

Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Transition Board
Minutes of Meeting 18th May 2017 at 9:30am
AONB Partnership office, Drovers House, Craven Arms



Present:

James Williamson (Chair)	Individual member
George Chancellor	Individual member
Neil Willcox	Shropshire Council

AONB Partnership staff:

Phil Holden	AONB Partnership Manager
Alison Kay	Administrator (minute taker)

1. Apologies

Cllr Heather Kidd	Shropshire Council
Cllr David Turner	Shropshire Council
Cllr Cecilia Motley	Shropshire Council
Cllr Chris Turley	Telford & Wrekin Council
Veronica Cossons	Shropshire Wildlife Trust
Fran Lancaster	Telford & Wrekin Council
Janine Hayter	Parish/Town Council rep
Hilary Clayton-Smith	Parish/Town Council rep
Andrew Wood	Co-opted member

The meeting was not quorate, but as no specific decisions were required, it was agreed to go ahead.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting of Tuesday 24th April 2017 were agreed as correct.
- 2.2 Submission to Defra is now awaiting informal comments from Dan Jones, and will be submitted by end of May if possible **ACTION Phil**
- 2.3 New letters from the Councils and Partnership to Defra – carried forward **ACTION Phil, with James, Neil and Fran**
- 2.4 Meeting with Shropshire Council re planning issues – carried forward **ACTION – Phil with James, and David and Cecilia**
- 2.5 Letter from James to Gemma Davies on Economic Growth Strategy was sent. Follow up required re requested meeting **ACTION Phil**
- 2.6 Plans for the joint summer tour are progressing. Base venue will be Aston on Clun Village Hall. Visits to be confirmed then invitations sent **ACTION – Phil with team members**

3. Update on Defra submission for Conservation Board (verbal)

- 3.1 Discussion took place with regard to some further comments received from Board members about the draft submission. It was suggested that:
 - A separate bullet point on 'raising profile', distinct from point about Management Plan.
 - Remove point regarding likelihood of funding from local authorities.
 - Mention fragmented tourism sector in Shropshire re role in improving visitor economy.
 - The wording of "governance body as intended to be" be clarified.

- 3.2 These updates would be made, alongside any resulting from informal comments from Defra
ACTION - Phil

4. AONB Team 2016-17 Work Programme update (verbal)

- 4.1 Year end reporting is being prepared for the Annual Review.
- 4.2 The end of the Landscape Partnership Scheme will be an influence on this Financial Year. There is potential for new project bids to be made, drawing on knowledge and skills within the LPS team. Ideas include an AONB-wide project on John Muir Award and Young Rangers, and support for volunteering in care of heritage sites at risk.
- 4.3 There were no questions from the Board.

5. AONB Partnership budgets update

- 5.1 Staff costs have been adjusted for Nigel McDonald going part-time from 1st June 2017.
- 5.2 Office rent for 2016-17 is now being billed by Shropshire Council, but an adjustment is necessary for correction of an undercharge for last Financial Year (not shown on budgets circulated). This affects the amount held 'uncommitted' in reserves.
- 5.3 Telford & Wrekin Council contribution for 3 years in advance has been received.
- 5.4 There was a small addition to reserves, but earned income targets for 2017-18 are challenging.
- 5.5 The fee payable by the new Trust for support by the team on the Conservation Fund has been agreed. This is % based so the amount may increase in future.
- 5.6 A decision has reluctantly been made to wind up the Sustainable Business Network. The market has changed and the staff time required for return is no longer justifiable.
- 5.7 Figures for 2018/19 will need to be adjusted at some point as they are based on having made transition from Partnership to Conservation Board structure.

6. Re-organisation of Resilient Heritage project programme

- 6.1 The matter is also to be discussed by the Trust at their trustees meeting on 23rd May.
- 6.2 As HLF funding cannot be granted for projects which have already started, decisions have to be made as to which activities should start. There was support for enhanced promotion of Friends to start as soon as possible.
- 6.3 Discussion took place as to how to adapt a reapplication to HLF to maximise the probability of an award. It was suggested that consultancy costs be reduced by including more of these roles within the proposed Project Development Officer post.
- 6.4 The proposal will be revised and discussed with HLF in due course (after Defra decision).

7. Outline of AONB Partnership post-Brexit position statement

There was support for continuing discussions at this stage rather than committing a position statement to paper. A discussion workshop would be held at the next Partnership meeting.

8. Any other business

None.

9. Dates of Next Meetings Thursday 13th July 2017, Tuesday 5th September 2017