

NORTH WESSEX DOWNS AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY
COUNCIL OF PARTNERS

MINUTES of a meeting held at
Marlborough Golf Club
on Tuesday 6th March 2018

Present

Mr E Hiscocks
Cllr Wayne Crabbe
Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philippe
Cllr Anna McNair Scott
Cllr Charles Mathew
Cllr Paul Miller

Representing

Chairman
Swindon Borough Council
Wiltshire Council
Hampshire County Council
Oxfordshire County Council
Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council

Community & Parish Interest Group Members

Mr Nigel Titchen
Dr J Sharp

Farming & Rural Business Interest Group Members

Mr Peter Lemon

Recreation & Tourism Interest Group Members

Mr M Crane

North Wessex Downs Landscape Trust

Mr D Sherlock

North Wessex Downs Management Working Group

Mr Robin Edwards

In attendance

Mr R Broadhead	Wiltshire Council
Mr J Wilshaw	Swindon Borough Council
Mr N Mottram	Oxfordshire County Council
Mr H Oliver	Director, North Wessex Downs AONB
Mr I Hepburn	Planning Advisor North Wessex Downs AONB
Mrs S Clarke	Partnership Coordinator North Wessex Downs AONB (job share)
Ms C McCorquodale	Partnership Coordinator North Wessex Downs AONB (job share)

Also present

Ms Sarah Nichols	Marlborough Tennis Club
Mrs Hilda Moore	Chair Marlborough Tennis Club

Apologies for absence were received from:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Cllr Dominic Boeck	West Berkshire Council
Cllr Vaughan	Hampshire County Council
Mr D Bibby	Test Valley Borough Council
Mr Garry King	Hampshire County Council

Mr Paul Hendry
Mr R Clarke
Mr Paul Rogers

West Berkshire Council
Recreation & Tourism Interest Group
Nature Conservation Interest Group

2. Constitutional Item (paper 1)

Members noted vacancies for Advisory members for Historic Environment Interest Group (2 vacancies) Nature Conservation Interest Group (1 vacancy) Community & Parish Interest Group (1 vacancy) Farming & Rural Business Interest Group (1 vacancy).

The Chairman encouraged members to identify potential candidates to fill the five vacancies. PM explained that he had been nominated as Heritage Champion by his local authority; he would be attending a training session in April which would bring him into contact with like-minded people and he was happy to act as a conduit to Historic England as required.

3 Minutes of Previous Meeting (paper 2)

It was agreed that the Minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 14 November 2017 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes

The Corporate Strategy was waiting for comment from the Landscape Trust. As soon as their comments have been agreed HO will circulate the document.

5. Chairman's remarks

EH welcomed Robin Edwards, the Chair of the Management Working Group and the Regional Director of the CLA South-East.

EH explained that he and HO had met the leader of Swindon BC, David Renard with Cllr Wayne Crabbe and the Team. Later in the month he and HO will meet Cllr Barber, Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council and Cllr Cotton, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council. He invited members to indicate if there were other organisations that they felt would be beneficial to visit.

EH asked for contributions towards the next Forum – the working title is “Farming Tomorrow”. The team is looking for informative and inspirational speakers and a venue, ideally a farm with appropriate accommodation and sites nearby for afternoon visits.

He invited members to a light lunch at the end of the meeting as an opportunity to network. He thanked those present for their ongoing support and involvement.

6. Partnership Round Table

PM informed the meeting that Urban&Civic, partnered with the Wellcome Trust, had been announced as the private sector development partner who will join Basingstoke and Deane BC and Hampshire CC to deliver this large scale development. PM is seeking a meeting with IH to discuss the impact before Easter.

JS commented that Harwell development pressures continue. He pointed to a multi-million pound initiative to refurbish former RAF buildings at Harwell Science and Innovation Campus. The programme will attract new businesses and help expand organisations already on site. There are

plans for a centre displaying information about the area. The Council of Partners agreed that the AONB logo should be on this building.

AMcN - Fully supported the Wellcome Trust's involvement with the Manydown project.

MC reported that Hungerford Town Council were disappointed that they had been refused leave to request a judicial review of West Berkshire Council's decision on the Salisbury Road major development. He drew attention to the ongoing wild flower project with the Town and Manor of Hungerford to reintroduce native wild plants to the Common.

NM continues to promote the AONB. He drew attention to Highways England's intention to create an expressway of new road and reinstated rail routes between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge – the Oxford/ Cambridge Expressway. He asked if the AONB had engaged with the consultation. HO explained that they had been working alongside Oxfordshire environmental groups. The AONB had been invited to a meeting in Milton Keynes and IH had had attended.

WC informed the meeting that Swindon BC were supportive of the Oxford/Cambridge Expressway taking the view that Swindon's strong manufacturing base would benefit from such an ambitious project. Swindon is continuing to develop. He drew attention to renovation taking place on the Wiltshire Berkshire Canal closed in 1914, although there are parts of the canal that because of development will not be able to be reopened and alternative routes will need to be identified.

JW Mitigation of development is crucial and he drew attention to the document published in 2006 – the Swindon Urban Fringe Action – that needed to be revisited in the light of the development on the southern and eastern sides of Swindon.

RE – drew attention to the recently published Government Command Paper Health and Harmony: the future for food, farming and the environment in a Green Brexit, February 2018 which should be read with the 25 Year Environment Plan.

PL expressed concern about the level of vacancies within the AONB Team.

FdRP noted that Swindon BC and Wiltshire Council were collaborating on the Core Strategy.

RB explained that due to a reorganisation at Wiltshire Council Ian Brown would be leaving the service. RB would be taking on a wide ranging and strategic role including public rights of way, AONBs, countryside management, Brexit, agriculture and local economy.

The Council of Partners asked that the Chairman send a letter thanking Ian Brown for his support over a number of years.

7. Budget Update (*paper 3*)

The update for 2017/2018 was noted. It was confirmed that all local authority partners had made their contributions. It was also confirmed that underspending due to carrying staff vacancies would be directed to projects within the current financial year.

7a. Resources Committee (*report circulated at the meeting*)

The report was noted. EH asked the meeting to consider if they had any contacts that might sponsor publications.

MC said that producing a leaflet with links to websites that are expected took a great deal of time. The Council of Partners thanked the Resources Group for their commitment and hard work.

JS also reported that the very first grant had recently made from the North Wessex Downs Fund, which is held and managed for the AONB by the Wiltshire and Swindon Community Foundation, to support young people undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh Award in the Marlborough Area.

8. Staffing and Recruitment Update (paper 4)

The report was noted. The Council of Partners again expressed the desire to recruit quickly and pressed the Wiltshire Council representatives to speak for them to expedite the matter. There was discussion about whether or not the posts should be part/time and would provide the depth of knowledge and skills needed. However it was felt that no changes should be made at this stage.

9. Proposed Budget 2018-2019 (paper 5)

The Council of Partners agreed the Budget allocations for 2018-2019.

10. Proposed Work Programme 2018-2019 (paper 6)

The Work Programme for 2018-2019 was agreed. The Contacts Database continues to be a challenge in respect of both the technology and the ability to keep the data clean and up-to-date. There are also the issues in respect of the latest data protection legislation to consider in this context. Also MC advised HO to approach Cranborne Chase AONB to access a signs toolkit.

11. Directors's Report (paper 7)

The report was noted.

The Council of Partners considered the Government published Command Paper *Health & Harmony: the Future for Food and Farming*. The Council of Partners agreed to respond by 8th May informed by the thinking already done by the NAANOB. It was noted that there would need to be a balance between farming and conservation interests and there will inevitably be tensions. A meeting will be convened and the following members expressed a willingness to participate CM/NT/PL/RE.

The Council of Partners noted that there was a rolling programme of meetings being arranged for the Chairman and Director to meet the Leaders of the constituent local authorities. It was proposed that the Chairman and Director approach local authorities to offer a 5-10 minute slot before a Full Council Meeting to raise the profile of the AONB.

12. Planning Update - (paper 8)

The Council of Partners noted the report which included some significant planning applications, appeals, strategic planning policy and other planning projects.

In addition the Ox/Cam Expressway was discussed. IH had attended a 'workshop' promoted by Highways England which he described as a lecture rather than an interactive workshop. There are further events planned. Whichever route is chosen will have an effect on the AONB. It was agreed to send a letter to the Secretary of State and CEO of Highways England promptly to ask for a full public consultation on the three options and not on one preferred route. The letter would be copied to local MPs and constituent local authorities.

13. North Wessex Downs Landscape Trust (Oral Report)

DS explained that GK had to step down due to work and personal pressures. The contract for delivering the SDF Programme for 2018/19 would be signed with the AONB Unit imminently.

The Trust is seeking further trustees in legal, accounts, business planning. Positive discussions are underway. A donation of £80 has already been received.

14. **A presentation by Hilda Moore, Chair of Marlborough Tennis Club** – The development of tennis courts for the community with advice from AONB officers and an opportunity to see the result.

The next meeting of the Council of Partners will be on Tuesday 3rd July 2018
(Meeting closed at 12.20pm)

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "H. J. S. Moore". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Signed.....

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3 July 2018