrative burden. Additional meetings could be convened if necessary. Meeting dates will be set well in advance to help promote good attendance levels.
- 21 It is proposed that the Management Group meets at least twice a year in advance of Partnership meetings and at other times as required to allow the preparation of Committee business and make more efficient use of the officer time available to support the Regional Park.

## **Financial Implications**

- 22 By holding the Joint Committee and Consultative Forum meetings together under the combined format of the Pentland Hills Regional Park Partnership, the total number of annual meetings will be reduced from eight to two. Whilst not resulting in direct savings this represents a significant reduction in elected member, officer and stakeholder time required to administer the Regional Park while promoting closer partnership working at the same time.

## **Equalities Impact**

- 23 In reviewing the membership of the Consultative Forum, there is an opportunity to involve currently under represented interests. This will assist in the consideration of the Regional Park's role and effectiveness in dealing with inequalities allowing improvements to be made.

## **Environmental Impact**

- 24 The review proposals will improve the governance and consultative mechanisms for the Regional Park and strengthen its ability to provide effective and efficient visitor and environmental management services in the Pentland Hills.

## **Recommendations**

- 25 It is recommended that the Joint Committee:
- a) approves the proposals in principle;
  - b) requests that the Consultative Forum is consulted on the proposals and engaged in the review of Forum membership; and
  - c) calls for a further paper to be presented to the next Joint Committee meeting setting out the finalised governance proposals for approval including any revisions required to the current Minute of Agreement, for the approval of the local authorities and funding partners.

Appendices	Appendix 1: Existing Membership of the Consultative Forum
Contact/tel/Email	David Jamieson (Parks and Greenspace Manager, 0131 529 7055) Keith Logie (Parks Development Manager, 0131 529 7916) Alan McGregor (Regional Park Manager, 0131 445 3383)
Wards affected	All
Single Outcome Agreement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Edinburgh's economy delivers increased investment, jobs, and opportunities for all</li><li>2. Edinburgh's citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health</li><li>3. Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential</li><li>4. Edinburgh's communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric</li></ol>
Background Papers	None

## Appendix 1: Existing Pentland Hills Regional Park Consultative Forum

<b>City of Edinburgh Council</b>	2 x Elected Members
<b>Midlothian Council</b>	1x Elected member
<b>West Lothian Council</b>	1x Elected Member
<b>Farming</b>	National Farmers Union
<b>Pentland Produce</b>	Scottish Agricultural College
<b>Landowning</b>	Scottish Rural Property and Business Association.
<b>Ministry of Defence Estates</b>	1 representative
<b>Scottish Wildlife Trust</b>	1 representative
<b>Friends of the Pentlands</b>	1 representative
<b>Fairmilehead Community Council</b>	1 representative
<b>Kirknewton Community Council</b>	1 representative
<b>Damhead Community Council</b>	1 representative
<b>Harperrig Management Group</b>	1 representative
<b>Walkers</b>	Ramblers Association
<b>British Horse Society</b>	1 representative
<b>Scottish Hill Runners</b>	1 representative
<b>Mountain Biking</b>	Cycling Scotland
<b>Disabled Users</b>	Thistle Foundation
<b>Scottish Angling Society</b>	1 representative
<b>Water Sports</b>	Scottish Canoe Association
<b>Orienteering</b>	Edinburgh Southern Orienteering Club
<b>Scottish Water</b>	1 representative
<b>Scottish Natural Heritage</b>	1 representative
<b>Sport Scotland</b>	1 representative
<b>Historic Scotland (Archaeology)</b>	1 representative
<b>Economic/Rural Development (Scottish Government)</b>	1 representative
<b>Edinburgh and Lothians Tourist Board</b>	1 representative
<b>Balerno Village Trust</b>	1 representative
<b>Regional Park Manager</b>	1 representative
<b>City of Edinburgh Council</b>	1 officer
<b>Midlothian Council</b>	1 officer
<b>West Lothian Council</b>	1 officer

