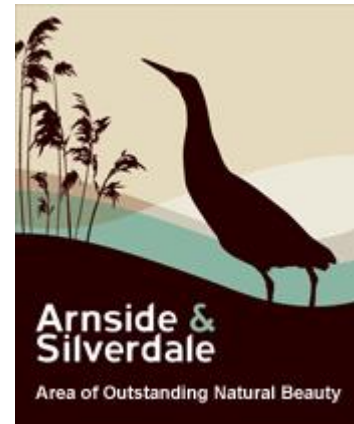


**Arnside & Silverdale
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership**

Executive Committee meeting 30th March 2016

The Heron Hall, Storth at 2pm



AGENDA

1. Welcome and apologies
2. Minutes of meeting held on 14th October 2015
3. Matters arising
4. AONB Core Budget 2015/2016 and 2016/17 (report circulated)
Decision required
5. AONB Development Plan Document progress update (report circulated)
6. Planning work programme update (report circulated)
7. Volunteer work programme update (report circulated)
8. Partners Reports
9. Any Other Business
 - AONB Team Business Plan 2016 – 2018
10. Dates for your diary
 - **8th May:** An exhibition featuring the best entries to the Landscape Trust Photographic Competition – Arnside Educational Institute
 - **21st May:** Open Afternoon at the Hyning (contact Sue Hunter for further information)
 - **27th May - 12th June:** “A Taste of the Landscape” – a series of events organised by Arnside & Silverdale AONB celebrating local food and products
 - **17th – 25th September:** “Outstanding Week” – a series of events across the country celebrating AONBs
 - **19th October:** AONB Executive Committee Meeting

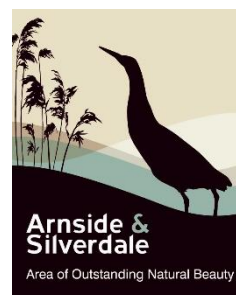
Tea and coffee will be served

3.30pm finish

Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday 14th October 2015 at 2.00pm
RSPB Leighton Moss, Silverdale



MINUTES

Attending

Members of the Executive Committee:

Andrew Frankish	Environment Agency
David Harpley	Wildlife Trusts
Sue Harrison	CLA
Robin Horner	RSPB
Joan Jackson	NFU
Brian Jones	Local User Group (Ramblers)
Ann Kitchen	Local Business (Bittern Countryside CIC)
Cllr Brian Meakin	Beetham Parish Council (Chair)
Cllr Keith Palmer	Silverdale Parish Council
Colin Peacock	Arnside/Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust
Craig Russell	Local Business (Beetham Holiday Homes)

In attendance:

Lucy Barron	AONB Manager
Barbara Henneberry	AONB Communications & Funding Officer
Sue Hunter	AONB Officer
Tony Riden	AONB Countryside Officer
Jackie Flynn	Lancashire County Council (S)
David Porter	Lancaster City Council
Lorayne Woodend	South Lakeland District Council

Apologies:

Cllr Nigel Goodrich	Lancaster City Council
Eve Hall	Local User Group (N Lancs Bridleways Association)
Alison Lax	CPRE/Friends of the Lake District
Georgina Lofthouse	National Trust
Elliott Lorimer	Lancashire County Council
Jarrold Sneyd	RSPB
Maggie Robinson	Natural England
Dorothy Fairburn	CLA

1 Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies are listed above

2 Introductions

- 2.1 Each person present introduced themselves.

3 Changes to Executive Committee membership

- 3.1 Members were advised that there had been several changes since the last meeting. The following new members were welcomed: Jarrod Sneyd (RSPB), Alison Lax (CPRE/FLD), Cllr Nigel Goodrich (Lancaster City Council), Sue Harrison (CLA) and Cllr Magnus George (Yealand Redmayne Parish Council). Outgoing members, former Councillor Paul Gardner and Cllr Mike Macklin were thanked for their service as part of the Committee.

4 Annual re-endorsement of User Groups, Business & Farming representatives

- 4.1 Under the terms of the Constitution, representatives of the local interests are subject to annual re-endorsement by the other members.
The appointments of Brian Jones (User Group – Ramblers), Eve Hall (User Group – NLBA), Ann Kitchen (Business/Tourism – Bittern Countryside CIC) and Craig Russell (Business/Tourism – Beetham Holiday Homes) were re-endorsed.
Proposed: Colin Peacock (Arnside/Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust)
Seconded: Andrew Frankish (Environment Agency)
The position of Landowner/farming representative is currently vacant.

5 Election of Chair and Vice Chairs

- 5.1 Under the terms of the Constitution, the Chairman is to be elected from among the voting members of the Executive Committee. Nominations for the position were requested. Cllr Brian Meakin (Beetham Parish Council) was proposed by Ann Kitchen (Bittern Countryside CIC) and seconded by Colin Peacock (Arnside/Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust). This was the only nomination. Cllr Brian Meakin was elected unanimously as Chairman. The appointment is for one year.
- 5.2 Nominations for the positions (2) of vice-chair were requested. Ann Kitchen (Bittern Countryside CIC) was proposed by Colin Peacock (Arnside/Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust) and seconded by Andrew Frankish (Environment Agency) and was duly elected. Cllr Kevin Briggs (Warton Parish Council), the current Vice-chair was not present at the meeting, so it was agreed that he should be contacted to see if he would be willing to stand for a further year.

ACTION: to contact Cllr Kevin Briggs

AONB Manager

6 Minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2015

- 6.1 The minutes were approved by the Committee and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting held on 11th March 2015

7 Matters arising from the minutes

- 7.1** (5.3) The AONB Countryside Officer gave an update on access to Trowbarrow Local Nature Reserve from Moss Lane. Network Rail has applied for a Section 119A Rail Crossing Diversion Order which will see the PROW, which currently crosses the rail track and is deemed unsafe, diverted along what was the permissive route. The application will be considered by Lancashire County Council Regulatory Committee on 21st October 2015.
- 7.2** (5.4) The AONB Manager confirmed that staff are continuing to monitor access to permissive paths but no problems, other than the access to Trowbarrow LNR, have been identified.
- 7.3** (7.1) The Business Plan 2015-18 was amended as requested and the revised document circulated.

8 AONB Budget 2014/15 outturn and revised 2015/16 (report circulated)

- 8.1** Members were advised that regular meetings are held with our accountants at Lancaster City Council where any variances are identified and changes in expected income/expenditure discussed. There is then an opportunity to formally revise the budget in October. Minor changes have been necessary to the 2015/16 budget agreed at the Executive Committee meeting in March, as explained in the report circulated.

Q: Does the figure provided for the Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) include Lancaster City Council's contribution to the wardening and has consideration been given to funding once the current stewardship agreement ends?

A: The wardening costs are not included in the AONB budget as they are met by Lancaster City Council. The financial risk caused by the closure of the current stewardship agreement has already been flagged up and a figure has been provided to Lancaster City Council to give an indication of the minimum amount required to maintain the sites, which are SSSIs, in favourable condition. In addition an application to the new Countryside Stewardship scheme is currently being prepared to be submitted to Natural England by 31st October.

AGREED: to note the report and approve the revised 2015/16 budget

9 Memorandum of Agreement - verbal update

- 9.1** The Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) provides a framework for the delivery of duties and obligations in respect of AONBs arising from the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 which, until recently, has been signed by Defra and the relevant Local Authorities. Defra has now indicated that their commitment will be made at a national level and has challenged individual AONBs to draw up their own MoA with their Local Authorities, which, in the case of Arnsdale & Silverdale, are Cumbria and Lancashire County Councils, South Lakeland District Council and Lancaster City Council. Arnsdale & Silverdale is now in a position to invite the Local Authorities to sign the MoA, which includes indicative figures for funding contributions for the next three years. Ideally we would like all four authorities to sign immediately, but we are mindful of the different circumstances of the individual authorities and if this is not possible, we will work with them towards getting their formal support as soon as possible. The work of the National Association for AONBs in this area has been, and continues to be, invaluable.

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

10.1 Members were briefed on the work undertaken and the work planned for the production of a Development Plan Document (DPD) for the area covered by the Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB. There is an important distinction to be made between the AONB Management Plan and the AONB DPD in that the former sets out the overall vision, objectives and delivery framework for the AONB while the main purpose of the DPD is to manage development. A housing needs survey has been carried out. A 'call for sites' undertaken early in 2015 resulted in a total of 117 sites being put forward for development and/or protection as open space. The next stage is to formally assess all proposals for their suitability using a consistent site assessment methodology. All sites will then be consulted upon through the Issues & Options consultation phase which will take place between 6th November and 18th December 2015. As part of this process, drop-in exhibitions are to be held in each of the parishes and every household in the AONB will receive a postcard notifying them of the opportunity to have their say.

The Draft Plan consultation will take place in Summer 2016, with a view to publication and submission of the Plan in early 2017 and formal adoption by Autumn 2017.

Q: What protection is in place between now and 2017?

A: Each local authority has existing development management policies relevant to the AONB and they will also take into account the results of the Housing Needs Survey.

Q: Is it possible to review the timetable, allowing for slippage, to ensure the adoption of the DPD meets the deadline imposed by Government?

A: Both local authorities are very aware of the deadline and will ensure that the process is completed by then.

The AONB team has been closely involved in the development of the DPD and will continue to prioritise this piece of work until its completion. The AONB Manager encouraged all members to take part in the consultation process starting on 6th November.

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

11.1 The AONB Team

The AONB Manager reported that:

- over the last six months, a full assessment of Local Wildlife sites has been undertaken which, in turn, will help establish a list of characteristic species which we can use for monitoring purposes.
- further work has been carried out on the Historic Designed Landscapes project which has identified a number of important historic designed landscapes and features which are not listed. Three in-depth studies have been undertaken and reports drawn up on how best to manage these sites.
- the AONB Team has been working closely with Morecambe Bay Partnership on the Headlands to Headspace project, which is looking at important heritage features including Jenny Brown's Chimney and Warton Crag hill fort. Detailed and exciting new research into these sites is being carried out with the help of volunteers.
- Morecambe Bay and the AONB received good coverage on BBC Countryfile at the beginning of October, with the programme covering the

new Morecambe Bay Cycleway and the new skytower at Leighton Moss.

- solar panels have been installed on the roof of the AONB office in Arnside, part-funded through a donation from the Bittern Countryside CIC
- the Local Produce festival “A Taste of the Landscape” took place in July and the biennial Apple Day earlier this month. Both events were very successful. The Team would like to record their thanks to Peter Goulder and Sheila Porter for once again hosting Apple Day and to the volunteers for their hard work in helping the day run smoothly.
- Colin Peacock and Tony Riden are to be congratulated on receiving national recognition for their contribution to AONBs when they were awarded the Landscapes for Life award at the NAAONB Annual Conference in July.
- a continuing successful AONB volunteer programme, carrying out practical conservation tasks on several sites within the AONB, installing fingerposts, carrying out monthly litter picks, butterfly transect recording and helping at events.
- a new warden, Jim Turner, has been appointed for the LNRs and a new seasonal ranger, Jonny Walker, hosted by the National Trust, is now working alongside the AONB Countryside Officer one day a week.

11.2 Partners

RSPB

reported on their contribution to delivery of the Nature Improvement Area project which is already reaping benefits in that a wintering bittern has been seen in the Lyth Valley where work to improve connectivity of sites was undertaken at Park End Farm. At Leighton Moss, there has been one booming Bittern, but no evidence of nesting. Work is currently being undertaken to raise the water levels at Silverdale Moss. The Skytower is now open, offering amazing views across the reedbeds and putting this wetland habitat into context within the wider landscape. Staff have also been discussing management of access onto Warton saltmarsh with Natural England.

NFU

highlighted the issue of the increasing number of solar farms and wind turbines which are clearly visible from the AONB and also the problem of ragwort being left to seed in fields and roadside verges.

Ramblers

requested an update on the Silverdale Tramper. The AONB Manager reported that it is now housed at Leighton Moss and we are looking to have it available for hire within a couple of months, once insurance etc. has been arranged. The AONB team is also working with the Leighton Hall Estate to arrange the necessary ground works to allow Tramper access into Trowbarrow LNR.

Local Business - Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company

advised members that they were pleased to have been able to support the installation of solar panels on the AONB office and would continue to focus on renewable energy projects. The importance of generating renewable energy was stressed and members were asked not to object to solar farms per se. The Silverdale & District Wood Bank continues to work successfully and small grants to enable the installation of woodburning stoves for households in fuel poverty are still available.

Lancaster City Council

reported that consultation on the Council's Local Plan "People, Homes and Jobs – how should we plan for the district's future?" will run for six weeks between 19th October and 30th November 2015.

South Lakeland District Council

reported that as Part 3 of their Local Plan, they will soon be consulting on their Development Management Policies which set out the criteria against which planning applications will be considered, including design and environmental standards. Their Statement of Community Involvement is currently under review.

The Wildlife Trusts

reported on their contribution to delivery of the Nature Improvement Area project which saw 500 ha of limestone grassland being managed and restored.

The Landscape Trust

reported a very successful 2015 events programme, which included 8 guided walks, 2 evening talks, a "Rocks & Soils" study weekend and an "AONB villages" weekend which this year focused on Beetham. Membership now stands at 1030.

CLA

reported that their members' annual outing had been to Dallam Tower Estate and the Local Access Forum had visited Trowbarrow LNR.

Local Business – Beetham Holiday Homes

reported that they are continuing to manage their sites for biodiversity, focusing on and monitoring butterflies and moths. They are also working closely with Dallam Tower Estate and Cumbria Woodlands on grey squirrel control.

Silverdale Parish Council

confirmed that progress is now being made in resolving the PROW closure and access problems at Trowbarrow LNR.

The Environment Agency

reported that work was ongoing in trying to improve monitoring of water quality at Leighton Moss and Hawes Water

Beetham Parish Council

reported work is continuing to put forward certain paths on the Dallam Estate as eligible to be designated as PROWs. The Council has also approached the Estate regarding improving the access to Heron Corn Mill, which due to increased traffic, is now becoming unsafe for pedestrians.

12 AONB Planning work update (report circulated)

- 12.1** The report provides the Committee with an update 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.

- 12.2** Work continues to fully finalise three important documents – The Landscape & Seascape Character Assessment, the AONB Planning Protocol and the Planning Protocol between Natural England and the AONB Partnership. It was proposed that adoption of these three pieces of work be delegated to the Planning sub-group following final revisions

- 12.3** Warton Parish Council wished to formally record their appreciation for the standard of planning consultation response letters written by the AONB Officer on behalf of the AONB Partnership.

AGREED: to note the report on planning work and to delegate the adoption of the Landscape & Seascape Character Assessment, the AONB Planning Protocol and the Planning Protocol between Natural England and the AONB Partnership to the Planning sub-group.

13 AONB Grants Fund progress – verbal update

- 13.1** The AONB Team is continuing to work with the Landscape Trust to establish a new AONB small grants fund for landscape projects. It is hoped to launch the new fund at the AONB Annual Conference in January.

14 Bittern Award 2015 – request for nominations

Each year the Bittern Award is presented to a group or individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the AONB. The AONB Manager asked for nominations for the 2015 award to be submitted by 1st December. The final decision will be made by the AONB Team and Chairman, with the award to be presented at the AONB Annual Conference in January.

ACTION: to submit nominations for the Bittern Award by 1st December

All members

15 Update on the work of the National Association for AONBs

- 15.1** The AONB Manager took the opportunity to stress the benefits of the NAAONB to individual AONBs, in particular the NAAONB's role in securing Defra funding and presenting a collective profile at a national level, developing relationships with national bodies and government departments. The AONB Manager and Executive Committee Chairman will be attending the NAAONB Chairs Conference and AGM in November where Rory Stewart MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Defra), will be speaking.

16 Any other business

- 16.1** Robin Horner of RSPB announced that this was likely to be his last meeting and that the RSPB in future would be represented by Jarrod Sneyd, the new site manager at Leighton Moss. Members wished to record their thanks and good wishes to Robin for his support for the AONB and for his many years' service on the Executive Committee.

Dates for your diary

2015

Saturday 31st October

AONB Hedgelaying Competition

opposite Leighton House farm, Slackhead LA7
7BA

2016

Wednesday 27th January

AONB Annual Conference

The Heron Theatre, Beetham

Wednesday 9th March

AONB Executive Committee meeting

RSPB Leighton Moss

Friday 27th May

AONB Local Produce Festival

to

Sunday 11th June

Signed Date:

Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Executive Committee 30.03.16

AGENDA ITEM 4

AONB Budget 2015/16 and 2016/17

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

To provide the Committee with details of the revised 2015/16 AONB budget and proposed budget for financial year 2016/17

RECOMMENDATION:

(1) that the Committee notes the report and approves the budget for 2016/17

Background

The 2015/16 budget has been revised to take into account of a number of changes and to enable effective delivery of the AONB Business Plan. The proposed 2016/17 budget is required by Defra

Arnside & Silverdale AONB Budget 2015/16 and 2016/17

	2015/16 agreed Oct 2015	2015/16 budget revised	2016/17 proposed Mar 2016
EXPENDITURE			£
Staff Costs			
Salaries, NI, Pensions	129100	128900	136100
Travel and subsistence	3200	3200	3200
Training	1500	1500	1500
Sub-total	133800	133600	140800
Accommodation / office equipment			
Repair and maintenance	1300	1500	700
Host authority central property charges			500
Cleaning	1000	1000	1000
Electricity	700	700	700
Other energy charges	600	600	600
Rent	3100	3100	3100
Rates	1900	1900	1900
Water services	100	100	100
Premises insurance	400	400	400
Telephones	1900	1900	1900
Office equipment	800	800	1000
Sub-total	11800	12000	11900
Communications and events			
Printing and stationery	800	800	800
Exhibitions and events	4100	4100	1600
Communications and publicity	3100	7200	3100
Sub-total	8000	12100	5500
Partnership running costs			
Executive Committee support inc Annual Conference	1400	1400	1400

NAAONB Membership	2500	2500	2500
Host authority recharges – Accountancy, internal audit & ICT	8100	8100	6800
Host authority recharges – other (provided in kind)	12400	4200	6500
Employee related insurance	1100	1100	1100
Repair and maintenance (vehicles)	500	500	500
Petrol and derv	700	700	700
Vehicle licence	500	500	500
Transport related insurance	900	900	900
Equipment and tools	2000	2000	1000
PPE (clothing and uniform)	300	300	300
Consultants	7400	3300	4700
Sub-total	37800	25500	26900
Other Management Plan Implementation			
AONB projects and community engagement programme	14600	14600	6970
Local Nature Reserves management programme	6120	13000	15610
Sub-total	20720	27600	22580
Reserve			
Contribution to reserve	3600	3600	2500
Sub-total	3600	3600	2500
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	215720	214400	210180

INCOME	2015/16 agreed October 2015	2015/16 budget revised	2016/17 proposed March 2016
Local authority financial contributions			
Cumbria County Council	8800	8800	8805
Lancashire County Council	8300	8200	8275
Lancaster City Council	15100	15200	15300
South Lakeland District Council	11500	11500	11500
Income in advance b/f from previous year	5400	5400	
Less Income in advance c/f to following year			
Sub-total	49100	49100	43880
Other income			
Defra grant	133200	133200	135490
Parish Council contributions and contracting income	6500	8200	6500
LNR grants income	6120	13000	15610
Bittern Countryside CIC grant	3800	3800	
Income in advance b/f from previous year	3600	3600	1700
Less Income in advance c/f to following year		-1700	
Sub-total	153220	160100	159300
Reserve			
Transfer out of reserve	1000	1000	0
Sub-total	1000	1000	0
Host authority in kind			
Lancaster City Council in kind support	12400	4200	7000
Sub-total	12400	4200	7000
TOTAL INCOME	215720	214400	210180

Vehicle, plant & machinery reserve	15/16
Balance as at 31/03/15	25846
Purchase of equipment	-1000
Purchase of new Land Rover	-25388
Land Rover trade-in	11000
Annual budgeted contribution into reserve	3600
Projected balance in reserve at year end	14058

Vehicle, plant & machinery reserve	16/17
Balance as at 31/03/16	14058
Annual budgeted contribution into reserve	2500
Projected balance in reserve at year end	16558

NOTES

- 2015-16: LNR grants income previously reported as £6120 in error
- 2016-17: LNR grants subject to confirmation of Countryside Stewardship for Warton Crag
- 2015-16: Local Authority contribution in kind recalculated by LCC
- 2015-16: Virement from Consultants to Marketing to enable a reprint of the Discover booklet
- 2015-16: Purchase of new Land Rover completed in February
- 2015-16/2016-17: Income carried forward.

Parish Council approval is required to treat £1700 of their contributions as Income in advance towards the continuation of funding of a part-time seasonal ranger.

In 2015/16 we have been working with the National Trust on a joint 6-month seasonal ranger scheme (Action 13.3 in the AONB Management Plan). The ranger was hosted by the National Trust, spending one day a week with the AONB Team and the remaining 4 days with the National Trust. The AONB made a contribution of £1472.30 towards full costs. This scheme has proved to be very successful – from our point of view providing invaluable help to the AONB Countryside Officer and the running of the AONB volunteer programme - and both the AONB and National Trust are keen to extend it for a further 12-24 months but on a slightly different basis of 1 day with the AONB and 3 with the National Trust. The cost to us of funding the post for 1 day a week from April would be approximately £3000. We have advised the National Trust that we can only commit to 1 year at this stage, although we would be prepared to consider a second year once we have further funding confirmations for 2017/18 and assuming the arrangement is still working well.

Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Executive Committee 30th March 2016

AGENDA ITEM 5

Title of report: Report on the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Plan Document Consultation. Report prepared by: David Porter (Lancaster City Council) and Lorayne Woodend (South Lakeland District Council)

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

To brief Executive Committee on the Issues & Options consultation for the Development Plan Document for the Arnside & Silverdale AONB, undertaken between 6 November and 18 December 2015.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Executive Committee notes the key matters arising from the Issues & Options consultation for the Development Plan Document for the Arnside & Silverdale AONB.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council are preparing a joint Development Plan Document (DPD) for the Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). When adopted, the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Plan will establish allocations of land for development, as well as consistent designations and policies for the conservation of the environment for the next 15 years. It will also be a key element in the delivery of the AONB Management Plan which was adopted in April 2014.
- 1.2 The Management Plan sets the overall vision for the AONB, whilst the main purpose of the DPD is to manage development. The DPD will undergo an independent examination by a government appointed planning inspector, and when adopted the Plan will form part of the statutory development plans for Lancaster and South Lakeland Districts. It will have great weight in making planning decisions.
- 1.3 The report presented to the AONB Executive in October 2015 explained the planning process relating to the preparation of the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Plan. It also summarised the surveys undertaken to ensure that the two Councils prepare the plan based on credible evidence.

- 1.4 This report summarises the results of the consultation undertaken by the two Councils on the Issues & Options stage of the Development Plan Document for the Arnside & Silverdale AONB.

2.0 Consultation

- 2.1 The two Councils undertook an Issues & Options consultation on the Arnside & Silverdale AONB DPD between 6 November and 18 December 2015. This was the first formal consultation stage for the Plan. The consultation set out the key aspects that the Plan seeks to address, and invited comments on:
- The Vision and Objectives for the AONB;
 - The most important planning policy issues facing the AONB;
 - Options for meeting the objectives and delivering the vision in the AONB, including sites suggested for consideration for development and protection.
- 2.2 The Issues and Options Discussion Paper put forward informed ideas before any decisions on the Plan are taken by the Councils. It concluded each section with questions designed to draw out comments on the key issues and options, but did not contain any definite proposals to allocate sites, or any proposed policy wording. Site suggestions (received from land owners and developers) were published alongside the Issues & Options, and responses invited on their suitability for the uses proposed.
- 2.3 The Issues and Options stage consultation set out to involve as many local people as possible in the plan-making process. In addition to press coverage and website information, every residential household in the AONB received a postcard notifying them of the opportunity to have their say. Drop-in exhibitions were held between 2pm and 7pm at the following locations:
- Wednesday 18 November: Heron Hall, Storth
 - Thursday 19 November, Warton Village Hall
 - Wednesday 25 November, Gaskell Memorial Hall, Silverdale
 - Monday 30 November, Arnside Educational Institute
 - Tuesday 1 December, Heron Theatre, Beetham
 - Wednesday 2 December, Yealand Village Hall

3.0 Summary of the Consultation Responses

- 3.1 Officers from the two Councils, assisted by colleagues from the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Unit, spoke to some 600 people at the six drop-in consultation events. Approximately 300 responses were received by the end of the consultation: most of these were from local residents, but others were from land-owners, local employers, statutory organisations and developers. The consultation contained 31 questions on a full range of planning issues, and invited comments on a total of 117 site suggestions.
- 3.2 The four most important matters arising from the consultation are:
- 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
- 3.3 The high regard and expectations that people have for the AONB are well recorded in the Management Plan. They are echoed in legislation (most notably in Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000) and guidance. The NPPF gives specific guidance for development planning and decision making in relation to AONBs. It confirms that “great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty” and that AONBs “have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.” It is for these reasons that many local people have objected to site suggestions which in their view would harm the qualities and significances of the AONB.
 - 3.4 The consultation responses drew attention to a number of infrastructure and services matters within the AONB. These range from highways, car parking and road traffic concerns, to health, education and broadband shortcomings, the lack of jobs and shops and the threat of cuts to libraries, fire stations, public transport and other key services.
 - 3.5 By far the biggest infrastructure concerns were connected to drainage and flood risk, especially in the settlements of Silverdale, Beetham and Warton where the consultation co-incided with a period of heavy rainfall and flooding. In places where there is no mains drainage or sewerage, local people drew attention to the importance of open land in flood and drainage attenuation, and the harm that developing certain sites could bring to the groundwater attenuation balance.
 - 3.6 The decision to consult on the 117 site suggestions was made in the interests of good participation in the planning process, but during the consultation it created some misunderstandings. Many respondents assumed that these sites were endorsed for development by the Councils, and responded to object. (In fact the Councils will only propose site allocations at the next stage of the plan process, the Draft Plan.) This diversion took some people’s attention away from aspects of the broader consultation, but did also produce new information about the planning history and constraints of some sites. Consulting on the site suggestions at this stage was also necessary for procedural reasons; to avoid a situation later in the process in which the first time people had sight of any of the site suggestions was after conclusions on whether to to exclude or propose them had been drawn.
 - 3.7 Many of the consultation responses supported the priority development of brownfield sites, a strong focus on affordable housing where need is demonstrated, and the control of further caravan site development. Overall, a large proportion of respondents oppose the development of major development sites and for second homes. These concerns are commonly supported by the lack of infrastructure and services, and the need to protect the qualities and significances of the AONB.
 - 3.8 In addition to the many local responses, there were submissions from land-owners and developers that make important points based on planning law and precedent, which in some cases are contrary to local preferences. These relate especially to the scale of development requirements (including the definition of major development), brownfield-first priorities and the viability of affordable housing.
 - 3.9 For some matters there is no clear signal from the consultation - for instance in response to the Discussion Paper’s questions on the six spatial options, the density of

development and settlement boundaries – where a wide range of views and opinions were expressed.

- 3.10 During the consultation, 11 additional sites were proposed for development, and a few of the original 117 have been withdrawn by their owners from consideration. A second consultation will be required on the new suggestions prior to the publication of the Draft Plan to ensure that people have had chance to comment on all the sites suggestions equally.
- 3.11 The two Councils now need to complete the analysis of the responses, testing the planning validity of the matters raised. A complete officer response to all comments received will be published on the Councils' websites.

4.0 Summary of Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 4.1 The Issues & Options Discussion Paper was subject to sustainability appraisal (SA). This was undertaken by independent consultants, Arcadis (formerly Hyder Consulting). The SA investigated the sustainability performance of the different elements of the Discussion Paper, looking at the social, economic and environmental implications of each of them. A separate assessment required under the Habitats regulations considered potential risks associated with each element of the Discussion Paper in relation to European environmentally protected designated sites.
- 4.2 A report detailing the conclusions of the SA was available for comment during the consultation process.
- 4.3 The SA undertook three main tasks:
- (i) It assessed the SA objectives against the Strategic Objectives for the AONB Plan, and found no areas of incompatibility;
 - (ii) It appraised the six spatial options, giving attention to the different facets of sustainability. Overall the appraisal recommends a balanced approach with most development directed to the Primary Settlements (Silverdale, Warton, Arnside and Sandside/Storth) and Beetham. The SA confirmed that options which promote a wider spread of development and in more remote countryside would have greater adverse effects on the AONB in general. The SA also recommended that allocations within the AONB should aim not to sever important links between areas of high biodiversity;
 - (iii) It appraised the policy options as set out in the Issues & Options Discussion Paper.
- 4.4 The appraisal of the policy options produced the majority of the recommendations in the SA. These are that:
- targets for affordable housing are included in the Plan;
 - a policy restricting housing development is implemented;
 - some restriction or direction of housing ownership is considered;
 - housing types are developed to meet specific housing needs;
 - the Plan guides the density of development with regard to local characteristics, needs and special qualities;
 - the Plan identifies land for key community infrastructure;
 - the Plan identifies locations or criteria for permitting certain energy developments without harming the special qualities of the area;
 - development is located near to roads and services;
 - the Plan includes policies which manage the impacts of new developments, protects and enhance bio/geodiversity and heritage assets, and provides

- comprehensive design requirements;
 - additional parking is made available in key settlements to improve the access, including for disabled people, and in areas where links to sustainable transport uses can be made (e.g. Arnside station);
 - the Plan includes a policy relating to development in areas with no mains drainage or sewerage system;
 - settlement boundaries are provided for the larger settlements;
 - phasing of development is encouraged to meet the SA objectives.
- 4.5 The results and recommendations of the SA will be fully considered in preparing the Draft Development Plan for the AONB.
- 4.6 The Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment was also undertaken by Arcadis. Its purpose is to assess whether or not the Arnside & Silverdale AONB DPD is likely to result in significant effects upon a European Site either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects and subsequently whether or not an Appropriate Assessment will be required.
- 4.7 The Screening Report has identified one potential site which, if allocated for development would have the potential for significant effects on European sites. The assessment provides advice on how the Councils should adapt the plan if they decide to allocate the site having considered all the evidence put forward.

5.0 Planning Implications and Next Steps

- 5.1 The next step for the two Councils is to complete the assessment of the site suggestions that have been put forward for development in the AONB. This will give the Councils a good idea of the likely supply of development land during the plan period, which may be compared against the combined constraints on development and any assessment of demand or need. In some cases there will be a need to discuss and negotiate with developers and landowners, and take advice on any necessary infrastructure or service investment required. In every case, great care will be taken not to harm the key qualities of the AONB.
- 5.2 The two Councils also need to complete the call for sites exercise for open space suggestions, and assess the sites put forward, so that these may be included more completely as proposals to retain open land in the Draft Plan. In some cases this will require discussions and negotiation with land owners.
- 5.3 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

6.0 Summary

- 6.1 Overall, some 300 responses were received in response to the consultation on the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Plan Issues & Options Discussion Paper. Most of these were from local residents, but others were from land-owners, local employers, statutory organisations and developers.

6.2 The three most important matters arising from the consultation are:

- 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.

6.3 The two Councils now need to complete the analysis of the responses, testing the planning validity of the matters raised, and complete the relevant evidence gathering and assessment of site suggestions, in order to prepare a Draft Plan for consultation in the autumn.

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AGENDA ITEM 6

Planning work update

Report prepared by: Sue Hunter, AONB Officer

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

To provide the Committee with an update on planning and development management work carried out by the AONB Team on behalf of the AONB Partnership

RECOMMENDATION:

(1) that the Committee notes the report on planning work

Introduction

The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area and development management and planning are a key element in achieving this.

Background

The AONB Executive Committee is a consultee on planning matters, both planning policy and planning applications; it is not a decision maker. Planning decisions are made by the relevant local planning authority.

Planning policies for AONBs are contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans. AONB designation and the AONB Management Plan are material considerations in the planning process. Management Plans are adopted statutory policy of the local authority.

Planning applications

All planning applications within the AONB are reviewed and also any applications outside, but potentially impacting on, the AONB. Records are kept of all applications reviewed by the AONB Team and the responses made.

A summary is given below of the total number of applications reviewed in 2015 and also in 2016 to date; the number of applications per individual parish is given. The number of formal responses submitted to the planning authorities is also given.

Planning applications reviewed in 2015

Arnside	41
Silverdale	42
Beetham	16
Yealand Conyers	3
Yealand Redmayne	9
Warton	39
Total within AONB	150
Outside AONB	15
 Total no. applications	 165
Responses submitted	48

Planning applications reviewed so far in 2016

Arnside	10
Silverdale	12
Beetham	8
Yealand Conyers	4
Yealand Redmayne	4
Warton	7
Total within AONB	45
Outside AONB	0
 Total no. applications	 45
Responses submitted	8

Of the responses submitted since the last Executive Committee meeting, 4 included formal objections to the proposed development. These applications are listed below, with the final planning decisions noted (where available).

- SL/2015/0872 Demolition of Crossfield house; construction of 8 flats for people aged 55 or over and provision of office/meeting room - **refused**.
- 15/00949/FUL Installation of arrays of 2.5m high PV panels, underground cabling, substation/control room building, 1.9m high security fencing, 4m high CCTV masts, associated landscaping, temporary construction compound, and construction of an access point and internal roads to form a solar farm – **granted**.
- 16/00221/OUT Outline application for the erection of up to 5 dwellings and new vehicular access, Land north of 113 Main St, Warton (resubmission of 15/01000/OUT) – no decision.
- 15/01400/FUL Erection of 18 dwellings with associated access, open space and landscaping at Whinney Fold, Silverdale, Lancashire – no decision.

Formal objections made to applications reported at the last Executive meeting but where a planning decision had not been made at the time include:

- 15/00643/FUL Erection of a ground floor and first floor extension to existing garage to incorporate a hobby/guest room at first floor level and construction of a balcony to the rear at Haweswater Bungalow, Moss Lane, Silverdale – **refused** on the grounds that the proposal would be detrimental to the visual amenity of the site and the wider A&S AONB.

This decision was taken to appeal by the applicant and was dismissed, the Inspector concluding that the proposal would fail to conserve and enhance the landscape of the Arnsdale and Silverdale AONB.

- 15/00833/CU Change of use of land for the siting of 9 holiday lodges with associated parking, Scout Crag Caravan Park, Warton - **refused** on the grounds that the proposal will be visually intrusive within the landscape and will significantly alter the nature and character of the site which is within the AONB. The application has now gone to appeal.
- 15/01066/FUL Excavation of land to extend basement and creation of a below ground garage with terrace above, change of use of agricultural land to domestic curtilage and creation of a new driveway and turning/parking area, and erection of single storey side and 2 storey rear extensions, Glenside, Redbridge Lane, Silverdale – **granted**.
- SL/2015/0740 Change of use from permanent siting of touring caravans (seasonal occupancy) to permanent siting of static caravans (restricted occupancy), Hall More Caravan Park, Hale, Milnthorpe – **granted**.

Additional planning application issues

Beetham Hall Crematorium Appeal

The proposal to create a crematorium at Beetham Hall was refused by South Lakeland District Council in October 2014. An Appeal Hearing was held in August 2015 and the Inspector's decision was finally announced in January of this year – **appeal allowed and permission granted**.

Other planning related work

- AONB Planning Protocol approved by the Planning Sub-group.
- Planning protocol between Natural England and the AONB Partnership agreed.
- Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment completed.
- National Grid North West Coast Connections project – since decision made by National Grid for the Morecambe Bay tunnel route, we are no longer attending the Stakeholder Reference Group meetings but are continuing to keep up to date with the islet design.
- Consultations responded to on behalf of the AONB Partnership:
 - AONB DPD Consultation
 - SLDC Development Management Policies DPD Consultation
 - Heversham and Hincaster Neighbourhood Plan 2015 – 20125
 - National Planning Policy consultation

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AGENDA ITEM 7

Volunteer work programme update

Report prepared by: Tony Riden, AONB Countryside Officer

No decision required

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

To provide the Committee with an update on the practical tasks and work carried out by the AONB volunteer team facilitated by the Countryside Officer on behalf of the AONB Partnership

RECOMMENDATION:

(1) that the Committee notes the report on the volunteer work programme

Introduction

The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area and the volunteer work programme is a key mechanism in achieving this.

Background

Volunteers are recruited and registered by the AONB Countryside Officer and allocated to the most appropriate voluntary role to help achieve the community involvement and practical management elements of the AONB Management Plan.

Practical tasks that are undertaken have public benefit including: public access improvements, management of Parish Council land and Lancaster City Council Local Nature Reserves, nature conservation management for key habitats and species, community woodfuel initiatives, community orchards, events, monitoring and recording.

Seasonal work programme and commitments

The busiest time is winter - October to March. Tasks include scrub-cutting, grassland restoration, woodland management and aquatic pond work. Orchard tasks are usually late summer/autumn. Tasks in the spring and summer months - April to July - include dry-stone wall repairs, finger-post installation, vegetation cutting on permissive paths and species monitoring and recording.

The AONB Team and volunteers are committed to looking after, maintaining and carrying out practical site management tasks on two Local Nature Reserves owned by Lancaster City Council at Warton Crag LNR and Trowbarrow LNR. The Higher Level Stewardship Agreement for Warton Crag has just expired but an application for the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme has been submitted. Trowbarrow is currently in a Woodland Improvement Grant scheme (WIG) which runs from 2012 - 2017.

We also help look after and maintain:

- Ashmeadow and Crossfield Wood, Arnside on behalf of the Barnes Charitable Trust
- Beachwood, Arnside on behalf of Arnside Parish Council
- Bank Well and Woodwell on behalf of Silverdale Parish Council
- Sandside Cutting on behalf of Beetham Parish Council
- Dobshall Wood and Hyning Scout Wood on behalf of the Woodland Trust
- Arnside station platform wildflower grassland
- Orchard Barn and Scott's Plot orchards in Arnside
- Sandside orchid verge
- The Hyning historic garden
- Landscape Trust reserves when required

A litter pick is carried out on a Thursday once a month.

14 new volunteers have been recruited during the year, taking the total to 202!

Other volunteer work

- Butterfly transect surveys, with this area having one of the greatest concentrations of transects in the country

Events & Training

- Our annual Hedgelaying Competition was held at Leighton House Farm, Beetham on 31st October 2015 as part of the Lancashire & Westmorland Hedgelaying Association Grand Prix
- Drystone walling training with the Cumbria Branch of the DSWA
- Brush-cutter machine training course for 6 volunteers in December 2015
- Emergency First-Aid at Work training for 12 volunteers in February 2016

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AGENDA ITEM 7 supplementary information

Volunteer work programme update

Practical tasks 1st April 2015 to date

- 48 Tuesday practical tasks
- 11 Thursday morning litter picks around the lanes of the AONB, plus 2 Tuesday tasks on the Keer Estuary shoreline. Collected almost 200 bags of rubbish.
- An average of over 11 volunteers per Tuesday task
- 5 Tuesday tasks have been in Trowbarrow LNR carrying out WIG work.
- 10 Tuesday tasks on Warton Crag LNR carrying out HLS work.
- 6 Tuesday tasks on behalf the Woodland Trust at Dobshall Wood, Arnside and Hyning Scout Wood, Warton.
- 3 Tuesday tasks for Parish Councils (Beachwood, Arnside; and Bank Well and Woodwell, Silverdale).
- 2 Tuesday tasks at Ashmeadow, Arnside for Barnes Charitable Trust.
- 6 new replacement finger-posts installed.
- 4 Tuesday tasks contributed to the Silverdale and District Wood Bank community woodfuel initiative.
- 3 Tuesday tasks at Orchard Barn and Scot's Plot orchards in Arnside.
- 2 Tuesday tasks at The Hyning, Warton working to help restore the Historic Designed Garden
- 2 Tuesday tasks carrying out footpath condition surveys and permissive path vegetation clearance
- 2 Tuesday tasks maintaining the wildflower area on the station platform, Arnside.
- 1 Tuesday task creating a wildlife pond at Millom Court, Arnside.

An incredible total of 3128 volunteer man hours

Other volunteer work

- 8 AONB volunteers carried out weekly butterfly transect surveys between April and October
- Bird nest-box monitoring, recording and maintenance
- Helping run our AONB events – in particular the AONB Apple Day and Hedgelaying Competition in October.
- Website maintenance
- Leaflet distribution
- The Landscape Trust now independently run Thursday morning volunteer tasks on their reserves.