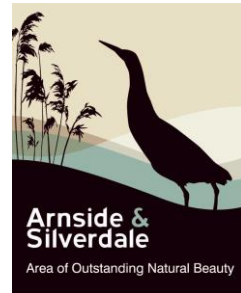


Arnside & Silverdale

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday 17th October 2018 at 2.00pm
RSPB Leighton Moss



MINUTES

Attending

Members of the Executive Committee:

Fiona Allan	Arnside/Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust
Andrew Frankish	Environment Agency
Ailsa Gibson	Local User Group (North Lancashire Bridleways Society)
Joan Jackson	NFU
Brian Jones	Local User Group (Ramblers)
Ann Kitchen (Vice Chair)	Local Business (Bittern Countryside Community Interest Co)
Cllr Pete McSweeney	South Lakeland District Council
Julian Oston	Farming/Landowner (Dallam Tower Estate)
Maggie Robinson	Natural England
Jarrold Sneyd	RSPB

In attendance:

Lucy Barron	AONB Manager
Barbara Henneberry	AONB Communications & Funding Officer
Sue Hunter	AONB Officer
Helen Rawlinson	AONB Countryside Officer
David Porter	Lancaster City Council
Rachel Whaley	Cumbria County Council

Apologies:

Ruth Ainsworth	AONB Funding & Communications Officer
Laura Chamberlain	South Lakeland District Council
David Harpley	Wildlife Trusts
Sue Harrison	CLA
Damian Law	South Lakeland District Council
Elliott Lorimer	Lancashire County Council
Cllr Brian Meakin (Chair)	Beetham Parish Council
Cllr Keith Palmer	Silverdale Parish Council
Cllr Phillipa Williamson	Lancashire County Council
Gemma Wren	National Trust
Craig Russell	Local Business (Beetham Holiday Homes)

1 Welcome and apologies

- 1.1 The Vice Chair welcomed everyone and read out apologies received (listed above).

2 Introductions

- 2.1 The AONB Manager welcomed three new members - Julian Oston who is the farming/landowner representative, Ailsa Gibson from North Lancashire Bridleways and Rachel Whaley from Cumbria County Council.

Each person present introduced themselves.

3 Presentation by Jarrod Sneyd, RSPB, about Warton Mires

RSPB has recently purchased 32.5 hectares of land in Warton with funding from a range of partners including the Landscape Trust and Lancashire County Council. The local community have been involved throughout the process and the project has strong support from local residents. The aim is to restore the wet grassland habitat for iconic species such as lapwing and redshank, while at the same time reducing flood risk for properties on Gardner Road and improving the footpath network.

Feasibility studies, impact assessments etc. are currently being carried out with a view to submitting a planning application in the Spring.

Q: There appears to be great potential to create a safe route between Warton & Millhead. Can this be a multi-user path? (Ailsa Gibson, NLBA)

A: As RSPB does not own the land all the way through to Millhead, discussions would need to be held with the current landowner and Lancashire County Council PROW officers. This will be pursued.

Q: Will there be any flood risk benefit to properties lying further down the catchment area? (David Porter, LCC)

A: Ongoing feasibility works will determine this

Q: With modern technology, why could this land not be returned to productive agricultural land? (Joan Jackson, NFU)

A: The land will still be farmed – just less intensively. It is important to strike the right balance for farming, flood risk and wildlife.

4 Changes to Executive Committee membership

- 4.1 As above in 2.1

5 Annual re-endorsement of user Groups, Business and Farming representatives

- 5.1 Under the terms of the Constitution, representatives of the local interests are subject to annual re-endorsement by the other members. The current members – Ailsa Gibson (User Group: NLBS), Brian Jones (User Group: Ramblers), Ann Kitchen (Business: BCCIC), Craig Russell (Business: Beetham Holiday Homes) and Julian Oston (Farming/landowner: Dallam Tower Estate) - were re-endorsed en bloc.

6 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

6.1 Under the terms of the Constitution, the Chair 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) has advised that he is willing to stand for a further year. This was the only nomination and he was elected unanimously as Chair. The appointment is for one year.

6.2 Nominations for the two positions of Vice Chair were requested. Ann Kitchen (Bittern Countryside CIC) indicated she was willing to stand for a further year and Cllr Pete McSweeney also agreed to stand. These were the only nominations and both were elected unanimously as Vice Chairs. The appointment is for one year.

ACTION: to circulate an up-to-date list of members

**AONB Comms &
Funding Officer**

7 Approval of minutes of the meeting held on 21st March 2018

The minutes were accepted and signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting held on 21st March 2018.

8 Matters arising

8.1 (2) The AONB Manager gave an update on the AONB Geology Audit & Assessment which has been carried out by Cuesta Consulting. Following extensive consultation and site visits, a draft report has been produced and this has been circulated to Natural England's geology specialists and other contributors and local experts for comment. It is hoped that the final report - a detailed geological framework for the area, an assessment of the natural capital value of the geodiversity of the AONB and an evaluation of how it influences natural beauty, landscape character, biodiversity and cultural heritage, along with guidelines, recommendations, digital maps and photographs – will be available soon.

8.2 (4.1) The AONB Manager reported that, as part of the Places and Spaces project (part of the Headlands to Headspace Landscape Partnership Scheme being led by Morecambe Bay Partnership), a dance performance by About Time Dance Company entitled 'Longways/Crosswise' had taken place and had been very well received in Silverdale. Interpreting tales of those that once crossed the sands in the last of the light, this was a celebration of the ever-changing landscape of the Bay. A short video of the production can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_5a7m7klfw&feature=youtu.be

8.3 (4.2) The appointment of an ecologist by the National Trust is still in progress.

8.4 (4.3) Habitat restoration and access management works by Natural England at Gait Barrows National Nature Reserve are largely completed.

8.5 (4.7) The AONB Manager reported that she continues to request regular updates from Lancashire County Council Highways on the legal diversion of the Public Right of Way which will open up access at the Moss Lane entrance to Trowbarrow.

8.6 (11) The AONB Manager thanked everyone for their kind words and contributions on the retirement of former AONB Countryside Officer, Tony Riden.

9 AONB Budget revised 2018/19 (report tabled)

9.1 A report detailing the 2017/18 outturn and revised 2018/19 budget was tabled. No queries were raised but the Chair did point out that clarification is still awaited from the AONB's accountant at Lancaster City Council on the final year-end adjustments which have resulted in a difference between total income & expenditure.

AGREED: members accepted the revised budget unanimously but requested an update on the 17/18 outturn following clarification from Lancaster City Council

10 AONB Development Plan Document (DPD) (report circulated)

10.1 David Porter (Lancaster City Council) updated the committee on progress with the AONB DPD. Following the formal Planning Inspectorate examination, some modifications to the Plan were required. These changes have now been made and there will be a further 6 week consultation period running from 25th October until 6th December. Any comments received will be collated and forwarded to the Inspector who will then write his report. It is hoped that the Plan will go to both Councils for adoption in February 2019.

AGREED: to note the report on the AONB DPD

11 Management Plan Review (report circulated)

11.1 The AONB Manager updated the Committee on progress with the Management Plan Review and outlined key steps that had been completed including establishment of the Review Group, consultations and preparation of the Draft Plan.

11.2 Some feedback has already been received including comments from the Environment Agency on the water quality data. The AONB Manager and AONB Officer will continue to work closely with Andrew Frankish (Environment Agency) to amend certain wording to ensure improved interpretation of the current data.

11.3 Cllr Pete McSweeney highlighted SLDC's ongoing work on rural housing, car parking, sustainable transport and broadband in the AONB.

11.4 The AONB Manager asked for the Committee's approval to proceed with a formal public consultation on the Draft Plan.

AGREED: To note the report and approve the Draft AONB Management Plan 2019-24 for public consultation during October/November 2018 (unanimous decision)

12 National Review of Designated Landscapes (report circulated)

12.1 The AONB Manager briefly summarised the report previously circulated, underlining the significant opportunity this National Review gives us to set out the case for changes needed in order for AONBs to remain fit for purpose and to deliver our full potential. Members were encouraged to participate in the 'Call for Evidence' consultation. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review>

AONB Manager

ACTION: to advise members when the 'Call for Evidence' has been issued and to circulate the NAAONB's position statement

13 Planning Work Programme Update (report circulated)

The AONB Officer gave an update on the planning work undertaken since the last meeting.

AGREED: To note the report

14 AONB Grants Fund update (report tabled)

The AONB Manager updated the Committee on the AONB Grants Fund which is run jointly with the Landscape Trust. Three grants have been considered in this financial year. £229 has been awarded towards an arts project with children from Arnside Primary School and £1300 to RSPB towards their habitat restoration work at Challan Hall Allotment. The decision on the third application is still pending.

AGREED: To note the report

15 AONB Delivery Plan update by partners

15.1 The Landscape Trust

reported that they have successfully purchased 2 new reserves -15% of Warton Mires (which will be managed by the RSPB) and a parcel of land which will connect the two current reserves of Coldwell Parrock and Coldwell Meadows. A fund raising appeal will be launched in November.

15.2 Natural England

gave an update on the England Coast Path where staff have now been assigned to carry out Habitat Regulations Assessments and Environmental Impact Assessments on the preferred route. Good progress has been made with the Gait Barrows/Hawes Water project with woodland, grassland and access work completed. Unfortunately, delays have meant that the proposed renovation works on the summerhouse have had to be postponed as it is now the bat roosting season. The Management Plan for Gait Barrows NNR is currently being reviewed and as part of this process, consideration is being given to the creation of a Trumper route through the reserve. NE have also been scoping a project with University of Cumbria, People's Trust for Endangered Species and other partners to reintroduce dormice at Gait Barrows.

15.3 Ramblers

The Lancaster Group will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 2019.

ACTION: to send a copy of the original report on footpath improvements compiled when the group first started to the AONB Manager

Brian Jones

15.4 The Environment Agency

reported that a stakeholder meeting has been held with farmers and landowners to encourage appropriate management to reduce diffuse pollution in the Leighton Moss catchment area.

15.5 RSPB

were delighted to report that Leighton Moss has seen breeding bitterns this year for the first time in 9 years. They also reported on the work they have been doing on Warton Crag for the benefit of butterflies and linking their management at Challan Hall woodlands to the proposed project to re-introduce dormice at Gait Barrows.

15.6 AONB Team

The AONB Communications & Funding Officer reported on the work recently carried out on the AONB website, in particular the design of the Home page and Events page and improvements to the navigation of the site. Members were also shown the newly designed 4-panel display which

sets out why the AONB is so special and what we do to conserve and enhance the area. The display is available for partners to borrow for events.

The AONB Countryside Officer advised members that the annual AONB Hedgelaying Competition will be held on Saturday 3rd November.

The AONB Manager reported that the Team is currently undertaking a survey to collect information from the area's landowners/farmers to help inform the Management Plan and plans for a future network. Members were asked to encourage any of their relevant farming/landowner contacts to complete the survey

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AONBLandSurvey>

15.7 Bittern Countryside CIC

wished to formally record their thanks to staff from SLDC, Lancaster City Council and the AONB Team for all their hard work preparing the AONB Development Plan Document.

16 The Bittern Award 2018 request for nominations (report circulated)

16.1 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 2018 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

17 Update on the work of the National Association for AONBs

17.1 The AONB Manager advised members that the National Association for AONBs has been working closely with Julian Glover and is drawing together a series of key points to feed into the Review. Further information can be found at www.landscapesforlife.org.uk

18 Any other business

18.1 There was no further business to discuss

19 Dates for your diary

2018

22nd October – 3rd December Draft Management Plan 2019-24 consultation

Saturday 3rd November AONB Hedgelaying Competition

2019

Thursday 31st January AONB Annual Conference in The Gaskell Hall, Silverdale

Wednesday 20 March – 2pm: AONB Executive Committee meeting (RSPB Leighton Moss)

Saturday 28th September AONB Apple Day at Orchard Barn, Arnside
10am – 4pm

Wednesday 16 October AONB Executive Committee meeting (RSPB
– 2pm: Leighton Moss)

Signed Date: