



Shropshire Hills
AONB Partnership

22 March 2022

9.30 am

Item

Public

**MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS AONB PARTNERSHIP MEETING HELD ON
19 OCTOBER 2021
9.30 - 11.50 AM CRAVEN ARMS COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

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Present

Local Authorities

Shropshire Council

Cllr Heather Kidd

Cllr Hilary Luff

Cllr Dan Morris

Cllr Cecilia Motley (Vice Chair)

Statutory/Voluntary Agencies & Individual members

Individual Member

Alison Caffyn

Individual Member

George Chancellor

Individual Member

Adrian Cullis

Individual Member

Gillian Preece

Individual Member

Fiona Williams

Individual Member

Andrew Wood

Town & Parish Council representative

John Luck

Town & Parish Council representative

Mark Hughes

Town & Parish Council representative

John Long

Town & Parish Council representative

David Mills

Caring for Gods Acre

Gill Binks

Country Land & Business Association

Alex Carson-Taylor (Chair)

Land Life & Livelihoods

Robert Harris

Longmynd Adventure Camp

Jim Bunce

Longmynd & District Bridleways Association

Sue Lee

/ British Horse Society

Middle Marches Community Land Trust

Janet Cobb

National Farmers Union

Carol Griffiths

National Trust

Pete Carty

Ramblers Association

Charles Edwards

The Strettons Civic Society

Hilary Claytonsmith (Vice Chairman)

Upper Onny Wildlife Group

Leo Smith

Observers/Officers

Shropshire Council

Clare Featherstone (Head of Culture & Leisure)
Tim Ward (Committee Officer)

Shropshire Hills AONB
Partnership Staff Team

Phil Holden (AONB Partnership Manager)
Joy Howells (Funding & Programmes Office)
Mike Kelly (Natural Environment Officer)
Nigel McDonald (Sustainable Tourism Officer)
Joe Penfold (Young Rangers Officer)

40 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

40.1 The retiring Chair James Williamson welcomed Jim Bunce, John Luck, Gill Preece and Fiona Williams to their first meeting of the Partnership.

40.2 Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Bury, Veronica Cossons, Charles Edwards, Ruth Houghton, Bill Klemperer, Nicola Stone and Chris Turley.

41 Minutes of the last meeting

41.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2021 had been circulated.

41.2 RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership held on 31 March 2021 be approved as a true record

42 Appointment of Chair, Vice Chairs and Members of Strategy and Performance Committee

42.1 Appointment of Chair

The retiring Chair advised the meeting that one nomination had been received for the position of Chair.

RESOLVED:

That Mr Alex Carson-Taylor be elected Chair of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership.

Mr Carson-Taylor took the Chair and paid tribute to the work that Mr Williamson had done during his time as Chair. The AONB Partnership Manager also paid tribute and made a presentation to Mr Williamson on behalf of the Partnership.

41.2 Appointment of Vice Chair

The Chair advised the meeting that two nominations had been received for the positions of Vice Chair

RESOLVED:

That Cllr Cecilia Motley and Ms Hilary Claytonsmith be appointed Vice Chairs of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership.

41.3 Appointments to Seats on the Strategy and Performance Committee

The Chair advised that Ms Janet Cobb, Cllr. Heather Kidd, Mr John Long, Ms Fiona Williams and Mr Andrew Wood, had been nominated to serve on the Strategy and Performance Committee.

RESOLVED:

That Ms Janet Cobb, Cllr. Heather Kidd, Mr John Long, Ms Fiona Williams and Mr Andrew Wood be appointed to serve on the Strategy and Performance Committee

43 **Background Induction Briefing about the AONB and National Context, and discussion about future directions**

43.1 Members received a presentation from the AONB Partnership Manager which gave an introduction to the AONB designation and the work of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership.

44 **Update on Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme and Development of Environmental Land Management (ELM)**

44.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which updated members on progress with the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme in the Shropshire Hills AONB.

44.2 The AONB Partnership Manager reminded members that the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme was launched nationally on 1st July 2021 and that there £736,000 of funding available in the first year. He advised members that it was hoped to reprofile the funding and move some to years two and three.

44.3 The AONB Partnership Manager advised the meeting that in the region of 100 enquiries had been received and that so far 4 grants had been awarded. He added that the team were working with existing farmer clusters and groups to encourage applications especially from underrepresented areas both geographically and in terms of the programme themes.

44.4 Members expressed concerns that some grants were pegged at the same levels as the Countryside Stewardship Scheme as often these were too low to encourage works.

44.5 Members received a short presentation from the Chair which updated them on the proposed replacements for the Basic Payment Scheme and existing agri-environment schemes.

45 Partner Activity

- 45.1 The AONB Partnership Manager reminded the meeting that this item was an opportunity for Partnership Members to update the full Partnership on their activity and that if any members wished to give updated to a future meeting to let him know.
- 45.2 Carol Griffiths gave an update from the NFU. She advised the meeting that NFU members were becoming increasingly concerned with the number and complexity of schemes coming forward and a lack of clarity coming out of DEFRA on the schemes, a fact borne out in a recent report from the National Audit Office. She added that one point of concern was the fact that some of the proposed schemes run for 25 years which may cause problems with succession planning.
- 45.3 Mrs Griffiths added that other concerns were the loss of tenanted farms with an increase in landlords taking farms back in hand or developing share farming agreements and the loss of food producing land as part of carbon offset schemes where land was being bought up to plant trees on.
- 45.4 Clare Featherstone, Culture, Leisure and Tourism Manager Shropshire Council gave an update. She informed the meeting that Shropshire Council were currently developing a new Shropshire Council Plan to clarify priorities which would focus on inequalities, climate change, skills and employment and the natural environment. The Culture, Leisure and Tourism Manager advised that currently there was a significant gap in funding for 2022/23 and that currently 65% of overall funding was now being spent on social care.
- 45.5 The Culture, Leisure and Tourism Manager informed the Partnership that following the retirement of the Director of Children's Services the Adults and Children's Directorates had been merged to form a People Directorate and a new Health and Wellbeing Directorate was being formed.
- 45.6 The Culture, Leisure and Tourism Manager reminded members that Culture, Leisure and Tourism Services were brought together in April 2020 and that the overall aim was to continue to develop Shropshire as a vibrant destination, with high quality, paid for cultural activities that will support community activities for those in most need. To help deliver the climate change agenda and there would be a focus on health and wellbeing, with the Services being closely linked to Public Health. She advised the meeting that a redesign of services was being undertaken which would reduce duplication, increase income generation and increase grant funding.
- 45.7 The Culture, Leisure and Tourism Manager advised members that "Vibrant Shropshire" the Cultural Strategy for 2021-31 had been published. (<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/vibrant-shropshire>) and that the Team were currently working with the Arts Council on the development of a Cultural Compact which was a cross-sector independent partnership which would facilitate the co-delivery of Cultural Strategy, lead a step-change in the sustainability and contribution of culture to the life of Shropshire and help develop the local cultural sector and boost its engagement with health agencies, business, universities and other sectors. She added that this would be supported by DCMS and bring Shropshire to the forefront of culture nationally, working with Cultural Compacts in other places.

45.8 The Culture, Leisure and Tourism Manager advised the meeting that from 1st November she would become the Head of Culture, Leisure and Tourism following the retirement of the current head and a new management team would be in place as follows: -

- Culture and Communities Manager - Pete Banford
- Culture and Tourism Manager - Andrea Fox
- Infrastructure, Contracts and Compliance Manager - Grant Wilson
- CLT Development Manager - Paul Gossage
- Support Officer - Alastair Pack

She informed the meeting that a second stage restructure was planned, which would increase collaboration across services, and it was hoped that this would be in place by April 2022 and that it was not envisaged that there would be any impact on the AONB Team, other than to offer more opportunities for joint working and to benefit from more joined up marketing.

45.9 The Culture, Leisure and Tourism Manager advised the Partnership that from 1st November the Council's officer representative for the AONB Partnership would be Pete Banford.

46 Shropshire Hills Young Rangers and Green Leaders Projects

46.1 Members received a presentation from Joe Penfold, Young Rangers Project Officer which gave an update on the Young Rangers and Green Leaders projects.

46.2 Members welcomed the projects and the opportunities that it gave young people in the AONB.

47 National Association for AONBs update, including collaborative work on climate change

47.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which updated members on some recent activity of the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB).

47.2 The AONB Partnership Manager updated members on the collaborative work which the NAAONB was carrying out which included a series of workshops and collaboration on climate change work.

48 Shropshire Local Plan Examination

48.1 The AONB Partnership Manager informed the meeting that the Shropshire Council Local Plan had been submitted for examination, but it was not currently known when this would take place. He added that the Partnership had made a further five responses at the Regulation 19 consultation stage some of which had been accepted. He advised the members that the Partnership had opted not to take part in the formal examination but that he had contacted the Programme Officer and had agreed that he would provide further information or clarification where needed.

49 AONB Team Work Programme Update

49.1 Members received the report of the AONB Partnership Manager which gave an update on the recent activity of the AONB team.

49.2 The AONB Partnership Manager reminded Members that the Strategy & Performance Committee oversaw the work of the team in more detail so the item was here largely for information but that they should contact him if they had any queries.

50 Dates of Future Meetings

50.1 Members were advised that the next meeting of the Partnership would be held on Tuesday 22nd March 2022 at 9.30am.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: