



Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Advisory Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 23rd January, 2013 at 2.00 pm in
Grindleton Pavilion, Sawley Road, Grindleton BB7 4QS**

Present:

Chair

County Councillor Albert Atkinson, Lancashire County Council

Committee Members

Councillor Lin Barrington, Craven District Council
Councillor Roger W Brooks, Wyre Borough Council
Helen Dix, Environment Agency
Councillor Mrs Rosemary Elms, Ribble Valley Borough Council
Michael Helm, LAPT
David Kelly, Ramblers Association
County Councillor David Smith, Lancashire County Council
Councillor James Starkie, Pendle Borough Council
Mr Andrew Taylor, Bowland Landowners and Farmers Group

Officers

Hetty Byrne, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Cathy Hopley, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Elliott Lorimer, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Nick Osborne, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Mike Pugh, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Vaughan Jones, Pendle Borough Council
Martin Putsey, Preston City Council
David Hewitt, Ribble Valley Borough Council
Dave Oyston, United Utilities plc
Greg Robinson, Wyre Borough Council

Apologies

County Councillor Mrs Susie Charles, Lancashire County Council
Councillor John Browne, Preston City Council
County Councillor Richard Welch, North Yorkshire County Council

David Padley, Lancashire County Council
Rebecca Jackson-Pitt, Natural England
Graham Megson, North Yorkshire County Council
Alison Boden, Wyre Borough Council

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None disclosed.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 October 2012

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2012 were agreed as an accurate record.

4. Introduction and outline of Management Plan review methodology

Elliott Lorimer, Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Unit, explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the AONB Management Plan that requires renewal every five years. The current plan runs from 2009 – 2014 so there is a need to review the plan and update as necessary for the period 2014 – 2019. Once reviewed, the plan will be presented to DEFRA in March 2014.

Elliott explained that the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 provides the statutory basis for the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of AONBs, and:

- defines the role of the statutory agencies, in particular their responsibilities for the designation of AONBs and as consultees in planning matters;
- requires local authorities and Conservation Boards to state their policies for management of their AONBs through preparing and publishing a Management Plan; and
- Requires all relevant authorities to demonstrate their commitment to AONBs by having regard to AONB purposes in their plans and activities.

Specifically, and in relation to Local Authorities Section 89 requires the relevant authority [i.e. the local authority or local authorities jointly], or Conservation Board to “prepare and publish a plan which formulates their policy for the management of the area of outstanding natural beauty and for carrying out their functions in relation to it”, within three years. The plan must be reviewed within five years of its original publication and at similar intervals thereafter.

In implementing the current plan the Partnership agreed four key AONB outcomes as part of a business planning process carried out in 2011:

1. An outstanding landscape of natural and cultural heritage;
2. Resilient and sustainable communities;
3. A strong connection between people and the landscape:

4. A dynamic and effective AONB Partnership.

The AONB Business Plan identifies strategic priorities under each key outcome and actions link directly to the implementation of the Management Plan. It therefore seems a logical step to adopt these four key outcomes as the framework for the Management Plan review, particularly as there is a fairly close fit with the National AONB Family objectives outlined above.

Elliott also explained that the current plan outlines six objectives, each with a specific vision of the AONB in 2014. These themes are set out in Table 1 below, with objectives rationalised to fit under the four key outcomes identified above along with a summary of important changes since 2009:

Table 1

2009-2014 Plan Objective	2014 -2019 Key Outcome	Summary of important changes
Natural and Cultural Landscape	1. An outstanding landscape of natural and cultural heritage	Biodiversity 2020: A strategy of England's wildlife and ecosystem services, European Landscape Convention, Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Lawton Review: Making Space for Nature, UK National Ecosystem Assessment, National Planning Policy Framework, Natural Environment White Paper 2011, NE Uplands Policy and Delivery Reviews, EU Water Framework Directive
Enjoyment, Health and Well-being	3. A strong connection between people and the landscape	AONB Sustainable Tourism Strategy, Lawton Review: Making Space for Nature, Local Transport Plans, RoWIPs.
Economy	2. Resilient and sustainable communities	AONB Sustainable Tourism Strategy, Comprehensive Spending Review 2010, Economic situation, EU CAP Reform and Rural Development Regulation, Local Enterprise Partnerships,

2009-2014 Plan Objective	2014 -2019 Key Outcome	Summary of important changes
		Rural Economy Growth Review 2011
Community	2. Resilient and sustainable communities	Localism Act 2011, Public Services (Social Value Act 2012, Sustainable Communities Act 2007
Working in Partnership	4. A dynamic and effective Partnership AONB	Comprehensive Spending Review 2010, NAAONB Strategic Plan, Transition from Natural England to Defra funding, Tripartite agreement between Defra, NE and NAAONB
Responding to Climate Change	Cross-cutting all four key outcomes	AONB Renewable Energy Position Statement 2011, Draft Energy Bill, Energy Act 2011, Feed-In Tariffs, Green Energy (Promotion) Act 2009, Green Deal, Renewable Heat Incentive, North West Coastal Connections Project

Review process – next steps

Elliott explained that the first stage of the Review process will be to establish a small review working group (ideally officers and JAC members), which will undertake an examination of the current plan and report to the Joint Advisory Committee on the scope and extent of the Review.

In light of the flexibility offered by Defra in its advice on the extent of the review, where issues and actions are well-established and agreed upon by AONB partners, a 'light touch' approach will be adopted. Other sections may require a more in-depth review to reflect policy, regulatory or societal change and the challenging economic conditions.

Once the scope and extent of the review has been agreed by the JAC, the second stage for the working group will be to develop a draft plan, ideally adopting the four key AONB outcomes as its framework.

Table 2 below attempts to summarise a proposed timetable for the Review of the Plan, detailing the various stages. Each of these stages will be open to widespread comment

from all interested parties, partly through circulation of review documents, but also using on-line consultation, public consultation events and local information.

Table 2 – Proposed Review Timetable

Review Stage	Timetable	Comment
Agree outline Review methodology	29 th November 2012	AONB Funders Group
Launch of Management Plan Review	January 2013	Extraordinary AONB JAC meeting
Agree extent of the Review	January 2013	Preliminary consultation with AONB JAC at meeting
Write to the local authorities to agree terms of reference for the preparation of the Review	January 2013	
Issue statutory notice regarding the Review	January 2013	MP Review Working Group
Outline Plan produced	March 2013	MP Review Working Group
Public consultation events	April 2013	
Draft Plan produced	May 2013	
Public on-line consultation on Draft Plan	May – June 2013	
Technical consultation events	June 2013	
Full Draft Plan produced	July 2013	
Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA)	August – September 2013	
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	August – September 2013	
Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)	September 2013	
Natura 2000 sites Appropriate Assessment (AA)	September 2013	
Public on-line consultation on Full Draft Plan and SEA/AA/SA/EqIA	September – October 2013	
Final Management Plan produced	December 2013	Final version of the Plan
Final Management Plan to Local Authorities for adoption	January 2014	Plan adopted by LAs after confirmation by Defra/NE that plan satisfies statutory requirements
Presentation to Minister/Defra of approved	March 2014	Plan forwarded to Defra

plan		
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Resolved: The Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee noted the report presented, and noted the review timetable and process outlined in the report.

5. Workshop

The Committee split into groups to discuss the four key outcomes identified in the current plan which are:

1. An outstanding landscape of natural and cultural heritage;
2. Resilient and sustainable communities;
3. A strong connection between people and the landscape;
4. A dynamic and effective AONB Partnership.

Each group spent 10 minutes discussing each outcome and feedback was presented as follows:

An outstanding landscape of natural and cultural heritage

- Sustainable Land Management.
- Work with land owners, Land Owners Association and work with farmers.
- Involve Rights of Way team.
- Safeguarding the land of farmers and others.
- Maintain architectural heritage – barns and other buildings.
- Raise the profile of the AONB in relation to other authorities – better engagement.

Resilient and sustainable communities

- Can the role of Parish Lengthsmen be extended?
- Can the funding of Lengthsmen be reviewed / increased?
- Continue to support drainage schemes.
- More distinctive about what the AONB is.
- Provide support for sustainable tourism – try to look at what is distinctive about the AONB.
- Rural transport / shops / post offices / village halls etc – How can we contribute.
- Assess the Sustainable Development Fund – what is available?

A strong connection between people and the landscape

- Access opportunities / communication work / link between heritage and community engagement.
- Important to maintain access routes to the AONB.
- Look at the connection between the AONB and nearby Universities such as UCLAN and Lancaster.

- Take account of the recreation choices of a diverse range of people (walkers, cyclists, ramblers etc).
- Greater promotion of AONB to tourists / visitors.
- Emphasis on website rather than print: Greater flexibility.
- Strong connection between people and landscape.
- Build stronger links in Craven area.
- Link with the Health and Wellbeing agenda.
- "Welcoming to everyone" not just niche groups.

A dynamic and effective AONB Partnership.

- Office space in Dunsop Bridge costs / space.
- Improve awareness / connectivity of partners and local groups and the AONB Unit.
- Raising the public profile of AONB and office – particularly with local authorities.
- Invite CEO / Council Leaders to relevant meetings to find out about the work of the AONB in each area relevant to the CEO / Council Leaders.
- Have project visits in the AONB.
- Ensure the AONB looks outwards and involves other partners.
- Increase the profile of AONB Partnerships and increase links with funding authorities and funding partners.

6. Short plenary session

Resolved: The Committee noted the information collated during the workshop.

7. Urgent Business

None.

8. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee will take place on Wednesday 10th April 2013, venue to be confirmed.

Andy Milroy
Principal Executive Support Officer

Lancashire County Council
County Hall
Preston