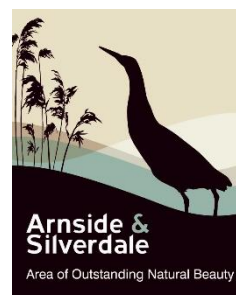


Arnside & Silverdale

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday 16th October 2019 at 2.00pm
RSPB Leighton Moss



MINUTES

Attending

Members of the Executive Committee:

Fiona Allan	Arnside/Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust
Cllr Helen Chaffey	South Lakeland District Council
Andrew Frankish	Environment Agency
Cllr June Greenwell	Lancaster City Council
Cllr Keith Halford	Arnside Parish Council
Joan Jackson	NFU
Brian Jones	Local User Group (Ramblers)
Ann Kitchen (Vice Chair)	Local Business (Bittern Countryside Community Interest Co)
Cllr Pete McSweeney (Vice Chair)	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Brian Meakin (Chair)	Beetham Parish Council
Richard Miller	RSPB (substitute)
Julian Oston	Farming/Landowner (Dallam Tower Estate)
Maggie Robinson	Natural England
Andrew Tait	CPRE (Friends of the Lake District)

In attendance:

Lucy Barron	AONB Manager
Barbara Henneberry	AONB Communications & Funding Officer
Sue Hunter	AONB Officer
Dougie Watson	AONB Countryside Officer
Damian Law	South Lakeland District Council
Adam Briggs	NFU

Apologies:

Richard Camp	Lancaster City Council
Ruth Colbridge	AONB Funding & Communications Officer
Ailsa Gibson	Local User Group (North Lancashire Bridleways Society)
Sue Harrison	CLA
Cllr Iain Harbison	Yealand Redmayne Parish Council
Elliott Lorimer	Lancashire County Council
Cllr Mike Macklin	Yealand Redmayne Parish Council
Jarrold Sneyd	RSPB
Sam Stalker	National Trust
Rachel Whaley	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Phillippa Williamson	Lancashire County Council

1 Welcome, apologies and introductions

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone, and each person present introduced themselves. Apologies received are listed above.

2 Presentation by Glen Swainson: Gait Barrows NNR management plan review 2019-24

- 2.1 The presentation began with a few facts and figures about Gait Barrows NNR, its key habitats and species, the historic environment and the conservation management work carried out.

Gait Barrows is a 'core area' for biodiversity central to the AONB. It is recognised that through partnership working to restore habitats and natural processes and developing 'ecotones', this will contribute to achieving Lawton's aspirations for habitats to be "Bigger, Better and more Connected".

A review of the Gait Barrows site management plan is currently being undertaken. The new Gait Barrows Management Plan 2019-24 will go out to public consultation in November. The documents will be available to view on the AONB website and a drop-in session will also be held at the Gaskell Hall in Silverdale.

3 Changes to Executive Committee membership

- 3.1 The Chair welcomed new members Cllr Keith Halford (Arnside Parish Council) and Cllr June Greenwell (Lancaster City Council) and thanked their predecessors for their valuable contributions.

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

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.

5 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

- 5.1 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) indicated that he was 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.
- 5.2 Nominations for the two positions of Vice Chair were requested. Ann Kitchen (Bittern Countryside CIC) and Cllr Pete McSweeney indicated they were willing to stand for a further year. These were the only nominations, and both were elected unanimously as Vice Chairs. The appointment is for one year.

6 Approval of minutes of the meeting held on 20th March 2019

- 6.1 The minutes were accepted and signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting held on 20th March 2019.

7 Matters arising

7.1 There were no matters to discuss.

8 AONB Budget 2018/19 outturn and revised 2019/20 (report circulated)

8.1 A report detailing the 2018/19 budget outturn and in-year changes to the 2019/20 budget was circulated.

The AONB Communications & Funding Officer confirmed that Lancaster City Council has rectified the 17/18 year-end discrepancy previously reported by making a contribution of the corresponding amount to the AONB reserve.

**AGREED: to note the report and approve the revised 2019/20 budget.
Proposed: Ann Kitchen (Bittern CCIC) Seconded: Andrew Tait (CPRE)**

9 AONB Team Business Plan (report circulated)

9.1 The AONB Manager apologised that the AONB Team Business Plan was not completed in time for the meeting. It will be circulated for comment as soon as possible.

ACTION: to circulate the AONB Team Business Plan for comment

AONB Manager

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

10.1 Damian Law (South Lakeland District Council) informed the committee that the AONB DPD was formally adopted by Lancaster City Council on 13th March 2019 and by SLDC on 28th March 2019. The two councils are now working closely to ensure the policies are being applied consistently across the AONB.

He also reported that the DPD had been submitted to the Royal Town Planning Institute for consideration in their Regional Awards for Planning Excellence 2019 and was delighted to report that it won the Spatial Planning category.

Cllr Pete McSweeney (Cumbria County Council) thanked the council officers and the AONB Team for their hard work and achievement and congratulated them on a well-deserved award.

The AONB Manager reported that there has been a lot of interest nationally in the DPD and that she had been asked to give a presentation on it at the National Association for AONBs Annual Conference. The work was also highlighted as an example of good practice and helped to inform some of the proposals in the recent Review of Designated Landscapes Report.

AGREED: to note the report on the AONB DPD

11 AONB Management Plan 2019-24 (report circulated)

11.1 Since the last meeting, the AONB Management Plan 2019-24 has been finalised and adopted by all four Local Authorities.

**AGREED: to note the key matters arising from the report and to endorse the final AONB Management Plan 2019-24
Proposed: Cllr Keith Halford (Arnside Parish Council) Seconded: Cllr Pete McSweeney (Cumbria County Council)**

12 National Review of Designated Landscapes (report circulated)

12.1 The Review, undertaken by a Review Panel led by Julian Glover, is the first independent review of designated landscapes in England since 1991 and it is the first time that AONBs have been included in the same review as National Parks.

The Review focussed on 5 areas

- Landscapes alive for nature and beauty
- Landscapes for everyone
- Living in landscapes
- More special places
- New ways of working

and 27 proposals have been published.

The AONB Manager welcomed the Review and in particular its proposals to strengthen AONBs (Proposal 24 “*AONBs strengthened with new purposes, powers and resources, renamed as National Landscapes*”). The report recognises the value of AONB designation and acknowledges the hard work and achievements of AONB staff, representatives and volunteers. It also makes a clear case for AONBs to expand their purposes and to receive more funding and resources.

12.2 Members of the Executive Committee were invited to discuss the Review proposals and the following comments were made:

‘A change of name or a National Landscape Service could result in AONBs being subsumed by National Parks’.

‘National Parks aim to encourage visitors, AONBs are about the landscape’.

‘Encouraging access must not outweigh nature benefit’ and ‘only quiet recreation should be promoted’. ‘There are many areas in National Parks where there is too much disturbance for nature recovery networks’.

‘What makes an AONB special should be retained’.

‘AONBs should be statutory consultees in planning matters’.

There was some concern that the Government has no obligation to implement the Report’s findings. The AONB Manager reported that both Natural England and the National Association for AONBs (NAAONBs) had responded to the Report and that the Chair of the NAAONBs had already met Lord Gardiner, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Margaret Paren, Chair of National Parks England and that the proposals are being taken very seriously at a national level.

The AONB Manager stated that regardless of what is happening at a national level, Arnside & Silverdale is already following up some of the proposals and will continue to do so. A meeting has been arranged in November with Richard Leafe, CEO of the Lake District National Park Authority. Ecologist Naomi Dalton, a shared appointment with the National Trust and AONB Partnership, is now in place and will be working on a Nature Recovery Plan for the AONB; and more work is being done on health and wellbeing projects with under-represented groups (e.g. the Dementia-friendly Walks for All project)

AGREED: to note the key matters arising from the report**13 Planning Work Programme Update (report circulated)**

An update on the planning work undertaken since the last meeting was circulated.

The AONB Officer was asked whether it is possible to work more closely with applicants in the planning process. Can help and advice be given before an application is submitted and/or supportive responses made endorsing an application?

The AONB Team unfortunately cannot provide pre-application advice to applicants and does not have the capacity to do so. Providing pre-application advice is the role of the Local Planning Authority. However, there is a longer term aspiration to work with the Local Authorities to produce a design guide for the AONB to support the implementation of the DPD if appropriate resources can be identified.

AGREED: To note the report**14 Volunteer work programme update (report circulated)**

14.1 An update on the volunteer work programme including tasks undertaken, sites managed and events & training was circulated.

Dougie Watson has taken over the role of Countryside Officer on a one year contract to cover Helen Rawlinson's maternity leave.

A total of 1678 volunteer hours have been recorded since April.

AGREED: To note the report**15 AONB Grants Fund update**

15.1 The AONB Grants Fund is run jointly with the Landscape Trust. In this financial year, grants have so far been awarded to the 'Westmorland Red Squirrels' and 'Grey Walls Historic Garden Restoration' projects.

16 AONB Delivery Plan update by partners**16.1 The Landscape Trust**

reported that a first draft of the Landscape Trust Business Plan has been completed, along with management plans for each of their reserves. A photographic competition was held over the summer, with the 13 winning images featuring in a Landscape Trust 2020 calendar which will be available to purchase shortly.

16.2 Ramblers

Consultation on the proposed route for the section of the England Coast Path passing through the AONB has been delayed and is now due to be launched in mid-November.

16.3 Friends of the Lake District

reported they are currently leading a project to gain 'Dark Skies Reserve' status in Cumbria.

16.4 The Environment Agency

reported that as part of their work on reducing diffuse pollution in the Leighton Moss catchment area they are monitoring water quality with the help of South Cumbria Rivers Trust.

16.5 Arnside Parish Council

While the village has been successful in setting up Arnside Community Wheels – a demand responsive transport for residents of Arnside and Carr Bank – support from members was requested with the bid to save the local 552 bus service to Kendal by signing the petition which is currently circulating. Members were also advised of a Cumbria County Council consultation which is currently taking place on proposed Traffic Regulation Orders for Arnside.

16.6 South Lakeland District Council

is currently reviewing its district-wide Local Plan.

16.7 Cumbria County Council

CLlr Pete McSweeney reported that he has problems establishing who is responsible for clearing ditches, dykes and becks. Is it the Environment Agency or the landowner?

The AONB Manager offered to circulate any relevant information and put it on the AONB website advice pages.

16.8 Dallam Tower Estate

has been carrying out useful work on Catchment Sensitive Farming schemes.

16.9 Natural England

A review of the Gait Barrows NNR Management Plan is currently being undertaken and a Habitats Regulations Assessment has been completed for the proposed section of the England Coast Path

16.10 Bittern Countryside CIC

reported that the solar panels have been replaced at Silverdale School following roof repairs and that RSPB Leighton Moss is to increase the number of panels it has on the reserve. The CIC continues to work with Westmorland Red Squirrels.

16.11 Beetham Parish Council

owns Sandside Cutting and has been carrying out tree felling on site.

17 Bittern Award 2019 – request for nominations

17.1 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 2019 award to be submitted by 1st December. The final decision will be made by the AONB Chairman and Manager, with the award to be presented at the AONB Annual Conference in January.

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

18 European Garden Award

18.1 The AONB Manager was delighted to report that at the European Garden Awards in September, Arnside & Silverdale AONB was awarded second prize in the “Best Development of a Cultural Landscape of European Relevance” category for our work to research and promote

the cultural landscape of the AONB.

19 Update on the work of the National Association for AONBs

19.1 It was decided that the AONB Manager would circulate the report via email.

AONB Manager

20 Any other business

20.1 This year is the 70th anniversary of Parliament passing the pioneering legislation that paved the way for the designation of the UK's 46 AONBs, and to commemorate this milestone, the National Association for AONBs commissioned a poem by the Poet Laureate, Simon Armitage. We were delighted that he chose Arnside Knott to read the poem, *Fugitives*, for the first time.

This coincided with a 'National Moment' when AONBs across the country formed hearts in the landscape to show their love for our precious landscapes and the health benefits being in nature brings. Members were encouraged to watch the video of the event at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SC_2e_MHggM

16 Dates for your diary

Light up Lancaster

Friday 1st & Saturday 2nd November
5.30pm

Maritime Museum

AONB Hedgelaying Competition

Sunday 3rd November 2019
9.30am – 3pm

Arnside – just off the B5282

AONB Annual Conference

Thursday 23rd January 2020
9.30am – 3pm

The Gaskell Hall, Silverdale

AONB Executive Committee meetings

Wednesday 18th March 2020 2pm – 4.30pm
Wednesday 14th October 2020 2pm – 4.30pm

RSPB Leighton Moss
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Signed Date: