

Arnsdale & Silverdale

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday 30th March at 2.00pm
The Heron Hall, Storth



MINUTES

Attending

Members of the Executive Committee:

Cllr Kevin Briggs	Warton Parish Council
Andrew Frankish	Environment Agency
Eve Hall	Local User Group (N Lancs Bridleways Association)
Joan Jackson	NFU
Ann Kitchen	Local Business (Bittern Countryside CIC)
Cllr Brian Meakin	Beetham Parish Council (Chair)
Cllr Keith Palmer	Silverdale Parish Council
Colin Peacock	Arnsdale/Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust
Craig Russell	Local Business (Beetham Holiday Homes)
Cllr Jim Shaw	Arnsdale Parish Council

In attendance:

Ruth Ainsworth	AONB Funding & Communications Officer
Barbara Henneberry	AONB Communications & Funding Officer
Sue Hunter	AONB Officer
David Porter	Lancaster City Council
Lorayne Woodend	South Lakeland District Council

Apologies:

Lucy Barron	AONB Manager
Tony Riden	AONB Countryside Officer
Cllr Nigel Goodrich	Lancaster City Council
Brian Jones	Local User Group (Ramblers)
Alison Lax	CPRE/Friends of the Lake District
Elliott Lorimer	Lancashire County Council
Cllr Jane Panton	Yealand Conyers Parish Council
Jarrold Sneyd	RSPB
Martin Rhodes	Natural England
Maggie Robinson	Natural England

1 Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies are listed above. Each person present introduced themselves.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 14th October 2015

- 2.1 The minutes were approved by the Committee and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting held on 14th October 2015

3 Matters arising from the minutes

- 3.1 (5.2) Cllr Kevin Briggs has been contacted and has agreed to continue as Vice-Chair for another year.
- 3.2 (13.1) The AONB Grants Fund was launched at the AONB Conference in January. One application is currently under consideration and 2 further expressions of interest have been received to date.
- 3.3 (14) The Bittern Award was presented to Peter Standing for his work in managing the hugely popular and successful Landscape Trust's annual events programme since 2010.

4 AONB Budget 2015/16 outturn and proposed 2016/17 (report circulated)

- 4.1 Members were advised that it had been necessary to make some minor changes to the budget since the last meeting in order to effectively deliver the Business Plan. These changes were detailed in the report along with the proposed budget for 2016/17.
- Permission was sought from members representing the Parish Councils for a proportion of their financial contributions to the AONB Partnership received in 2015/16 to be used in 2016/17 to deliver actions identified in the AONB Management Plan, in particular the continued work to provide opportunities for young people to gain work experience in conservation and land management. This was agreed.

Q: What has the money allocated to Consultants been spent on in 2015/16 and what is planned for 2016/17?

A: In 2015/16, Graeme Skelcher was commissioned to carry out survey work on the AONB's priority habitats and Mark Sears, Chief Wild Officer of the Wild Network was invited to be the keynote speaker at the AONB Annual Conference. In 2016/17 we are planning to work closely with the Wild Network to become one of the pilot sites for their new 'Wild Local' programme. This will see local networks of organisations, schools and families working together to reduce the barriers to 'wildtime' and get more children enjoying the outdoors. Further Priority Habitat survey work is planned in 2016 as part of the Landscape Monitoring Project to be co-funded by Natural England.

AGREED: to note the report and approve the 2016/17 budget, including using a proportion of the Parish Council contributions received in 2015/16 to enable delivery of the AONB Management Plan in 2016/17.

5 Progress on the AONB Development Plan Document (report circulated)

- 5.1 Members were briefed on the Issues & Options consultation for the Development Plan Document for the Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB, which took place between 6th November and 18th December 2015.

Drop-in exhibitions were held in each of the parishes and these were attended by over 600 members of the public. The consultation resulted in almost 300 written responses from local residents, landowners, local employers, statutory organisations and developers.

The four most important matters arising from the consultation were:

- That the special nature and protected status of the AONB is highly valued, and should be given the strongest protection by the Plan;
- The infrastructure shortcomings of the area, especially in respect of drainage and the high risk of flooding in many parts of the AONB;
- Widespread opposition from local people to most of the development sites suggested, with support for a brownfield-first approach.
- That some of the housing needs arising within the AONB should and could be met outside of the AONB

During the consultation, 3 of the original 117 sites were withdrawn and 11 new sites were put forward and these are currently being consulted on, with the consultation finishing on 3rd May 2016.

It was requested that the information on the AONB and Council websites identifies which sites have been withdrawn.

Action: David Porter

5.2 The timetable for the remainder of the plan preparation is expected to be as follows:

- Spring 2016: Consultation on new site suggestions
- Autumn 2016: Draft Plan consultation
- Early 2017: Publication and Submission of the Plan
- Summer 2017: Public Examination of the Plan
- Autumn 2017: Adoption of the AONB Development Plan Document

5.3 Some discussion took place on protecting school playing fields and whether there was any merit in putting the Plan forward as a Neighbourhood Plan.

5.4 It was agreed that another stakeholder meeting should be held before publication of the Draft Plan.

Action: David Porter

5.5 Members thanked Lancaster City Council, SLDC and the AONB Team for running such a successful consultation exercise which generated a lot of interest and feedback.

AGREED: to note the key matters arising from the Issues & Options consultation for the Development Plan Document for the Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB

6 AONB Planning work update (report circulated)

6.1 Members were updated on planning and development management work carried out by the AONB Team on behalf of the AONB Partnership, including the number of applications assessed and responses submitted, highlighting the importance of this area of our work. It is encouraging that the planning authorities are clearly taking landscape character into consideration in their decision making.

6.2 Three important documents have now been finalised – The Landscape & Seascape Character Assessment, the AONB Planning Protocol and the

Planning Protocol between Natural England and the AONB Partnership – and formally adopted by the Planning sub-group on behalf of the full Executive Committee as agreed at the previous meeting.
The Landscape & Seascape Character Assessment is available to view and/or download from the AONB website.

AGREED: to note the report on planning work.

7 Volunteer work programme update (report circulated and supplementary information tabled)

- 7.1** We continue to run a very successful volunteer programme offering numerous opportunities to engage in practical conservation work, monitoring, administration and event support. The AONB Countryside Officer leads the volunteers every Tuesday, with an average of over 11 volunteers turning out each week. The monthly litter picks have resulted in almost 200 bags of rubbish being removed (and wherever possible, recycled) from the lanes and shoreline of the AONB. Over the year, this side of volunteering alone has contributed an incredible 3128 hours of volunteer effort.

NLBA reported that they have purchased a chainsaw to facilitate maintenance of bridleways in the area.

AGREED: to note the report on the volunteer work programme

8 AONB Delivery Plan update from the AONB Team and partners – verbal updates

8.1 The Environment Agency

reported that a first ever fish survey had been carried out on Leighton Beck. Whilst numbers were lower than expected, all other tests indicate a healthy water course. The survey will be repeated later in the year.
Further sampling of the water at Leighton Moss and Hawes Water has been carried out by RSPB and the Environment Agency.

8.2 Silverdale Parish Council

reported that a continued bus service connecting with Carnforth and the trains had been secured. There are current concerns about the future of the library in the village.

8.3 The Landscape Trust

reported that 2016 sees it celebrating its 30th Anniversary. A comprehensive programme of events has been organised, including a photographic competition/exhibition, a study weekend and a “Meet the villages” weekend focusing on Arnside. Coldwell Meadows, the recently acquired Landscape Trust reserve, is now open to the public.

8.4 Local Business – Beetham Holiday Homes

reported that good progress is being made with the B4YS project which will bring hyperfast broadband into the area.

8.5 Beetham Parish Council

reported that an approach has been made to Dallam Estate regarding improving the access to Heron Corn Mill, which due to increased traffic, is now becoming unsafe for pedestrians. Following the retirement of the sub-postmaster, the Post Office has agreed that Storth PO can be run by volunteers, ensuring the shop and PO remain an important amenity for the village.

8.6 Chairman’s report

The Chairman reported that the AONB Annual Conference held in January had been a very successful event. It was well attended and delegates were treated to a varied programme of entertaining and interesting speakers.

9 Any other business

- 9.1** Due to illness, the AONB Manager has been unable to present the AONB Team Business Plan for 2016-18. This will be completed and circulated to members as quickly as possible.

**10 Dates for your diary
2016****7th & 8th May****Photographic Exhibition**

featuring the best entries to the Landscape Trust Photographic Competition – Arnside Educational Institute

21st May**Open Afternoon at the Hynning**

(contact Sue Hunter for further information)

27th May - 11th June**A Taste of the Landscape**

a series of events organised by the AONB celebrating local food and products

17th – 25th September**Outstanding Week**

a series of events across the country celebrating AONBs

19th October (2pm)**AONB Executive Committee meeting**

to be held at RSPB Leighton Moss, Silverdale

Signed Date: