



Shropshire Hills AONB
Partnership

14 June 2016

Item

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Public

**MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS AONB PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD ON 18 APRIL
2016 9.30 - 11.00 AM**

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

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Present

Local Authorities

Shropshire Council

Cllr Heather Kidd

Cllr Cecilia Motley (Vice Chair)

Cllr David Turner

Telford & Wrekin Council

Cllr Chris Turley

Statutory/Voluntary Agencies & Individual members

Individual Member

Andy Boddington

Individual Member

George Chancellor (Vice Chair)

Individual Member

John Pritchard

Individual Member

James Williamson (Chair)

Town & Parish Council representative

Janine Hayter

Town & Parish Council representative

Yvonne Holyoak

Town & Parish Council representative

Clive Leworthy

British Horse Society

Ronald Repath

Campaign to Protect Rural England

Sarah Bury

English Heritage

Bill Klemperer

Longmynd & District Bridleways Association

Sue Lee

National Trust

Peter Carty

Natural England

Emma Johnson

Hazel McDowall

Ramblers Association

Sue Jones

Shropshire Geological Society

David C Smith

Strettons Civic Society

Ian Dormor

Shropshire Wildlife Trust

Veronica Cossons

The Strettons Civic Society

Ian Dormor

Upper Onny Wildlife Group / Shropshire

Leo Smith

Ornithological Society

Observers/Officers

National Association for AONBs

Howard Davies (Chief Executive)

Shropshire Council

Neil Willcox (Locality Commissioning Manager)

Tim Ward (Committee Officer)

Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership staff
team

Phil Holden (AONB Partnership Manager)

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He advised that there would be an additional presentation on the Stepping Stones project which was held over from the last meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received from Caroline Bedell (CLA), Gill Binks (Caring for God's Acre), Alison Caffyn (Individual Member), Lee Chapman (Shropshire Hills Tourism), Hilary Claytonsmith (Town & Parish Council Rep), Rhona Goddard (Butterfly Conservation), Joy Greenall (Land, Life & Livelihoods), Cllr Robert Tindall (Shropshire Council), Michael Whithouse (Land, life & Livelihoods) and John Woolmer (Individual Member).

2. Minutes of the last meeting

- 2.1 The note of the meeting held on 22 March 2016 had been circulated.
- 2.2 Mr L Smith asked that with regard to minute 22.3 it be noted that he had agreed to circulate details of an appeal that he was organising and confirmed that he had done this after the meeting.

3. Alternatives to Shropshire Council's Management Restructure

- 3.1 Members considered the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which set out options for future structures for the Shropshire Hills AONB and the recommendations of the Management Board. All Members present confirmed that in addition to the report that had received copies of the Chairman's letter to the Director of Commissioning and the Director of Commissioning's response.
- 3.2 The Local Commissioning Manager emphasised that Shropshire Council had always valued the work that the AONB Partnership did. He referred to the report and stated that the Council had always been open to other ways of achieving the necessary savings and informed the meeting that, subject to receiving some clarification, the Council was happy to consider the proposal put forward by the Management Board.
- 3.3 The Chief Executive of the National Association of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAAONB) commented that the Association had been working to reduce the reliance of AONBs on DEFRA funding. He went on to say that the general direction of travel for AONBs was to a position of greater independence.
- 3.4 The Chair advised members that the Management Board had agreed that Shropshire Council should recharge the AONB for support costs in the 2016/17 budget which were currently covered by the Council, a figure of £31,290.
- 3.5 Ms Hayter asked whether there would be a transition period for the move to the new structure. The Chair advised that the Management Board would be looking for a two year transition period.
- 3.6 In response to a question, the AONB Partnership Manager confirmed that the Management Plan would still need to be adopted by the Councils. Mrs Bury commented

it was important that the Councils continued to recognise the importance of the AONB and the Management Plan.

3.7 Ms Hayter asked whether the 40 day redundancy consultation on the AONB Partnership Manager's post had been halted. The Chair informed the meeting that the consultation was still active but that he was meeting with representatives of Shropshire Council later in the week and would be pressing for the suspension of the consultation period during the negotiations towards the new structure.

3.8 Following further discussion around the potential structure of the new organisation it was **RESOLVED:**

That the Partnership endorse the Management Board's recommendations for a move towards an independent AONB organisation, as either an independent charity or Conservation Board or similar structure, and to support the terms of the Chair's potential agreement with Shropshire Council.

4. Stepping Stones Project

4.1 The Meeting received a presentation from Peter Carty on the proposed Stepping Stones Project, a landscape scale conservation initiative for the Long Mynd – Stiperstones area.

5. Date of Next Meeting

5.1 Members were reminded that the next meeting of the AONB Partnership would be held on Tuesday 14 June 2016 and that it would be followed by the Annual Tour.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: