



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATION BOARD FOR THE CHILTERN'S AREA
OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY held on Wednesday 26th June 2019 at Y2K Hall,
Cavendish Road, Markyate AL3 8PS following the AGM**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Appointed by Local Authorities

Cllr Bill Bendyshe Brown
Cllr Paul Duckett
Cllr Steve Jarvis
Cllr. Lynn Lloyd
Cllr Richard Newcombe
Cllr Ian Reay
Cllr Nick Rose

Appointing Body

Buckinghamshire County Council
Central Bedfordshire Council,
North Hertfordshire District Council
South Oxfordshire District Council
Aylesbury Vale District Council
Hertfordshire County Council
Chiltern District Council

Appointed by the Secretary of State

Colin Courtney
Alison Doggett
Paul Mainds
John Nicholls
Ray Payne
Elizabeth Wilson

Secretary of State
Secretary of State
Secretary of State
Secretary of State
Secretary of State
Secretary of State

Elected by Parish Councils

Cllr Alison Balfour-Lynn
Cllr Susan Biggs
Cllr John Griffin
Cllr Charles Hussey
Cllr Clive Thomas

Hertfordshire
Oxfordshire
Oxfordshire
Buckinghamshire
Buckinghamshire

CCB Officers

Sue Holden
Graham Hurst
Lucy Murfett

Chief Officer
Finance Officer
Planning Officer

Other:

Deirdre Hansen
Les Mosco

Clerk to the Board
Trustee Chilterns Society

19/20.1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Charles Mathew, Oxfordshire County Council, Cllr Hugh McCarthy, Wycombe District Council and Ian Waller, Secretary of State appointee.

Absent without apologies: Cllr Raj Khiroya, Three Rivers District Council and Cllr Luisa Sullivan, South Bucks District Council.

19/20.2 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

19/20.3 Minutes of the Board Meeting 20th February 2019.

The minutes of the Board Meeting of 20th February 2019 were signed by the Chairman as a true record after 'not' was added to 18/19.32 second paragraph "the risks of *not* achieving the plan".

19/20.4 Matters Arising.

a. Management Plan.

The Members were presented with the final copy of the Management Plan, which was praised. The Chief Officer thanked the authors of the Management Plan 2019-2024, the Planning Officer, the Countryside Officer, the Conservation & Landscape Officer, the Landscape Heritage Officer, the Communications Officer and herself the Chief Officer for their work on producing this outstanding piece of work.

Some hard copies will be available for the CCB's key partners and a web version will soon be available. A summary is being printed.

b. There is no update on the National Park application.

c. The Secretary of State members have not had a meeting with the Secretary of State as requested at the last meeting (18/19.32- recommendation 5)

19/20.5 Public Question Time.

No public questions.

19/20.6 Board Review including reports from the Executive and Planning Committees.

a. The Chief Officer had provided a summary of the CCB's work with some highlights:

1. Accolade was given to the Planning Officer for securing a substantial funding package of £3.75m for AONB enhancements in the Great Western Rail corridor (Reading to Didcot). This had been a hard-fought gain.

2. The People and Society Officer received thanks for her success in securing a £120,000 grant from the HS2 BLEF towards a 3-year programme to boost the visitor economy in the Chilterns.

3. The May visit of Julian Glover, Chair of the Landscapes Review was noted.

4. LiDAR discoveries will soon be available on the website.

5. It was noted that the Chilterns Walking Festival in May had been a great success.

b. Reports from the Executive Committee, the Planning Committee, Landscape and Conservation, People and Society and Development and Communications had been received.

c. Members were presented with copies of the Annual Review and asked to distribute copies to their Council members and other interested parties.

d. Members had the opportunity to ask questions and comment.

- Members offered assistance to have Local Authorities adopt the AONB Model Planning Policy.
- It was noted that the Planning Officer has asked for the application for the M1-A6 link road to be called in by the Secretary of State. The Central Bedfordshire member thanked her for her work on this and the update she gave.
- It was noted that all the CCB's work in the recent year is a remarkable legacy thanks were given to the Chief Officer and her team.
- The Members offered staff support if they felt it may be required.
- The Chair of the Planning Committee had represented they Board at Oxford-Cambridge expressway meetings, she had opposed the justification of this road and had assisted the Planning Officer with the Boards comments on the plans.

It had been a successful year and all the staff were congratulated on this.

1. The Board NOTED the review June 2019.

19/20.7 Statement of Accounts 2018-19

The Finance Officer presented the Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2019. The overall deficit for the year was £8,967 which is deducted from reserves, but was smaller than expected.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) is required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and once approved by the Board is subject to external audit. The AGAR contains the internal audit report, which shows as good, there were no recommendations and no management actions had been issued.

1. The Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 was approved and signed in the appropriate places by the Chairman and the Clerk.
2. The Accounting Statement 2018/19 was approved and signed in the appropriate places by the Chairman and the S151 Officer.

The Finance Officer made the following observations:

- a. 2019/20 is the last year of the current 4-year Defra fixed funding agreement.
- b. Core expenditure is very near to budget.
- c. All reserves are earmarked, with very little reserve for core expenditure.
- d. The Pensions reserve is a statistical figure, provided by actuaries, not an actual one.

Members had a wide-ranging discussion on funding. It was noted that local authority members needed to engage with their local authorities to ensure full contributions.

The Finance Officer was thanked for his hard work on the accounts.

- 1. The Board APPROVED the Annual Governance Statement included in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19**
- 2. The Board APPROVED the Accounting Statement included in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19**
- 3. The Board APPROVED the Statement of Accounts 2018-19**

19/20.8 Statutory Requirements and Code of Governance

The Chairman and Vice Chairman presented some minor amendments to the Statutory Requirements and Code of Governance which was last revised in 2017.

The edits have been accepted by the Executive Committee at its May meeting.

The main edits are:

- To use the title of Chief Executive Officer instead of Chief Officer
- To Standing Committees and Advisory Groups as more flexibility is required.
- To use gender neutral pronouns where possible.

- 1. The Board ADOPTED the revised Statutory Requirements and Code of Conduct.**

19/20.9 Future Meeting Dates

The Chief Officer informed the Board of the future meeting dates for 2019/20

Full Board:

16th October 2019

26th February 2020

17th June (and AGM) 2020

- 21st October 2020
- Executive Committee**
- 18th September 2019
- 15th January 2020
- 6th May 2020
- 23rd September 2020

1. The Board NOTED the future meeting dates.

12.30 The Countryside Officer and the Conservation and Landscape Officer arrived.

19/20.10 Landscape Enhancement associated with Major Infrastructure and Development

The Conservation & Landscape Officer started the presentations updating the Board on the current initiatives to bring significant landscape enhancement to the AONB.

1. He gave a presentation on the HS2 Landscape and Biodiversity Connectivity Project.
2. This was followed by the Planning Officer presenting on the Network Rail fund for mitigating the Great Western Rail Electrification through the AONB (12m), to provide significant improvement and connected landscape, valued and protected for the future through a stronger sense of place. The two AONB's and the Railway Action Group involved sit on the Steering Committee.
3. The Conservation & Landscape Officer presented on various Visual Impact Provision projects, OFGEM, VIP, LEI, UKPN undergrounding and the two projects approved, Dunstable Downs and Chess Valley.
4. This was followed by Biodiversity Accounting. The use of biodiversity offsetting within the planning process is evolving. The aim is to offset loss with requirements ending up with net gain.

Members had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss items as they came up. Lively discussion took place. Members supported the thoughts on capturing opportunities for the CCB to show that it can make the Chilterns better.

The Conservation & Landscape Officer and Planning Officer were thanked for their interesting presentations.

1. The Board will CONSIDER the potential for enhancement projects arising as mitigation and compensation for the impacts of major infrastructure and development on the AONB.

19/20.11 Any other Business.

1. The Chairman informed the Board that Elaine King, the new Chief Executive Officer, will take up her post on 9th July.
2. Sue Holden, Chief Officer, will leave the Board 17 July. In her 4 years she has brought a new look to the Board, transformed the financial situation, brought fresh ideas and challenged the Board. She leaves it with many new projects on board.

Sue was presented with some Chilterns gifts.

Lunch would be followed by a visit to Dunstable Downs.

The Chairman.....date.....