

West Pennine Moors Area Management Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 5th July, 2011 at 9.30 am in The Dome Room, Smithills Hall, Smithills Dean Road, Bolton, BL1 7NP

Present:

Chair

County Councillor Peter Malpas, Lancashire County Council

Committee Members

Councillor Mrs Jean V Rigby, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Councillor Khalid Hussain, Bury Metropolitan Borough Council
Councillor Amanda Robertson, Rossendale Borough Council
Councillor Paul Brierley, Bolton Council
Councillor Marie Gray, Chorley Borough Council
Councillor Trevor Maxfield, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Councillor Eileen Entwistle, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Councillor Brian Essex, Rossendale Borough Council
Neville Kidd, United Utilities

Officers

Ms Bronwen Earnshaw, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Fiona Cruchley, Lancashire County Council
Ms Jenny Kenyon, Lancashire County Council
Ms Tamzin Percival, Rossendale Borough Council
Mr Malcolm Russell, Bolton Council

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

It was unanimously agreed that to be able to discuss the change to the Terms of Reference that a chair and vice-chair be voted in for this meeting. CC Peter Malpas and Councillor Jean Rigby were therefore voted in as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively.

Following the acceptance of the amended Terms of Reference and the fact that the funding situation meant that Lancashire County Council was the only remaining funding authority, CC Peter Malpas was nominated and seconded as Chair and Councillor Rigby was nominated and seconded as Vice-Chair for a term of three years, ending at the annual meeting to be held in July 2014.

2. Revision to the Terms of Reference

After some discussion it was unanimously agreed that the amended Terms of Reference be agreed for the management committee. It was noted that all voting councils now have two voting representatives. The Secretary to contact all councils and inform them of this.

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillor Eileen Sherrington (Bolton Council), Councillor Derek Boden OBE (Bury Metropolitan Borough Council), County Councillor Jimmy Eaton (Lancashire County Council), Rosemary Budd (Natural England).

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (31 March 2011)

These were agreed as a true record.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

There were no matters arising.

6. Review of Partnership Arrangements

Members noted the report attached to the agenda. No comments were raised.

7. West Pennine Moors Revenue Budget - Final Accounts 2010/11

Members noted the report attached to the agenda. Jenny Kenyon requested that if anyone has any specific queries to contact her directly.

8. Lancashire County Council Report on Project Activity

Members noted the report attached to the agenda. Fiona reported that the leaflets on the bridleway and Healey Nab were at the printers and an email version would be sent to all members as soon as it became available and she would arrange to send all members paper versions later. Following a query from Councillor Gray it was noted that versions of the leaflets would be available in the visitors' centres.

9. Ranger and Information Services Report - United Utilities

Neville Kidd presented his report attached with the agenda. He reported that following the moorland fire, a total of 30 hectares of woodland had been lost in the Pike Stones area. He commented that fly-tipping and litter were ongoing problems taking up a considerable amount of time and that removal of the Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed were a constant problem but one which was constantly being targeted.

Neville reported that the revenue and capital programme was attached to the agenda and if anyone required any further information to contact him direct.

County Councillor Peter Malpas queried the issue of fly-tipping and whether the Police had been helpful in finding the culprits. Neville replied that unfortunately it was a widespread problem in the area and referred to the problem of people dumping used tyres. Neville mentioned that the areas of Rivington, Turton and Belmont were the worst areas for this offence and the culprits were very hard to trace. It also meant that United Utilities had to pay to have the tyres disposed of.

Neville did say however, that fly-tipping was easier to trace on the whole as the bags of rubbish were searched through and often incriminating evidence was found but the offenders were becoming aware of this and being selective about the rubbish tipped.

Neville reported that it cost United Utilities approximately £100,000 to dispose of illegally dumped rubbish.

Councillor Jean Rigby reported on an iphone 'app' called 'lovecleanstreets' which enables iphone users to take pictures of dirty streets. This information is then passed via the application to the relevant council. The website address is <http://lovecleanstreets.org>.

Discussion took place on the Himalayan Balsam and the Japanese Knott Weed issue.

Councillor Brian Essex queried the progress with the dam repairs and Neville replied that it would take a minimum of 12 months to repair, depending on the survey findings into the core of the dam.

Following a query regarding tree planting, Neville confirmed that this would be continuing this year, including hedges.

Councillor Jean Rigby and County Councillor Peter Evans praised the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service for their efforts during the recent moorland fires and other members of the committee also wished to praise all other such services, eg mountain rescue.

10. Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme and potential opportunities arising from the recent white paper on the Natural Environment

Fiona Cruchley updated the members regarding the progress of this application. The discussions were ongoing and it had hoped to apply in January 2011 but due to the changes regarding funding this application would now be submitted in January 2012. She stressed that competition would be strong but would keep members informed as to progress.

Fiona also informed the members regarding the Government White Paper 'Nature Improvement Areas' and reported that although details of the application process had not yet been finalised requested permission from the members to apply as and when necessary. This was agreed. She reported that there would only be 12 areas involved initially in England and competition would also be strong.

Councillor Brian Essex confirmed that any help with seeking enhanced categorisation for the area could only be of benefit.

11. Any Other Business

Malcolm Russell commented on behalf of Bolton Council that they were still maintaining projects already commenced on the moors but that capital works had been curtailed. He would report to future meetings as necessary.

Bronwen Earnshaw reported that the situation with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council is the same as Bolton and they were maintaining projects, especially the Public Rights of Way. Some funding had been obtained from the Section 106 Fund but this was to maintain the Tacklers Trail and Weavers' Trail as they were rights of way. Bronwen handed round to members copies of a leaflet for the impending walking festival.

12. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be scheduled for Tuesday 3 July 2012 at a venue and time to be decided.

Ian Fisher
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston