

Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Advisory Committee

Notes of the informal meeting held at the National Park Office, Helmsley on 10 November 2016, commencing at 10.00 am

Present

Members:

Hambleton District Council: Councillor Christine Cookman
North Yorkshire County Council: County Councillor Clare Wood
Ryedale District Council: Councillor Robert Wainwright
Parish Councils: Sally Brown (Ryedale)
Ramblers: Philip Catterall

Officers:

Howardian Hills AONB team: Paul Jackson and Liz Bassindale
North Yorkshire County Council: Kate Arscott (Secretary) and Liz Small (Heritage Services Manager)
Ryedale District Council: Paula Craddock

1 Informal Meeting

As the Joint Advisory Committee meeting was inquorate, members present agreed to hold an informal meeting instead, using the same agenda. The election of a Chair and Vice Chair of the JAC was deferred until the next meeting. Councillor Christine Cookman chaired the informal meeting.

2 Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of County Councillor Caroline Patmore, Ryedale District Councillor Fiona Farnell, Chris Stratton (Hambleton Parish Councils), Sir William Worsley (Country Land & Business Association), Jim Smith and Mick Hoban (Forestry Commission), Ailsa Kirkup and Jenny Craven (Natural England) and Caroline Skelly (Hambleton District Council)

3 Minutes of the Joint Advisory Committee meeting held on 14 April 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2016 were noted.

ACTION – Minutes of 14 April 2016 to be included on the agenda for the next meeting for formal approval.

4 Matters Arising

Minute 72 – National Association for AONBs Activity

County Councillor Clare Wood asked for an update regarding the NAAONB theme of health and wellbeing and the promotion of access for less able groups.

The AONB Manager reported that a number of case studies had been presented at the national conference in June 2016. Locally the AONB was working with the Moorswork social enterprise group and officers were due to meet in the near future with both the Alzheimer's Society and Sight Support Ryedale walking group to explore

opportunities for joint working. The team was also commissioning web based work through ifootpath.com to promote easy access routes.

County Councillor Clare Wood thanked Liz Bassindale for attending the recent Health and Wellbeing wider partnership event. She recommended that the AONB team contact the Council's new contractors Dementia Forward and Making Space.

Liz Small suggested that it would be possible to build in more public health outcomes to the successful River Ryevitalise bid.

Minute 68 – Development within the AONB

The AONB Manager confirmed that he would check whether it was possible to differentiate between applications that had been refused and ones that had been withdrawn before a likely refusal in time for the next meeting.

Minute 72 – National Association for AONBs Activity

Philip Catterall reported that the Ramblers' involvement with Outstanding Week had been successful and they would take part again in 2017.

Minute 73 – Reports from Partner Organisations

The AONB Manager confirmed that he was due to attend the Hambleton Area Committee on 12 December 2016 and the Ryedale Area Committee on 23 February 2017.

5 JAC Virtual Site Tour of 2015/16 work

Paul Jackson, AONB Manager, gave a slide presentation of examples of work undertaken in 2015/16, highlighting the following sites:

- Firby, Bulmer, Gilling and Brandsby – new hedge planting
- East Newton and Grimston – wall restoration
- Grimston – Toft Wood SINC restored to native broadleaves
- Crambeck and Brandsby – Himalayan Balsam control
- Yearsley – bracken management
- Appleton-le-Street – churchyard grassland management
- Nunnington – scrub management
- Grimston – rhododendron control
- Barton Hill, Low Hutton, Terrington and West Ness – traditional direction sign restoration
- Huttons Ambo – village name sign restoration
- Yearsley – brash removal from Scheduled Monuments
- Yorkshire Arboretum – composting toilets

Members particularly welcomed partnership work with the Autism Plus Centre at Gilling East.

In response to a comment about overhead cables, Paul Jackson confirmed that national funding for undergrounding was only available for power cables and not telecommunications lines. He was hopeful of BT improving the cabling at Nunnington, which was considered the highest priority. The need for underground cables to be suitable for the needs of a 21st century society was stressed.

Members welcomed the report and the visual presentation of the work being carried out.

6 AONB Unit Activity

Members noted a detailed report of the work areas and progress achieved by the AONB Unit since the last meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee.

Liz Bassindale, AONB Officer, gave a slide presentation of examples of work undertaken in the first half of 2016/17.

Liz also reported the following:

- the number of volunteers had increased and more tools were being bought as a result
- mole control and maintenance had taken place at the popular City of Troy maze
- Moorswork and the AONB Volunteers had carried out a day's work in Amotherby Churchyard
- Howsham Mill - post-flooding clear-up work had taken place and a Forest School area and picnic site had been created
- Reinvigorated popularity of the Junior Rangers activity days, which are now routinely full.

The AONB Manager reported that the River Rye Landscape Partnership funding bid had been successful and would result in £275k for development work, including 2 full-time officers, leading to a 5 year delivery plan. The contribution from the AONB JAC would be £1,500 per year in the development stage, and £5,000 per year in the delivery phase. The project covered about half of the AONB area.

Where possible the replacement of village signs was being linked to undergrounding. Members discussed the willingness of Parish Councils to contribute to projects, which in other parts of the county had to be fully funded by Parish Councils. It was noted that some small Parish Councils found the contribution difficult to raise, particularly where for example they also had to provide new poles for lighting following undergrounding of power cables.

The AONB Manager informed members of a Geology Trust lottery bid, more details of which would be available at the next meeting.

Members asked to see the new banners at the next meeting.

ACTION – Update on Geology Trust Lottery bid to be provided at next meeting
New banners to be displayed at next meeting

7 JAC Planning Consultations

Members noted the responses to planning consultations submitted by the AONB Manager since the last meeting.

The AONB Manager drew members' attention to the comments on the Ox Pasture Wood felling licence application on page 61-67 of the agenda. He indicated that larch disease made it likely that there would be more applications of this type in the local area, and highlighted the importance of defining 'Remnant Features' in this context, which would be a decision for the regional Forestry Commission officers. He reported on a divergence of opinion in relation to the appropriate balance to be struck between the AONB objectives of conservation and restoration, and the economic drivers which landowners had regard to, in responding to the spread of larch disease.

8 AONB Indicators

Members noted a report detailing performance against selected indicators used to measure AONB performance annually. In particular indicators 4 and 5 relating to financial resources, leverage and 'added value' were relevant with regards to the budget.

9 AONB Budget

Members noted a report detailing final income and expenditure during 2015/16 and considering the anticipated budgetary requirement for 2017/18.

The AONB Manager clarified that the majority of the £23k underspend in 2015/16 had now been allocated for projects. This funding had initially been retained in anticipation of financial cuts which had not materialised, and was therefore being spent in the current year.

He confirmed that the 2016/17 budget was on track, with plenty of projects coming forward. A similar budgetary position was projected for 2017/18, assuming no changes in the Chancellor's autumn statement later in the month. Management of the budget on a small business approach had been endorsed by the Directorate management team.

Members reflected their support for the approach adopted in managing the budget and the optimistic outlook with regard to the future, within the underlying context of ongoing budget pressures on all funders. The flexibility to move resources between budget areas was felt to be key. It was noted that some of the reserves would probably be allocated to meet the JAC contribution to the River Ryevitalise project. Members felt that it was helpful from a public perspective to see where reserves were being earmarked for specific purposes.

10 National Association for AONBs Update

The Committee noted an update on activity by the National Association for AONBs. The AONB Manager particularly highlighted the encouraging focus on raising the national profile of AONBs through engagement and participation in high level meetings as new policies emerge, and also the Association's commitment to taking advantage of opportunities that arise to promote AONB objectives at a national level.

Members noted that Lord Gardiner was now the minister with responsibility for AONBs.

11 Reports from Partner Organisations

Members of the Committee shared the following information:

Ramblers

Philip Catterall planned to contact the Estate Manager at Castle Howard to clarify the timescale and plans for reconstruction of the closed car park. Paul Jackson agreed to provide him with contact details.

Ryedale District Council

The Ryedale Local Plan preferred sites were due to be agreed by the Council on 8 December for public consultation in January.

North Yorkshire County Council

Consultation was currently taking place on the Joint Minerals and Waste Plan, with a closing date of 21 December. There had been significant changes since the previous version, particularly regarding fracking.

The arm of the Directorate that included the AONB team had been renamed Growth, Trading Standards and Planning Services, with a new Assistant Director, Matt O'Neill, now in post. This recognised the potential of the natural landscape as a driver of growth and economic development

There may be some historic environment/archaeology projects coming out of the Ryevitalise project.

Liz Small congratulated Paul Jackson on 25 years of service with the County Council.

Hambleton District Council

The Hambleton Local Plan was out for consultation, with a number of public meetings scheduled. The consultation will close in December.

Other

Paul Jackson updated members with regard to work at Castle Howard. The bridge had been restored and work had been carried out on the avenue of trees. Historic England had now asked the estate to look at the North Avenue and potential restoration of the two obelisk panels.

Sally Brown reported that the North York Moors National Park Development Plan was now available on the website.

12 Date of next JAC Meeting

ACTION - The next meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee to be held on Thursday 13 April 2017 at 10am at Hovingham Village Hall, or Coxwold if Hovingham is not available.

The meeting concluded at 11.40am

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