

**Laura Baird**

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**From:** Jaki Carnegie  
**Sent:** 24 January 2015 16:06  
**To:** Angus Allan; Bob Ellis; Colin Bayes; David McCowan; David McKenzie; David Warnock; Fergus Wood; George.Freeman@argyll-bute.gov.uk; Hazel Sorrell; James Robb (James.Robb@argyll-bute.gov.uk); Martin Earl; Petra Biberbach; Willie Nisbet  
**Cc:** Linda. Email [REDACTED]; Owen McKee; Lindsay Morrison  
[REDACTED]; Gordon Watson; Sandra Dalziel  
**Subject:** Review

Issued on behalf of Lindsay Morrison

Dear Colleagues

You may recall that Linda emailed Board members on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2014 advising that she had asked me to oversee a review around any risk the organisation had in relation to decisions concerning Scotgold and Cononish goldmine.

I am pleased to advise that the main conclusion is that the Park Authority followed proper process and fulfilled its obligations in respect of Board and Planning and Access Committee meetings in respect of the Cononish Goldmine.

As the review paperwork, evidence and report contains personal and sensitive information I have decided it appropriate for a summary (see below) to be shared with Board members. The full report has been shared with the Convener and Owen McKee.

At the Special Board Meeting on Monday, I would ask that this is not discussed and it is hoped that any members of the public attending the Special Board or Planning and Access Committee will not ask any questions. If there are questions the Accountable Officer (Gordon) or Proper Officer (Sandra) will respond. The review information should be treated confidentially.

I hope you agree that this brings this situation to a satisfactory conclusion.

Regards

Lindsay Morrison

#### Summary

The purpose of the review was: -

- To assure the NPA Board that NPA Board and Planning and Access Committee decisions affecting Scotgold's Cononish goldmine planning application have not been prejudiced by shareholdings in Scotgold.
- In the event that reassurance cannot be given, and there is concern that actions may have interfered with any decisions or process with relation Scotgold's Cononish goldmine planning application, identify recommendations for the NPA to address this.

The review involved a review of files including: -

- Agendas, minutes and papers for Board meetings, Board Business sessions and Planning and Access meetings,
- Code of Conduct, National Parks (Scotland) Act
- Shareholding certificates,
- Register of Interests

The summary findings are: -

- The Code of Conduct for Members that applied until late 2014, did not stipulate a de-minimis value or shareholding to determine whether or not an interest was registerable. Any shareholding in Cononish was therefore a registerable and declarable interest.
- The Park Authority took all the normal procedural steps to request and minute declarations of interest at the beginning of Board and Planning and Access Committee meetings.
- Between 2012 and 2014 there were a number of Board and Planning and Access Committee meetings at which Cononish Goldmine was referred to, discussed and decisions made.
- The references and discussions at Board and Planning and Access Committee meetings related primarily to updates and decisions related to administrative matters, which were not debated or voted on, and not influenced by any intervention by any member of the Board.

The Review recommendations are: -

- The Park Authority acted appropriately, followed proper process and had properly discharged its responsibilities. The instances where there was an undeclared interest did not arise when the Board was taking any substantive planning decisions in relation to the Goldmine development. The decisions that were made when there was an undeclared interest was procedural, were by consensus and there is no record of any individual Board member contributing to or influencing such decisions.
- Board members receive refresher training on the Members Code of Conduct to ensure a full understanding of registerable and declarable interests.