

West Pennine Moors Area Management Committee

Wednesday, 15th July, 2015 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'D' - The Henry Bolingbroke Room, County Hall, Preston

Agenda

No. Item

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of the meetings held on 27 January 2015 and 8 July 2014** (Pages 1 - 8)
Minutes attached
- 3. Partner reports on project activity** (Pages 9 - 10)
Report attached.
- 4. Rivington Terraced Gardens:**
Presentation by Groundwork Lancashire West and Wigan
- 5. Verbal Update on SSSI notification project**
- 6. West Pennine Moors Task and Finish Group Next Steps** (Pages 11 - 12)
Report attached.
- 7. Any Other Business**
- 8. Date of Next Meeting**

I Young
Director of Governance,
Finance and Public Services

County Hall
Preston

Agenda Item 2

West Pennine Moors Area Management Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 27th January, 2015 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'D' - The Henry Bolingbroke Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

Chair

County Councillor Jackie Oakes

Committee Members

Councillor Andrew MacNae, Rossendale Borough Council
Councillor Tony Cummings, Bury Council
Hazel Gregory, United Utilities
Dave Dunlop, Lancashire Wildlife Trust
Mark Turner, Pennine Prospects
Ian Harper, United Utilities
Andy Grundy, Bolton Council
Mick Holding, Natural England

Officers

Fiona Cruchley, Lancashire County Council
Alison Marland, Chorley Council

1. **Welcome and Introduction to the meeting - County Councillor Jackie Oakes, Chair of the Area Management Committee (10.00am)**

County Councillor Jackie Oakes welcomed everyone to the Joint Member/Officer meeting of the West Pennine Moors Area Management Committee.

Those present each introduced themselves and the organisation they represented.

Mr Hammersley

Stuart Benson, Lancashire County Council reported on the recent passing of Mr G Hammersley, a long standing member of the Committee. Mr Hammersley had served on the Committee for many years and his knowledge and experience would be sorely missed.

The Committee agreed to place on record its appreciation of Mr Hammersley's commitment and efforts over many years.

2. **Project Progress (10.15am)**

Members of the Committee were invited to give progress reports on projects and initiatives they were involved in.

SSSI

Mick Holding, Natural England reported that work on achieving SSSI had been ongoing for 3 years. In terms of an update for the Committee he reported that:

- New officer had been appointed now who knows the area well
- Flora/fauna surveys had been undertaken
- Permission for access had been obtained where possible
- Woods, Hay meadows had been included, as well as grassland, fungi and reptiles
- All surveys, reports and legal papers were due to be approved by the Board
- Further statutory processes to follow were outlined

United Utilities

Ian Harper, United Utilities gave a presentation on SCAMP 2 – Sustainable Catchment Management Programme. SCAMP is an integrated approach to catchment management incorporating sustainable upland farming which delivers a range of water quality, environmental and public goods. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.

Pennine Prospects

Mark Turner, Pennine Prospects reported that an application for a Local Nature Partnership in the South Pennines had been submitted in 2012 and that application had been successful. A Steering Group had been established with a range of local authority partners, and included an economic development focus.

Six priority areas had been developed and areas of overlap identified. Organisations with an interest were encouraged to get involved as the next key stage was to get projects up and running.

The Committee noted the update reports.

3. Taking stock - implementation of the WPM Management Plan 2010-2014 (11.15am)

Fiona Cruchley reported that local authority finances had changed drastically since 2009 and as a result of discussions at the last meeting of the Committee, it had been considered worthwhile taking stock.

A basic assessment of the West Pennine Moors Management Plan had been undertaken by officers and 139 actions had been identified. These actions were shared with the Committee and had been graded under a traffic light scheme designed to indicate progress.

Fiona reported that many actions appeared to be aspirational and were probably not achievable. It was therefore important for the Committee to look agree its priorities and what can realistically be achieved. Local authorities were increasingly becoming more focused on statutory responsibilities and this position was unlikely to change for the foreseeable future.

4. Where next for the West Pennine Moors? (11.35am)

Mark Turner, Pennine Prospects, informed the Committee that Pennine Prospects was a rural regeneration company focused on the South Pennines. It had been established in

2005 and it was felt that there was an opportunity now to look at the whole landscape and work more closely with the West Pennine Moors Area Management Committee. Pennine Prospects was already looking at partnership working and it was anticipated that a paper would be considered by the Board in March.

Members of the Committee agreed it was an opportunity to work together and across boundaries. It was considered important to consider the balance between different users eg. Mountain bikes, walker and equestrians.

5. Round-up and closing comments (12.15pm)

Everyone was thanked for their input and Fiona suggested that there was a number of questions/issues that would need to be addressed and these included:

- What can be done?
- What Structure is required?
- How we work across the whole area

It was **agreed** to establish a task and Finish Group with the aim of producing proposals for consideration by the Area Management Committee at its meeting in July 2015.

I Young
Director of Governance,
Finance and Public Services

County Hall
Preston

West Pennine Moors Area Management Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 8th July, 2014 at 2.00 pm in Cabinet Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

Chair

County Councillor Jackie Oakes

Committee Members

County Councillor Sean Serridge

Councillor Kim Snape, Chorley Council

Councillor Andrew MacNae, Rossendale Borough Council

Councillor Tony Cummings, Bury Council

Hazel Gregory, United Utilities

Mr GH Hammersley, Conservation, Access and Recreation Advisory Committee

Tim Mitcham, Wildlife Trust for Lancs, Manchester & N Merseyside

Officers

Fiona Cruchley, Lancashire County Council

Ms Lindsey Blackstock, Chorley Borough Council

Alice Kimpton, Natural England

1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Area Management Committee

County Councillor Jackie Oakes and Councillor Kim Snape were appointed Chair and Vice Chair of the West Pennine Moors Area Management Committee respectively for the next 3 years.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G France – Chorley Borough Council, Councillor T Maxfield - Blackburn with Darwen Council, Councillor S Brookfield – Blackburn with Darwen Council, and N Kidd – United Utilities.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting held on the 10 September 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on the 10 September 2013 were agreed as a true record.

4. Partner reports on project activity

- Blackburn with Darwen Council – no report received
- Bolton Council – the report attached to the agenda was noted by the Members

- Lancashire County Council – the report attached to the agenda was noted by the Members
- United Utilities – report noted
- Wildlife Trust – report noted

5. Site of Special Scientific Interest designation process - Natural England

Alice Kimpton, Natural England reported on progress in relation to designation status. A report was being compiled for consideration by the Natural England Board. Stakeholder consultation would also be undertaken in due course. Once signed off by the Board, landowners and tenants would need consent/assent as required. The process of Notification through to Confirmation was expected to take approximately 9 months. It was hoped that achieving designation would also help to attract external funding.

United Utilities sought clarification that it would need to obtain agreement before hosting the many events it holds on an annual basis. In response, Alice suggested it would be helpful to send a list of known events, so that they could be considered and if appropriate, agreed all together.

It was agreed to note the report.

6. Feasibility Study - Mountain Bike Trail Sites in the West Pennine Moors

Fiona Cruchley presented the details of a feasibility study which had been prepared in 2010 on potential Mountain Bike Trail sites in the West Pennine Moors.

Unfortunately, no significant action had been taken over a sustained period of time, mainly due to the pressure on partner resources and the loss of locally based staff. Difficulties in attracting funding had also contributed to a lack of progress.

Members were asked whether there was a desire to progress any of the proposals outlined in the Study and was any one organisation willing to lead the way.

Andy MacNae reported that Rossendale Borough Council would be willing to lead as the proposals were about encouraging new users into the area, attracting revenue and improving public health. He would like to explore with partners not present at the meeting to see if there was any appetite and report back to the next meeting.

It was agreed that this was a sensible approach.

7. Any other business

Members queried the direction of the West Pennine Moors Area Management Committee and the effectiveness of meetings. There had been a significant number of progress reports and some members expressed a desire for a more strategic and forward looking approach. It was acknowledged that many of the aspirations in the Management Plan had not been fulfilled, so perhaps it was time to assess how partners wanted to work together moving forward.

It was suggested and agreed to hold a separate joint Member/Officer strategic planning meeting to clearly identify the Area Management Committee's priorities (utilising the existing Management Plan which would be sent out after the meeting) and the resources required to support them.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting to be notified to members in due course.

I Young
Director of Governance,
Finance and Public Services

County Hall
Preston

West Pennine Moors

Lancashire County Council activity in 2014/15

As in 2013/14, Lancashire County Council activity in the West Pennine Moors continues to be limited.

Healey Nab

Site Cover

The site is patrolled on Sundays by a dedicated team of volunteer rangers. These rangers report back to full-time ranger Nick Haigh. Volunteers deal with most issues that arise on their duty patrolling Healey Nab. If there are issues that they cannot deal with they contact the full-time Ranger for help or advice or pass it on to the full-time Ranger to resolve.

Volunteer activities

Volunteers carry out site checks and help interpret the site to visitors.

Typical activities include:

Litter picking, checking for fires, reporting windblown trees and tree damage, checking the mountain bike trail, resolving access issues (e.g. walkers using the mountain bike paths and mountain bikers using footpaths).

Public Rights of Way

Maintenance of the public rights of way network is ongoing as part of the statutory responsibilities of the County Council. This is often in partnership with United Utilities' ranger team. Any issues about rights of way should be reported to the public rights of way team on PROWreports@lancashire.gov.uk

West Pennine Moors Area Management Committee

Task and finish group on future governance and activity

The last meeting of the Area Management Committee established a task and finish group to look at how the Committee's work could be progressed with the resources currently available.

The task group met once, and additional discussion took place by email. Attendees at the meeting were

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Cllr Gordon France | Chorley Borough Council |
| Cllr Kim Snape | Chorley Borough Council |
| Tim Mitcham | Lancashire Wildlife Trust |
| Neville Kidd | United Utilities |
| Andy Grundy | Bolton Council |
| Fiona Cruchley | Lancashire County Council |

Key concerns identified

It is recognised that joining up activity around the West Pennine Moors is crucially important, building on a long history of cooperation. It was felt that despite limited resources available to local authorities at present that the group needs to continue meeting and look at creative ways to maintain activity and ensure that the broad range of interest in the area was represented effectively.

The various groups linked to WPM were considered, and the need to strengthen links between them identified.

There is concern about the level of maintenance of the existing assets that had been developed in WPM over the years (particularly access routes). Grant funding is not usually available to maintain these assets long term, therefore it was important to find a sustainable way to achieve this.

Priorities identified

- Getting WPM designated – as soon as possible as SSSI.
- Strengthen links between officer working group and area management committee
- Strengthen links between local advisory groups and area management committee
- Recognition of the role of volunteers in managing the area – and potential for a project to encourage better coordination of this
- Ensuring relevant partners are represented on Area Management Committee – current membership is strong from local authorities and conservation organisations but more limited from access and recreation groups

Things to do now

- Write to Natural England re delays to SSSI process
- Ensure that officer working group feeds into area management committee – e.g. by requesting strategic input on key issues
- Invite the chairs (or a representative) of the local advisory groups to sit on the AMC

Things to do over next 6-12 months

- Investigate the potential for a project to join up the volunteering opportunities and good practise in the area – including how they can support maintenance of access routes. Review which organisation could best host this project, and which groups currently make significant contributions to the area – this could include Friends of Healey Nab (maintaining trails), Lancashire Wildlife Trust (managing their sites and monitoring wildlife) and parish councils. Identify potential sources of funding to support this work, and lead organisations for delivering this.
- Identify additional interest groups that should be invited to join the AMC.