



Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Advisory Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 26th April, 2013 at 2.00 pm in Barley Village Hall, Cross Lane, Barley, Nr Burnley. BB12 9JU

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
Councillor Colin Price, Yorkshire Local Councils Association
County Councillor David Smith, Lancashire County Council
Councillor James Starkie, Pendle Borough Council
Barrie Tyrer, Bowland Experience Limited
Janet Sharp, Champion Bowland (formerly Bowland Tourism Environment Fund)

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
David Padley, Lancashire County Council
Mike Pugh, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Sandra Silk, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit
Martin Putsey, Preston City Council
Gavin Thomas, RSPB Bowland Wader Project

Apologies

County Councillor Mrs Susie Charles, Lancashire County Council
Councillor John Browne, Preston City Council

Neil Clark, Natural England
Ian Grindy, United Utilities plc
Councillor Roger Sherlock, Lancaster City Council
Mr Andrew Taylor, Bowland Land Managers Forum
County Councillor Richard Welch, North Yorkshire County Council
Graham Megson, North Yorkshire County Council
Dave Oyston, United Utilities plc
Alison Boden, Wyre Borough Council

Presentation

The Committee received a presentation from Gavin Thomas from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). Gavin gave a presentation on the RSPB's Bowland Wader Project and highlighted work being undertaken to encourage and promote various wader species to return to the Forest of Bowland, the work has included aspects such as:

- Habitat creation.
- Landscape maintenance and restoration.
- Focusing resources on specific "wader hotspot" areas.
- Working in partnership with all relevant organisations.
- Working with farmers and landowners.
- Volunteer tasks such as wader surveys and habitat management work.

Resolved: The Committee noted the presentation.

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

The Chair, County Councillor Albert Atkinson, welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

2. Appointment of Additional Committee Member

The Committee considered a request to appoint a new Committee Member – Friends of Bowland.

Friends of Bowland was established as an unincorporated association in 2012, agreeing a governing document and appointing officers following its launch at Newton-in-Bowland village hall in October 2012.

Friends of Bowland aims are:

- to promote practical conservation in Bowland;
- to promote environmental knowledge and training - in particular to benefit Bowland flora and fauna;
- to promote historical and local research relating to the landscape of Bowland;
- to hold educational and social events likely to be of interest to Friends;
- be a means of getting advice and recruiting volunteers for projects;
- raise funds to promote these aims, in particular where funds may be inaccessible to the AONB unit;

- work with the AONB unit and other relevant groups/organisations to avoid duplication and waste of resources.

Resolved: The Committee approved the appointment to the Joint Advisory Committee of a representative from Friends of Bowland.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None disclosed.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 January 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2013 were agreed as an accurate record.

5. Matters Arising

None.

6. Budget 2013/14 Update

Elliott Lorimer presented a revised and updated Budget report which detailed at Appendix 'A' the agreed 5.38% reduction made to the Defra grant for 2013/14. An estimated reduction in accommodation costs and reduced budgets for the AONB Sustainable Development Fund will help absorb the reduction in Defra grant.

The updated budget figures were presented and showed that the grant for 2013/14 from Defra allows £208,303 against core costs and contribution of £16,000 towards the AONB Sustainable Development Fund.

This allows £87,378 for the annual programme of projects to deliver the AONB Management Plan and AONB Unit business plan. SDF will be supplemented with additional funds from the annual projects programme to provide a total pot of £26,000.

It remains important to emphasise that 'projects funding' will continue to be used as match-funding to attract additional income to the AONB Partnership to better deliver the AONB Management Plan.

Resolved: The Committee noted the revised budget for 2013/14.

7. AONB Partner Updates

Updates were provided by partners on a Hen Harriers project and the Brennand & Whitendale river project project to increase the numbers of Salmon in the rivers.

The Committee also took the opportunity to commend the Parish Lengthsman Scheme.

The Committee raised the issue of the risk of ragwort weeds in Hodder Valley and the potential for it to spread. Officers discussed the Lancashire County Council invasive species project and agreed to raise the issue with the Ribble Rivers Trust.

8. Delivering the AONB Management Plan

Elliott Lorimer introduced each of the items under Item 8 as follows:

a) AONB Unit activity report

This report is a summary of some key AONB projects developed and delivered by the AONB Unit over the last six months.

b) Draft AONB Unit business plan 2013/14

An annual review of the AONB Unit Business Plan is now complete and a draft of the plan is attached for JAC members to view.

c) AONB Management Plan Review update

Updates were provided as detailed in each of the relevant sections of the minutes.

8a. AONB Unit Report

The Committee received the AONB Unit Report which provided updates, as detailed in the full report on the following projects / work areas:

- Hedgelaying in Bowland
- Moorland Restoration
- Bowland Hay Time Project
- Haytime Appeal
- Undergrounding for Visual Amenity programme – Roeburndale
- Champion Bowland
- Electric Bicycle Network
- Sustainable Development Fund
- Wild about Bowland
- Training for Tourism Businesses
- Bowland Land Managers Forum
- A Leap in the Park
- Lancashire Witches Walk
- Bowland Rambler Bus Service
- Access for All
- 50th Anniversary
- Gisburn Forest Hub
- Festival Bowland 2013
- St. James' Church Archaeology Project
- Communications
- The National Association for AONBs – Future Landscapes Collaboration Project

Resolved: The Committee commented on the various projects and noted the report as circulated.

8b. AONB Unit Business Plan 2013/14

The draft AONB Business Plan for 2013 to 2016 was presented to the Committee as circulated in the full report.

The business plan set out the strategic priorities for 2013 to 2016 and how they will be implemented each section of the plan was presented and discussed in detail with the Committee.

Resolved: The Committee noted and endorsed the draft AONB Business Plan for 2013 to 2016 as presented.

8c. AONB Management Plan Review Update

It was reported to the Committee that following the additional special meeting of the Committee held in January 2013 in Grindleton a Management Plan Review timetable has been put together which was circulated to Committee members. The Management Plan Review timetable set out key stages and a timeline for completion.

Resolved: The Committee noted and endorsed the Management Plan Review timetable as presented.

9. AONB Fundraising Strategy

Cathy Hopley, Forest of Bowland AONB Unit, presented the report. Cathy explained that in April 2012, the AONB JAC approved the AONB Unit to progress the development of a Fundraising Strategy for the Partnership. This strategy sets out a number of ways in which the Partnership can compensate for likely reductions in future funding, including:

1. reducing expenditure from staff, projects or SDF budgets;
2. seeking gifts from individual or corporate donors;
3. developing alternative income streams.
4. applying for grants from non-governmental bodies.

Resolved:

The Committee resolved to:

- i. Note the report and approve the adoption and implementation of AONB Fundraising Strategy by the Partnership.
- ii. Approve for the AONB Unit to implement the transfer of the Sustainable Development Fund to Champion Bowland, subject to approval by the SDF Panel and trustees of Champion Bowland.
- iii. Approve for the AONB Unit to develop a draft proposal for an Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Stage 1 bid (to be tabled again for further discussion at the AONB JAC meeting in October 2013).

10. AONB 50th Anniversary Update

It was reported to the Committee that a bid for some additional funding for the 50th Anniversary had been unsuccessful. However it was also reported that a meeting had been scheduled with interested parties to look at organising a series of events within existing resources, including Festival Bowland, walks, arts programme and lots of other projects with publicity and promotion.

Resolved: The Committee noted the updated on the AONB 50th Anniversary arrangements.

11. Date of Future Meetings

Following a discussion around potential clashes of dates it was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 9th October 2013 in the Preston area, with the following Committee meeting to be held on Tuesday 22 April 2014 in the Craven area.

Andy Milroy
Principal Executive Support Officer

Lancashire County Council
County Hall
Preston