



Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Advisory Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 26th January, 2016 at 10.00 am in Ellel Village Hall, Main Road, Galgate, Lancaster, LA2 0LQ

Present:

Chair

Committee Members

County Councillor Albert Atkinson
County Councillor Mrs Susie Charles
Alderman Roger W Brooks, Wyre Borough Council
Councillor Jane Parkinson, Lancaster City Council
Councillor John Browne, Preston City Council
Councillor James Starkie, Pendle Borough Council
Michael Helm, LALC
Councillor Colin Price, Yorkshire Local Councils Association
Helen Dix, Environment Agency
David Kelly, Ramblers Association
Councillor Ian Thompson, Craven District Council

Officers

Elliott Lorimer, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Martin Putsey, Preston City Council
Alison Boden, Wyre Borough Council
David Porter

Apologies

County Councillor Kevin Ellard
County Councillor Richard Welch, North Yorkshire County Council
Graham Jones, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Mr Andrew Taylor, Bowland Land Managers Forum
Jeremy Duckworth, The Moorland Association
David Hewitt, Ribble Valley Borough Council
Dave Oyston, United Utilities plc

Jackie Flynn

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence

County Councillor Albert Atkinson welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

Harvey Hamilton-Thorpe, Project Manager for Ribble Life Together was introduced and he presented the attached powerpoint to the Committee, prior to the commencement of the meeting proper.

Following a question and answer session at the end, Harvey was thanked for his presentation.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

None declared.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 October 2015

The minutes were agreed as accurate following the addition of Cllr John Browne's apologies that were not recorded previously.

David Porter, Lancaster City Council

An update was given regarding the results of the consultation on Lancashire City Council's planning document entitled 'People, Homes and Jobs' outlining potential sites for future development in the district. 800 representations were made, with a significant number of these relating to proposals affecting Dolphinholme and Bolton-le-Sands. The City Council is briefing its members at the Planning, Policy and Liaison Group on 27 January 2016 on the next part of the plan for the Summer.

Elliott Lorimer stated that a response outlining the two significant development sites proposed that could affect the AONB had been sent, highlighting some concerns about the likely impact on the landscape.

Michael Helm had visited Dolphinholme recently with regards the recent flooding.

Networks 4 Nectar

Elliott outlined that the LEF application to support 'Wildflowers for the Meadows' a further phase of project work to support hay meadow restoration by growing specific species to enhance nectar patches and meadows had been successful and will run from April 2016 to the end of March 2017. There will be a different focus looking at community involvement on meadow sites and propagating certain species of plants which have been difficult to restore to sites using methods such as spreading green hay or seed sowing.

A match-funding issue has arisen with the Coronation Meadows project (BIFFA) and work is currently on-going to replace this funding to ensure this project can go ahead in March 2016.

Hen Harriers in the Forest of Bowland

The Hen harrier Joint Action Plan has received Government approval and was launched on 14 January 2016 with all partners signing up to it, including the RSPB following minor changes to the plan. This can now move forward at a local level following the six point plan as follows:

- Monitoring of hen harrier populations in England and UK
- Diversionsary feeding
- Work with Raptor Persecution Priority Delivery Group to analyse monitoring information and develop intelligence picture
- Nest and winter roost protection
- Southern re-introduction
- Trialling a brood management scheme

Michael Helm queried as to whether trans-location was being looked at, and Elliott replied that it was, and was covered by the 5th action of the plan. However, the FoB (and other Protected Landscapes) had expressed a view that the conservation and protection of hen harriers in Northern England still remained the priority.

Cllr Starkie reminded the Committee about the plan to replace and refurbish AONB boundary signs with the hen harrier logo. He expressed concern about the slow progress that is being made with regards to replacing a sign near Roughlee, though he did add that Dave Padley had been trying to progress the issue with LCC Highways. Elliott also explained that an audit of the condition of the existing signs was being made and that the number of signs had now been identified for refurbishment and a local craftperson (contact supplied by Cllr Starkie) had been contracted to carry out this work.

4. AONB Revenue Budget 2016/17

Elliott presented the report on the Revenue Budget for 2016/2017 and the AONB 'Project' provision and Sustainable Development Fund as attached to the agenda.

The formal grant offer from Defra had just been received and it was better than expected and will protect National AONBs and National Parks funding for the next four years and includes an annual inflationary increase. Therefore at Appendix 'A' the Defra funding for 2016/17 which was budgeted at £208,143 has increased by £3,580 to £211,723. Elliott will now look at the additional funding received and where it should be apportioned within the Partnership budget and will report back to the Committee with this information in April.

It was noted that by not cutting Defra funds, it proves that the current minister is very supportive of the good work the AONB partnerships carry out nationally. The National Association for AONBs (that FoB subscribe to) have been instrumental in negotiating this favourable grant settlement with Defra.

With regards the AONB Sustainable Development Fund the proposal is to cease the Fund at the end of this financial year. The reasoning behind this is that there are other AONB projects with greater need for match-funding support and which can also offer greater added value and benefits (eg Pendle Hill LPS, Wildflowers for the Meadows).

Resolved: that the Committee agreed to:

- i) Approve the 2016/17 Revenue Budget with the increased funding of £3,580 from Defra as set out in the report
- ii) Subject to the approval of (i) above, to request the funding authorities to make appropriate provision in their revenue budgets
- iii) Agree the closure of the AONB Sustainable Development Fund from April 2016

5. Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership

An update on the progress and implications for AONB Unit staffing delivery were detailed in the attachment circulated with the agenda and Elliott spoke further to the paper.

Resolved: the Committee agreed to:

- i) Note the progress report and offer comments on the development of the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership

6. Urgent Business

Elliott gave a brief staffing update within the wider AONB team and support staff and informed the Committee that as of 31 March 2016, Tarja Wilson will leave Lancashire County Council on VR. He stated that she will be sorely missed by her colleagues and local communities that she has worked with during her time at LCC. Tarja will be saying goodbye at a "leaving do" on 23 March 2016.

A number of the Committee wished to record their best wishes to Tarja for the future and it was echoed by them that they will miss her terribly.

Cllr Browne requested that the Chair, CC Atkinson write on their behalf to Tarja detailing the lovely comments made about her. CC Charles seconded this.

Resolved: CC Atkinson, to write a letter to Tarja.

Also the National Association for AONB have a long service recognition award and Elliott has nominated both Tarja and Dave Padley for this award. Dave is going to be undertaking some of Tarja's post following her departure.

Nick Osbourne will be leaving the Authority as well at the end of March 2016.

Finally, Congratulations were expressed to Hetty Byrne who recently got engaged.

Alderman Roger Brooks brought to the table an article by the Director of External Affairs on land mass in England, Northern Ireland and Wales and that the National Trust are

monitoring the effect of local planning authorities. He asked as to whether Local Planning Officers had been made aware of this and Elliott confirmed they had.

Please see attached link to the full report <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/news/protecting-englands-special-countryside>.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, 21 April 2016 in Bleasdale Parish Hall, Wyre. Project visits meet at 9.45am, lunch at 1.00pm and JAC meeting at 2.00pm.

Samantha Gorton
Democratic Services

Lancashire County Council
County Hall
Preston