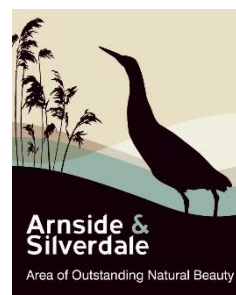


Arnside & Silverdale

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday 11th November 2020 at 2.00pm
Via Microsoft Teams



MINUTES

Attending

Members of the Executive Committee:

Fiona Allan	Arnside/Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust
Cllr Kevin Briggs	Warton Parish Council
Cllr Jim Ferguson	Silverdale Parish Council
Andrew Frankish	Environment Agency
Cllr June Greenwell	Lancaster City Council
Cllr Keith Halford	Arnside Parish Council
Sue Harrison	CLA
Brian Jones	Local User Group (Ramblers)
Ann Kitchen (Vice Chair)	Local Business (Bittern Countryside CIC)
Georgina Lofthouse	National Trust
Cllr Mike Macklin	Yealand Redmayne Parish Council
Cllr Pete McSweeney (Vice Chair)	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Brian Meakin (Chair)	Beetham Parish Council
Julian Oston	Farming/Landowner (Dallam Tower Estate)
Maggie Robinson	Natural England
Sam Stalker	National Trust
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
Richard Camp	Lancaster City Council
Rachel Whaley	Cumbria County Council

Apologies:

Cllr Helen Chaffey	South Lakeland District Council
Damian Law	South Lakeland District Council
Elliott Lorimer	Lancashire County Council
Alastair McNeill	South Lakeland District Council
Jarrold Sneyd	RSPB
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 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 are 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)

Proposed: to re-endorse en bloc: Cllr Pete McSweeney (Cumbria County Council); Seconded Fiona Allan (Landscape Trust)

AGREED: to re-endorse User Group, Business and Farming representatives en bloc

3 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

- 3.1** 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 one more year but suggested that consideration be given to finding someone to take over in 2021. This was the only nomination.

Proposed: to elect Cllr Brian Meakin as Chair: Cllr Pete McSweeney (Cumbria County Council); Seconded Julian Oston (Farming/landowner representative)

AGREED: to elect Cllr Brian Meakin as Chair. The appointment is for one year.

- 3.2** 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.

Proposed: to elect Ann Kitchen and Cllr Pete McSweeney as Vice-Chairs: Maggie Robinson (Natural England); Seconded Julian Oston (Farming/landowner representative)

AGREED: to elect Ann Kitchen and Cllr Pete McSweeney as Vice-Chairs. The appointments are for one year.

4 Approval of minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2019

- 4.1** The minutes were accepted and signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting held on 16th October 2019.

Note: the meeting due to take place in March 2020 was unable to take place due to the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown restrictions.

5 Matters arising

- 5.1** (9.1) The AONB Manager reported that the AONB Business Plan and Work Programme are having to be adapted and modified to take into

account changing priorities due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

6 AONB Team work programme update (report circulated)

- 6.1** Members were advised of changes to the staff team. Ruth Colbridge left in May to take up the role of Communications Manager for the National Association for AONBs. The AONB Manager took the opportunity to thank her for her valued contribution, in particular her work on the WILD! Project and events such as the National Moment. Helen Rawlinson has returned from maternity leave at 0.6FTE and Dougie Watson has stayed on at 0.8FTE. Barbara Henneberry will be retiring in March 2021 and again, the AONB Manager took the opportunity to thank her for her outstanding contribution over the last 18 years.
- 6.2** The AONB Manager also asked the Committee to recognise the efforts of Belinda Barclay, the LNR Warden, in responding to a tragic incident at Warton Crag in September when she called the emergency services and performed CPR until their arrival.
- 6.3** The AONB Manager reported that the Covid-19 pandemic has obviously had an impact on the work of the Team but nevertheless, a great deal has been achieved, as can be seen from the report circulated. A selection of photos highlighting some of this work was then shared with members.
- 6.4** Fiona Allan (Landscape Trust) thanked the Team for their help and advice in re-starting the Trust's volunteer tasks, setting up arrangements according to an approved Covid-19 risk assessment and implementing additional safety precautions.

7 AONB Budget 2019/20 outturn and revised 2020/21 (report circulated)

- 7.1** A report with explanatory notes detailing the 2019/20 budget outturn and in-year changes to the 2020/21 budget was circulated.

The AONB Communications & Funding Officer confirmed that Lancaster City Council has made changes to its accounting procedures which now mean that going forward they will cover the full cost of recharges. This effectively means an additional £9000 is available to spend elsewhere in the budget this year.

AGREED: to note the report and approve the revised 2020/21 budget.

8 Planning protocol and work programme update (report circulated)

- 8.1** The AONB Planning Protocol has been reviewed in consultation with the local planning authorities following the adoption of the AONB DPD and the revised National Planning Policy Framework, and updated accordingly.

Maggie Robinson (Natural England) asked how often the document would be reviewed as planning requirements are constantly developing (eg: net gain). The AONB Manager confirmed the document can be reviewed whenever the Team or Committee feel necessary.

Proposed: to formally approve the updated AONB Planning Protocol: Cllr Pete McSweeney (Cumbria County Council); Seconded Andrew Tait (CPRE)

AGREED: To formally approve the updated AONB Planning Protocol

8.2 There were no questions on the planning work report.

AGREED: to note the report

9 Local Government Reform (documents circulated)

9.1 Cllr Pete McSweeney advised members that last month Government sent letters to councils in Cumbria, North Yorkshire and Somerset inviting submissions on 'locally-led proposals for unitary government' in those areas. That means councils in these areas could formally submit initial proposals for local government restructure to replace the existing two-tier system of county and district councils with a system where there is a single tier for any given area.

9.2 He confirmed expressions of interest were put forward by both Lancashire and Cumbria County Councils together with a proposal for a new unitary authority around Morecambe Bay submitted by Barrow Borough Council, Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council. Fully costed proposals need to be submitted by 9th December 2020.

9.3 It is important that people have their say, whether they agree or disagree with the proposals, as any local government reorganisation will have significant implications for our communities and the way services are delivered.

9.4 How do the proposals affect the AONB? If the Bay bid were successful, the AONB would come under one local authority, rather than the current four. The AONB Manager sought confirmation that the combined funding would not be reduced.

9.5 It was reported that when the proposals were debated by Lancaster City Council and SLDC, both gave very strong support for the Bay option.

ACTION: to circulate the joint press release with link to the online public consultation survey

AONB Manager

10 The Bittern Award

10.1 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 2020 award to be submitted by 1st December. The final decision will be made by the AONB Chairman in consultation with the AONB Manager.

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

11 AONB Delivery Plan update by partners

11.1 The Landscape Trust

On a sad note, it was reported that Sheila May, ex-editor of Keer to Kent had died. Volunteers continue to manage the reserves which seem to be attracting more visitors this year. The Landscape Trust 2021 Calendar is now available to buy from their website.

11.2 The Environment Agency

reported that unfortunately due to Covid-19, water quality monitoring as part

of their work on reducing diffuse pollution in the Leighton Moss catchment area in line with AS12 of the AONB DPD, has been curtailed.

11.3 Natural England

Cumbria is one of five local authorities selected by the Government to help kick-start nature recovery on a countrywide scale. The selected authorities will receive a share of £1 million of funding to set up 'Local Nature Recovery Strategies' (LNRS) pilot studies to help map the most valuable sites and habitats for wildlife in their area and identify where nature can be restored.

11.4 Cumbria County Council

Cllr Pete McSweeney reported that following complaints about flooding on Black Dyke and Arnside Moss, he has been trying to get a response from Network Rail about debris on their land. Can the Environment Agency help in getting Network Rail to take some action?

ACTION: to consult with colleagues

**Andrew
Frankish**

The County Council will be working in partnership with organisations and across sectors, sharing skills, knowledge and resources, to deliver the Local Nature Recovery Strategy pilot and help achieve the objectives of Nature Recovery Networks. This partnership working includes government, land owners and managers, businesses, local communities and conservation groups. Anyone wanting to be kept informed/be involved in future engagement with Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy should contact rachel.whaley@cumbria.gov.uk

11.5 Dallam Tower Estate

has continued work on Catchment Sensitive Farming schemes and is looking at how the Estate can contribute to connectivity and biodiversity net gain.

11.6 Bittern Countryside CIC

The CIC is continuing to support the Back on Our Map (BOOM) project.

11.7 Lancaster City Council

Whilst the Local Plan adopted in July 2020 does seek to address climate change, it was too far advanced in the plan preparation process to incorporate some of the actions and directions of the climate emergency declaration made in 2019. It has therefore been decided to enter into an immediate Local Plan review to ensure that the aspects of this important agenda are adequately considered and include the necessary mitigation and adaptation measures necessary to address the climate emergency.

11.8 National Trust

reported that Covid-19 has had a massive impact, with the Trust losing about £200 million in revenue overall and as a result, there have been numerous redundancies. However, they have been able to retain the co-funded AONB Ecologist post and therefore Naomi Dalton will be continuing to carry out work on the AONB Nature Recovery Plan. There is a major issue with ash dieback which the rangers are now having to deal with.

11.9 The AONB Team

The AONB Manager reported that Defra has offered the AONB Partnership additional funding to support the advocacy and communication of Countryside Stewardship (CS) and Environment Land Management (ELM) schemes as part of a project being led by the National Association for AONBs.

12 Update on the work of the National Association for AONBs

12.1 The AONB Manager reported that the NAAONB is working closely with Defra to explore how the Glover Review recommendations can be implemented. The Government’s response has been delayed due to Covid-19 but we are hoping to hear about our funding settlement soon as the current agreement expires in March 2021.

12.2 Arnside & Silverdale is already part of the Northern AONBs Forum where we share best practice etc but the NAAONB is now looking at developing a “Coastal Cluster” of AONBs where we will be able to benefit from help with issues particular to coastal habitats and communities.

13 Any other business

13.1 Cllr June Greenwell reported that she had received a number of emails voicing concerns about the Government’s proposed reforms of the planning system. The AONB Officer confirmed that a consultation response had been submitted on behalf of the AONB Partnership raising concerns about certain aspects of the proposals. Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Councils had also submitted responses.

16 Dates for your diary

AONB Executive Committee meetings

- Wednesday 17th March 2021 2pm – 4.30pm venue tbc
- Wednesday 20th October 2021 2pm – 4.30pm venue tbc

Signed Date: