1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

1. Note that the Cairngorms Main Issues Report raises no significant issues for the land use planning in that part of Angus contained with the National Park; and

2. Agree that this report be submitted to the Cairngorms National Park Authority as a response to the consultation.

3. Note that opportunity will be available to comment on the new Local Development - Proposed Plan when this is published next year.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Development plan policy in Angus is currently provided by the Dundee and Angus Structure Plan (2002), the Angus Local Plan Review (2009) and the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan (2010). Members will recall that the northern part of Angus lies within the designated boundary of the Cairngorms National Park. These documents provide the current land use planning framework for the development and use of land, protection of the environment and guidance for making decisions on planning applications.

2.2 The Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) has been reviewing the existing local plan and as part of this process has prepared and published a Local Development Plan Main Issues Report (MIR). Consultation on the MIR extends until 9 December 2011. Published alongside this is a Monitoring Report, an interim Environmental Report of the Strategic Environmental Assessment, an interim Habitats Regulations Appraisal and an Equalities Impact Assessment and five Background Information papers covering the following topics: Housing and Population; The Economy; Monitoring Report; Other Information; and Site Analysis.

2.3 The MIR is a key element of the new development planning system and is the main focus for engagement on the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan. The document sets out choices for the land allocations that could be made for development and for policies that the CNPA and its constituent authorities will use to make decisions on applications for planning permission.

2.4 It should also be noted that the CNPA has published a Draft Cairngorms National Park Plan and associated documents for consultation over the same period. The Draft Cairngorms National park Plan 2012 – 2017 sets out the vision, strategic objectives and a framework for managing the Park.
2.5 A copy of the Draft National Park Plan, MIR and supporting documents is available in the Members’ Lounge, The Cross, Forfar.

2.6 This report summarises the main thrust of the MIR and provides the basis for a response to the National Park Authority.

3 MAIN ISSUES REPORT

3.1 The draft Cairngorms National Park Plan 2012 -2017 sets out the vision, strategic objectives and the general approach to sustainable patterns of development growth, infrastructure and communications. The Vision is of ‘an outstanding National Park enjoyed and valued by everyone, where nature and people thrive together’.

3.2 The National Park Plan identifies three strategic objectives as follows:

1. To ensure the Cairngorms National park is a special place where the natural and cultural heritage is conserved and enhanced.

2. To develop a sustainable economy that supports thriving and resilient business and communities.

3. To ensure the Cairngorms National Park delivers an outstanding visitor experience and is an international benchmark for sustainable tourism.

3.3 Taking the above into account, the MIR sets out the particular challenges faced by the Cairngorms National Park area under the following headings:

- Issue 1 Special Qualities of the Park;
- Issue 2 – Resources/Reducing our Consumption;
- Issue 3 – Support for our Communities;
- Issue 4 – Housing/affordable Housing;
- Issue 5 – Spatial Strategy;
- Main Settlements – An Camas Mor; Aviemore; Ballater; Grantown-on-Spey; Kingussie; and Newtonmore;
- Other Settlements- Blair Atholl; Boat of Garten; Braemar; Bruar and Pitagowan; Carr Bridge; Cromdale; Dalwhinnie; Dinnet; Dulnain Bridge; Killiecrankie; Kincaig; Nethy Bridge; Tomintoul;
- Issue 6 – Support for our Rural Areas;
- Issue 7 Connectivity and Communications;
- Other issues – general topics to be carried forward from the current adopted plan;
- Supplementary guidance – setting out the topic areas for SPG.

3.4 With regard to the existing adopted Local Plan policy framework the MIR is suggesting that the following existing policy areas be taken forward into the Proposed Local Development Plan or supplementary Guidance associated with it:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural heritage</th>
<th>Replacement houses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developer contributions</td>
<td>Conversion and reuse of existing traditional and vernacular buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Gypsies and travellers and travelling showpeople</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development standards</td>
<td>Tourism related development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House extensions and alterations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5 The existing adopted Local Plan also has a wide range of supplementary planning guidance; it is intended to revisit all existing guidance to ensure it provides best guidance to support the new Local Development Plan. Topics to be included as Supplementary Guidance are as follows:
3.6 For each issue the MIR sets out an introduction, current policy approach, options for change including that preferred by the CNPA. It is important to note that each issue cannot be seen in isolation; each has an impact on the other. For each of the policy and land development options presented there are a range of questions to which the public are requested to comment. A copy of the options and questions are attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

3.7 The MIR sets out the next steps and timescale for preparation and publication of the Proposed Plan which is scheduled for September 2012.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Not surprisingly the emphasis is on the MIR on the protection of the special qualities of the National park while seeking to enable sustainable development and economic growth. The bulk of new development – housing, economic, etc - will continue to be directed towards the main settlements (see paragraph 3.3 above) in the park where existing services and facilities exist. The MIR indicates the development options for each of the main settlements and the range of other identified settlements and the reasoning behind the preferred choice of site.

4.2 From the Angus perspective, Members will be aware that the area of the National Park within Angus is mostly upland area where forestry, farming, sporting estates, recreation and natural heritage are the main activities. Other than Clova village the population and settlement pattern is very dispersed.

4.3 Within an overarching context of continuing to focus on conservation and enhancement of designated nature conservation sites, habitat connectivity, wildness and landscape character the preferred approach for the Angus part of the CNP (and similar rural areas within the Park, is to ‘support rural communities by providing for growth which matches historic growth patterns. Use the landscape character to protect these important rural areas from inappropriate development.’ Such an approach would allow small scale development which supports diversification and other opportunities for sustainable economic development whilst respecting and protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the area. The existing Local Plan policy framework provides some flexibility in seeking to achieve the above and it will be for the new Proposed Plan to set out and clarify any changes to this framework.

4.4 The broad approach to land use planning in the Cairngorm National Park and that part within Angus is generally supported as being a pragmatic way of trying to tackle the balancing of protecting the intrinsic qualities which make the area attractive and special while seeking to allow for social and economic development in a sustainable manner. The MIR seeks a response to options and questions developed around the main issues. The Head of Planning & Transport is supportive of the preferred approach set out in the MIR to the topics covered by questions 1 – 5 and 25 – 28; it is however considered inappropriate to comment on the spatial development options/preferred option for development of main and other settlements outwith Angus, the communities covered by questions 6 – 24.

5 RISK

5.1 This report does not require any specific risk issues to be addressed.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.
7 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The issues contained in this report fall within an approved category that has been confirmed as exempt from an equalities perspective.

8 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective. An equalities impact assessment is not required.

8.2 It should however be noted that an Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken by the Cairngorm National Park Authority and published alongside the Main Issues Report.

9 ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN AND SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

9.1 The Cairngorms National Park MIR contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2011 – 14:

COMMUNITIES THAT ARE PROSPEROUS AND FAIR

1. We have a sustainable economy with good employment opportunities
2. Angus is a good place to live in, work in and visit

COMMUNITIES THAT ARE SUSTAINABLE

10. Our communities are developed in a sustainable manner
11. Our natural and built environment is protected and enjoyed
12. Our carbon footprint is reduced

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Law & Administration and the Head of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

11 CONCLUSION

11.1 The preparation of the Main Issues Report is a key stage in the new development planning process and will afford opportunity for public engagement in the land use planning options for policy development in Cairngorms National Park area.

ERIC S LOWSON
DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

NOTE : The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report.

Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan – Main Issues Report September 2011

P&T/GWC/GDP/IAL
7 November 2011