



Committee and Date

Shropshire's Great Outdoors
Strategy Board

13 October 2022

SHROPSHIRE'S GREAT OUTDOORS STRATEGY BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2022

**In the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury,
Shropshire, SY2 6ND**

2.00 - 3.37 pm

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Alex Carson-Taylor (Chair), Mark Weston (Vice Chairman), Georgie Hyde and Jack Tavernor

52 Welcomes, Introductions and Apologies for Absence

52.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

52.2 Apologies for absence had been received from Peter Carr, Cecilia Motley and Andrew Wood.

53 Declarations of Interest

53.1 There were no declarations of interest

54 Public Question Time

54.1 There were no public questions.

55 Minutes of the Last Meeting

55.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2021 had been circulated

55.2 RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Shropshire's Great Outdoors Strategy Board held on 4 February 2021 be agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman

56 Strategy Board Membership

56.1 The Culture and Communities Manager advised the meeting that following the recent reconstitution there remained vacancies for representatives from the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership and the disability access sector.

56.2 The Committee Officer informed the meeting that there was also need to formally appoint representatives from Shropshire Council to the Board and that in the past

the Shropshire Council representatives had been the Portfolio Holders for Communities, Culture, Leisure & Tourism, Transport and for Adult Social Care and Public Health.

RESOLVED:

That the Portfolio Holders for Communities, Culture, Leisure & Tourism, Transport and for Adult Social Care and Public Health be the Councils representatives on the Board.

56.3 Mr Tavernor asked that a full list of Board Members be circulated. This was agreed.

57 Update on ROW Reform/Deregulation Act

57.1 The Mapping Enforcement Team Leader reminded the meeting that the 2026 cut off date for the addition of historic routes. She added that the right of landowners to apply to move row under Highways Act 1980 and the rights of councils to recover costs of doing this were being taken forward but that this would need some sort of legislation.

57.2 The Mapping Enforcement Team Leader commented that there had been some concern that some parts of the Deregulation bill which would have simplified some of ROW processes would not be taken forward, but Defra had confirmed that these would be enacted and that it was hoped that the Statutory Instruments would be laid before Parliament by the end of the year.

58 ELMS Update

58.1 The Chair asked Members to provide an update.

58.2 Ms Hyde advised the meeting that the NFU was currently working with its members, and that a survey that they had carried out had shown uptake would be lower than Defra had anticipated. She commented that there was agreement that that pay rates were lower than most farmers would like and that there was not much information regarding the higher level schemes such as Landscape recovery and that more detail was required.

58.3 Mr Weston commented that there was not much detail around access within ELMS but that National access groups had been meeting with DEFRA in effort to get access incorporated in all three tiers, he added that the BHS were keen that landowners were paid for maintaining access

58.4 Mr Tavernor commented that a lot of tenants were worried around loss of BP but that there appeared to be a lot of "head burying" about the way forward. He added that a lot of tenants would welcome payment for access as there was comparatively little work required for the payment.

58.5 Mr Tavernor advise that the Welsh Government had just published details of SFI and that on the whole these had been well received although payment levels were

not known yet. He informed the meeting that there would be a requirement for farms to have 10% woodland but that most farms close to this already, although hill and costal farms may struggle

58.6 Mr Weston asked that the Board write to Minister requesting that access be included in all three levels of SFI. This was agreed.

58.7 The Chair suggested that ELMS be a standing item on future agendas. This was agreed

59 Shropshire's Great Outdoors Strategy Update

59.1 The Culture and Communities Manager reminded Members that the Strategy covered the period 2016 – 2028 and that the first years of the strategy had seen unprecedented times with covid and that this had reinforced the value people put on outdoor spaces with more people accessing attractions and the general Rights of Way network on their doorstep and this had highlighted inequality of access due to demographic and where you live. He added that the increased use of sites and the network had brought its own issues such as increased litter and issues with parking at that increased use of the rights of way network had led to a large increase in reported issues.

59.2 The Culture and Communities Manager highlighted the following: -

- Increasing links with the Public Health department with joint working to address issues
- Use of volunteers important to service – currently no of volunteers equates to 27 full time equivalent posts
- Green flags retained – increased recycling opportunities introduced at all sites
- Severn Valley Park – financially broke even for first time
- Plans for Mere - looking at providing access to Mere for water sports
- Working with colleagues in planning to ensure green space included in new developments and green corridors between settlements
- £200K capital budget for bridge maintenance secured
- Major reduction in budget since 2010 has led to different ways of doing thing with more income generation to support core work.
- Potential pot of money for improvements to ROW network available through AONB protected landscapes.

59.3 The Culture and Communities Manager advised the meeting than a full update report would be brought to future meeting

60 Shropshire Council Finance

60.1 The Culture & Communities Manager advised the meeting that following receipt of the government settlement there was a large deficit, and the council were currently looking at solutions. He stated that as a department he was looking at different

ways of working and that the “in year” savings that needed to be found would be met by increasing income and that he was carrying out a departmental restructure which was looking to break down “silos” within department such as increased work with leisure and museums staff.

- 60.2 The Culture and Communities Manager informed the Committee that work was starting earlier on budget setting for the next financial year in order to address challenges ahead and that the department’s budget formed a very small part of the total council budget. He added that he was working to make department more sustainable through income generation and working with other departments such as public health.
- 60.3 In answer to a question the Culture and Communities Manager confirmed that he would be putting a bid for funding from the funding received as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Funding to fund an “Education Ranger” to work with schools.
- 60.4 The Culture and Communities Manager reminded the meeting of the “Farming in Protected Landscapes” funding pot which was being administered by the AONB. In response to a question the Culture and Communities Manager stated that he wasn’t aware of any access projects that had been funded by the scheme.
- 60.5 A discussion followed about how the board could assist the process.

61 Shropshire Place Branding

- 61.1 The Chair advised the meeting that Place Branding was a piece of work where consultants had been engaged to carry out a piece of work to find a “single brand” for Shropshire.
- 61.2 The Culture and Communities Manager advised the meeting that the project was looking at everything the Shropshire is, and that as a Team they actively encouraged responsible and appropriate use of the countryside.

62 Updates from Members

- 62.1 The Mapping and Enforcement Officer informed the meeting that Peter Carr had asked whether the Council was going to do any “mega – orders” to correct anomalies in the rights of way network. She commented that where it was easy these anomalies would be addressed but that due to the large number of other applications that were pending there would be no opportunity to carry out pro-active work.
- 62.2 The Mapping and Enforcement Officer gave an update from Peter Carr on the working group on autonomous farm machinery that he sits on, informing the meeting that a paper would be published for consultation but that currently there

was no proposals for restriction or diversion of routes where autonomous machinery was being used.

62.3 Mr Weston advised the meeting that local equestrians still had concerns regarding the lack of an equestrian crossing of the Northwest Relief Road at Shepherds Lane. He asked that an item be put on the next agenda regarding multiuser use.

63 Dates of Future Meetings

63.1 Members were advised that the next meeting of the Board would be held in October and that the Committee Officer would advised members of the date when it was to hand.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: