



Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Advisory Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 1st March, 2019 at 2.00 pm in Dunsop Bridge Village Hall, Trough Road, Dunsop Bridge, Clitheroe, BB7 3BG

Present:

Chair

County Councillor Albert Atkinson, Lancashire County Council

Committee Members

County Councillor Mrs Susie Charles, Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Richard Welch, North Yorkshire County Council
Councillor Ian Thompson, Craven District Council
Councillor Mrs Rosemary Elms, Ribble Valley Borough Council
Councillor John Ibison, Wyre Borough Council
Helen Dix, Environment Agency
Blanaid Denman, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Mr Andrew Taylor, Bowland Land Managers Forum
Mike Pugh, Champion Bowland
David Kelly, Ramblers Association

Officers

Elliott Lorimer, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
David Porter, Lancaster City Council
Sandra Silk, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Liz Small, North Yorkshire County Council
Sam Gorton, Legal and Democratic Services, LCC
Sarah Robinson, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Robin Gray, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit

Apologies

County Councillor Shaun Turner, Lancashire County Council
Councillor Jane Parkinson, Lancaster City Council
Councillor John Browne, Preston City Council
Councillor James Starkie, Pendle Borough Council
Colin Price, Yorkshire Local Councils Association

Rosemary Budd, Natural England
Marilyn Pilkington, Friends of Bowland
Alison Boden, Wyre Borough Council
David Hewitt, Ribble Valley Borough Council
Andrew Laycock, Craven District Council

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence

County Councillor Albert Atkinson welcomed all to the meeting.

Apologies were presented on behalf of the Committee members and officers as detailed above.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosures of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 October 2018

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2018 were agreed as a correct record following the addition of Councillor Rosemary Elms' apologies being noted.

4. AONB Management Plan Review - final draft for consideration

Elliott Lorimer, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Manager presented the report and presentation, which summarised progress towards the final approval and adoption of the Forest of Bowland Area of Natural Outstanding Beauty Management Plan (2019-2024).

Following formal consultation with local authorities, statutory agencies, non-governmental organisations, community groups and individuals, which took place between early November 2018 and mid-January 2019 the final draft plan was now complete and was only likely to receive minor amendments if the formal consultation on the Environmental Report raised any issues.

Additional information had been added to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan following the consultation stage. This included core principles as below:

- Supporting sustainable land management
- Sustainable development
- Landscape change
- Adopting a natural capital and ecosystems approach
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation

Future monitoring of the Plan would take two forms:

- i) Monitoring performance – to establish how well the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership was progressing in delivering the Plan's objectives and actions.

- ii) Monitoring condition – to establish whether the special qualities/features of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty were in favourable condition, potentially showing improvements, no change or deterioration and hence whether the aim of conserving and enhancing the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was being achieved.

Next steps in the review were to complete consultation for assessments and subject to agreement of the final draft by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Advisory Committee, seek approval/adoption of the Plan by local authority partners. Following this, design proofs would be created and available online (with limited print) and the final revised Plan would be submitted to the Defra Minister.

Natural England had recently released a position statement about burning on deep peat and it was suggested that this could possibly be included in the Plan under one of the actions. Elliott Lorimer noted the comment and would review the plan objectives and actions in light of this statement.

Resolved: That the Committee:

- i) Noted the report and offered comments on the review of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.
- ii) Approved the final draft of the revised Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (2019-2020), to proceed for final approvals by partner funding authorities and statutory agencies.

5. Current AONB Management Plan - Delivery Updates:

a) Landscape Enhancement Initiative – Quernmore and Conder Valley Project

Robin Gray, Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit updated the Board with a presentation on the Quernmore and Conder Valley Landscape Enhancement Initiative which was bid for in April 2019. Over the last two months, Sandra Silk and Robin Gray have been working towards submission of an expression of interest bid by 15 February 2019 to the National Grid. The maximum amount of bid is £200,000 and the total budget is £266,667. Works were identified in excess of this budget, however they have been scaled back accordingly to bring the project budget back in line with the available grant. The matched funding required would be made up from 4% Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership, 5% Woodland Trust (tree stock), 12% Landowners (labour to carry out works) and 4% Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty staff time.

The outputs from the project were that there were 30 different landowners and the project would deliver 4,294 metres of hedgerow on existing fence lines (mostly where there were previous hedges) and restore 2.314 metres of existing hedgerow (gapping up and protection). 2,811 metres of hedgerow would be laid, a central component of the landscape character and create 2.261 hectares of woodland and field corner planting. 450 metres of drystone walling would also be restored and six training sessions would be delivered.

Other (possible) outputs being developed in parallel to the Landscape Enhancement Initiative (these are not funded through the initiative) were to restore two hectares of semi-natural grassland at Crook O'Lune, restore 200 metres of riparian habitat and restore four hectares of ancient semi natural woodland at Bushy Bank. Two visitor car parks could also be refurbished and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit was working with Abbeystead regarding this.

There were also 6-7 schemes outside the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty formal boundary but within the setting of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designated area.

The next steps were to prepare the full application for submission which closes on 10 May 2019. Notification of the application and grant agreements was due around Christmas 2019 time and if successful, the release of funds would be around the first week in January 2020.

Helen Dix stated that there was a flood risk review around Galgate taking place and there was lots of potential for more funding from the Lune Rivers Trust and urged that Robin spoke to Simon Bennett from the Environment Agency regarding this.

Other benefits from the project was some consultancy time for woodland and hedgerows consultants and landowners could call for their advice. There was also shared learning between the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership too.

Sandra and Robin were thanked for their contribution on the project.

b) Defra Environmental Land Management System 'Tests and Trials' – National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty proposal

Elliott Lorimer, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Manager informed the Committee that the Government was proposing a replacement for the agricultural basic payment scheme by an Environmental Land Management System. In the short term, Defra wanted to carry out tests and trials as to how this system might work and had asked the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to consider putting forward trial proposals. A proposal had gone forward from the National Association of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to deliver a series of trials across 12 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Forest of Bowland had submitted proposals jointly with North Pennine and Nidderdale which looked to support, viable high nature value farming in the uplands and would look to work with farmers to develop land management plans based on identification of natural capital assets on farm and establish the value of these assets and associated ecosystem services. Further work would then be progressed to look at how farmers might be paid to maintain and improve these assets for the public good. This work on the Environmental Land Management System would also be accompanied by farm business advice to establish how Environmental Land Management System on a farm could also support a viable and profitable farming enterprise. Elliott would keep the Committee updated if the trial progresses.

6. Glover Review of Designated Landscapes - Update

Elliott Lorimer, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Manager drew the Committee's attention to the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty review document and the local responses document that were circulated with the agenda for the Glover Review of Designated Landscapes.

Elliott informed the Committee that a review panel visit to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty would take place and be conducted by Dame Fiona Reynolds, former Director General of the National Trust. Elliott was proposing to have a round table discussion with Fiona and invite a few people from this Committee to the meeting and then arrange the visits to projects and to visit partner organisations. Dame Fiona would be coming for two days and initially be visiting the Grosvenor Estate and then with the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit for a day. The dates of the visit were 6-7 June 2019 and if any Committee members wished to raise anything important to inform Elliott Lorimer, email elliott.lorimer@lancashire.gov.uk. It is hoped that the review would be concluded in Autumn 2019 and an update would be given to the next Joint Advisory Committee following the report.

7. Any Other Business

There was no any other business received from the Committee.

8. Urgent Business

The Chair reported that there had been no items of urgent business received.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee noted that the next meetings would be held on:

Thursday, 18 April 2019 in Wyre District

Thursday, 24 October 2019 in Preston District

Samantha Gorton
Democratic Services

Lancashire County Council
County Hall
Preston