



Shropshire Hills
AONB Partnership

22 March 2016

9.30 am

Item

Public

**MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS AONB PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD ON
17 NOVEMBER 2015
9.30 - 11.50 AM**

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward
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Present

Councillor George Chancellor (Chairman)
Councillors James Williamson (Vice Chairman), Heather Kidd, David Turner,
Mr Andy Boddington, Alison Caffyn, Mr John Pritchard, Mr John Woolmer,
Ms Hilary Clayton-Smith, Mr Clive Leworthy, Mr John Tucker, Caroline Bedell, Gillian Binks,
Sarah Bury, Veronica Cossons, Ian Dormor, Carol Griffiths, Sue Jones, Sue Lee,
Hazel MacDowell, Mr David Mills, Ronald Repath, Leo Smith and Ms Donna Tavenor

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

9 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

9.1 The Chairman welcomed Andy Boddington (Individual Member), John Pritchard (Individual Member), John Woolmer (Individual Member), Clive Leworthy (Parish & Town Council Representative), and John Tucker (Parish & Town Council Representative) to their first meeting of the Partnership. He advised that Councillor Robert Tindall had replaced Councillor Tim Barker as one of the Shropshire Council representatives on the Partnership and paid tribute to the role that Councillor Barker had played during his time on the Partnership.

9.2 Apologies for absence were received from Lee Chapman (Shropshire Hills Tourism), Cecilia Motley (Shropshire Council), David C Smith (Shropshire Geological Society) Robert Tindall (Shropshire Council) and Tom Whiteman (Individual Member).

10 Minutes of the last meeting

10.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2015 had been circulated

10.2 **Resolved:** -

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2015 be confirmed as a correct record

11 **Proposed Amendments to the Terms of Reference**

11.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which set out proposed changes to the Partnership's Terms of Reference.

11.2 The AONB Partnership Manager advised Members that following the loss of the LEADER programme the Partnership Terms of Reference required updating and that in addition to the removal of the content relating to LEADER the following amendments were being proposed: -

- Increasing the number of seats for Town and Parish Council Representatives from 3 to 6
- Increasing the term of the Chair, Vice Chair and Management Board seats from 1 year to 2 years.

And that in addition a new section on the role of the host authority, which had previously been in the DEFRA Memorandum of Understanding, had been added.

11.3 Several members welcomed the proposal to increase the number of Parish Council representatives but commented that it was important to ensure good geographical spread of the representatives. Mrs Kidd commented that it was important that the Partnership improved the way it engaged with all Parish Councils.

11.4 Mr Smith commented that during the re-appointment of membership of the Partnership it was important to get a good balance of interests represented.

11.5 Ms Claytonsmith pointed out that there was still a reference to LEADER in paragraph 5.4. The AONB Partnership Manager stated that this would be deleted.

11.6 **Resolved:**

That the Partnership approves the changes and endorses the updated Terms of Reference.

12 **Election of Chair, Vice Chairs and Seats to the Management Board**

12.1 **Resolved:** -

That Mr James Williamson be elected Chair of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership.

12.2 Mr Williamson took the chair and paid tribute to the vast amount of work that Mr Chancellor had done during his time as Chair of the AONB Partnership.

12.3 Resolved: -

That Councillor Cecilia Motley and Mr George Chancellor be elected Vice Chairs of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership.

12.4 The AONB Manager reminded Members that in addition to the Chair and Vice Chairs and Councillor Turley there were 6 seats available on the Management Board.

12.5 Resolved: -

That Mrs Bedell, Mr Chapman, Lady Cossons, Councillor Mrs Kidd, Mr Pritchard and Councillor Turner be elected to the Management Board.

13 AONB Partnership Activity Update

13.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which gave an update on work being carried out by the AONB Partnership Staff Team.

13.2 The AONB Manager advised members that the running of the LEADER Programme had been transferred to Shropshire Council's Outdoor Partnership Team and that Pete Banford had transferred to that team. He added that he and the Chair had provided support and advice with the transfer where needed. He informed Members that following a commitment to make good the income lost from the transfer of LEADER, Shropshire Council had agreed to contribute to the rental and service costs of the new offices. Mr Chancellor confirmed that he was representing the AONB Partnership on the Local Action Group (LAG) and that he had recently attended the first meeting and undertook to give regular updates to the Partnership.

13.3 The AONB Partnership Manager reminded Members that the Stiperstones and Corndon Hill Country Landscape Partnership Scheme was half way through its 5 year duration and advised that a mid-term review was being carried out by an external consultant. He gave an update on the work that was being carried out and advised that the contract for the provision of apprenticeships had been terminated and that the training element of the scheme was being redesigned and would primarily be delivered in- house.

13.4 The AONB Partnership Manager advised that due to the ongoing squeeze on core funding, and the difficulties in obtaining contributions to core running costs from projects, the 2015-16 budget was predicted to be in deficit, and that all possible savings were being made. He added that the office move would reduce on-going costs but there were one off costs associated with the move and that any deficit would be met from the reserve of earned income held from previous years. The Chairman commented that suggestions of ways of increasing earned income would be welcomed.

14 Shropshire Hills AONB Conservation Fund

14.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which updated Members on progress with moves to establish the Shropshire Hills AONB Conservation Fund as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

- 14.2 The AONB Partnership Manager advised Members that since the last Partnership meeting Antony Morgan, George Chancellor, Sarah Bury and himself had been appointed as founding Trustees of the CIO. They had held two meetings and had approved and adopted the draft constitution; the Trustees were in the process of opening a bank account prior to application to the Charity Commission to register as a CIO.
- 14.3 The AONB Manager reminded the meeting that the CIO was not part of the AONB structure and should exist independently of it. However he added that the constitution contained some of the preferred links between the CIO and the AONB Partnership, including the ability for the Partnership to appoint up to three Trustees, with the AONB Partnership Manager as an ex-officio trustee, but that this was subject to approval by the Charity Commission.
- 14.4 Mr Smith queried the timescale for the creation of the CIO. The AONB Partnership Manager advised that it was hoped that the CIO would be in place in time for the next round of conservation grant to come from the Charity.

14.5 **Resolved:**

That the Partnership notes the progress made to develop the CIO and the proposed links between the Partnership and the CIO.

15 **River Clun Recovery Project**

- 15.1 Members received a presentation from the Clun Catchment Officer on the work being carried out as part of the River Clun Recovery Project.
- 15.2 The Clun Catchment Officer reminded the meeting that the project had started in April 2015 and provided capital funding for schemes that would help protect soils and the water, and that the scheme offered attractive levels of funding and aimed to keep “red tape” to a minimum. She went on to outline some of the work that was being funded which included:
- riverbank tree planting and woodland creation which would help to decrease riverbank erosion,
 - work to exclude livestock from the rivers by installation of fencing and alternative water sources such as troughs and
 - creating alternative river crossings., and working with landowners to minimise the impact of land use on watercourses through run off management works.
- 15.3 The Clun Catchment Officer then outlined some of the work being carried out to create two recovery sites on the river Clun to enable the relocation of the fresh water pearl mussels.
- 15.4 The Chair thanked the Clun Catchment Officer for her presentation.

16 **Update on Tourism Work**

- 16.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which provided them with an update on activity on sustainable tourism and changes to the organisation of tourism structures within the county.
- 16.2 The AONB Partnership Manager reminded Members that activity on tourism had increased over recent years and that the aim was to influence the patterns and impacts of tourism on the AONB. He then outlined the work that had been carried out over the past 5 years.
- 16.3 The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that Shropshire Council had recently reduced the number of Tourism Officers from 2 to 1 and had also changed the nature of their role, which had resulted in the withdrawal of administrative support for the Destination Development Partnership (DDP). He informed Members that the AONB Partnership had taken over this role to ensure the continued momentum of the group. He then outlined other changes and areas of potential work.
- 16.4 Ms Jones asked about the future of the Shuttle Busses. The AONB Partnership Manager informed her that new sources of funding were being sought as the funding currently received from the Stiperstones NNR budget was being withdrawn.

16.5 **Resolved:**

That the information contained in the report be noted.

17 **Proposed Uplands Commons Project**

- 17.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which outlined the proposed national project on upland commons involving the Shropshire Hills AONB along with 4 English National Parks.
- 17.2 The AONB Partnership Manager informed Members that the proposed project, co-ordinated by The Foundation for Common Land would focus on enhancing the heritage of common land in 5 areas, Dartmoor, the Yorkshire Dales, the North York Moors, Cumbria and The Shropshire Hills and that the project would aim to share experience and learning between the five areas through a programme of mentoring, skills sharing and promotion of best practice.
- 17.3 The AONB Partnership manager advised that a steering group had been formed to develop the project application to the Heritage Lottery Fund and that if successful there would be a two year development stage and a three year delivery period. And that the aim would be to work with three commons in each area.
- 17.4 Several Members welcomed the development of the project. In response to a query the AONB Partnership Manager confirmed that the National Trust was represented on the national steering group.

17.5 **Resolved:**

That the contents of the report be noted.

18 **Dates of Next Meetings**

- 18.1 The AONB Partnership Manager advised Members that he was currently looking at dates for future meetings and would advise them of the dates as soon as they were available.