



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 8<sup>th</sup>  
October 2015 at Chinnor Village Hall, High Street, Chinnor OX39 4DH  
COMMENCING AT 10.45 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 13.00 PM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Appointing Body</b>
<b>Appointed by Local Authorities</b>	
Cllr Bill Bendyshe-Brown	Buckinghamshire County Council
Cllr. David Collins	Dacorum Borough Council
Cllr Heather Kenison	Three Rivers District Council
Cllr. Lynn Lloyd	South Oxfordshire District Council
Cllr Hugh McCarthy	Wycombe District Council
Cllr Ian Reay	Hertfordshire County Council- Chairman
Cllr Nick Rose	Chiltern District Council
Cllr Andrew Southam	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Cllr Alan Walters	South Buckinghamshire District Council

<b>Appointed by the Secretary of State</b>	
Dr Heather Barrett-Mold	Secretary of State
Alison Doggett	Secretary of State
Gill Gowing	Secretary of State
Ray Payne	Secretary of State
Helen Tuffs	Secretary of State- Vice-Chair
Ian Waller	Secretary of State
Elizabeth Wilson	Secretary of State

<b>Elected by Parish Councils</b>	
Cllr George Case	Buckinghamshire
Cllr Simon Deacon	Hertfordshire
Cllr John Griffin	Oxfordshire
Cllr Tony Penn	Buckinghamshire
Cllr Michael Stonnell	Bedfordshire

<b>Officers</b>	
Kath Daly	CCB Countryside Officer
Claire Forrest	CCB Information & Interpretation Officer
Deirdre Hansen	Clerk to the Board
Sue Holden	CCB Chief Officer
Lucy Murfett	CCB Planning Officer
Cathy Rose	CCB Activities & Learning Officer
Donna Webb	CCB Administration Officer

**15/16.17. Item 1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr David Barnard North Herts District Council, Cllr Ken Janes, Cllr Sue Biggs, Oxfordshire Parish Councils, Cllr David Nimmo-Smith, Oxfordshire County Council

#### **15/16.18. Item 2 Introduction of new members.**

The Chairman welcomed the new members to the Board and asked them to introduce themselves. He welcomed Sue Holden, the new Chief Officer to her first Board meeting.

#### **15/16.19. Item 3 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

#### **15/16.20. Item 4. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman after the following:

- 15/16.18. 5 amend rail over wires to *rail over-head wires*
- 15/16.9. 1 add to "Budget Equalisation"- *Reserve*
- 15/16.10 final paragraph, last sentence delete "take the lead " and insert *contribute*

#### **15/16.21. Item 5. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising not on the agenda.

#### **15/16.22. Item 6. Public Question time**

No public present.

#### **15/16.23. Item 7. Election of Parish Council Member to the Executive Committee**

The Chairman briefly explained that a parish council vacancy on the Executive Committee had not been filled at the June AGM, because the election process for the parish council vacancies on the Board had not been completed until September. A parish council member was invited to join the Executive Committee.

Three members expressed an interest to be elected, Simon Deacon, George Case and Michael Stonnell. George Case was duly elected to serve on the executive committee until the 2016 AGM.

#### **15/16.24. Item 8. Report from the Executive Committee**

The Chairman reported the matters discussed and decisions taken, by the Executive Committee under delegated powers.

It was questioned if the reduction in the reserves was a one-off or if the Board was running a deficit. The Chief Officer responded that both were occurring and that she will address the matter as a priority.

The Finance Officer reported that the Government scheduled date for announcing the next four years of grants is 22 November.

- 1. The Board NOTED the issues considered by the Executive Committee at its meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> September and the decisions made under delegated authority.**

#### **15/16.25. Item 9. Annual Audit Return**

The Finance Officer gave a brief introduction to the Boards finances for the benefit of the new Members. He reported that the Audit Commission had completed their audit of the Board's accounts for 2014-15. The opinion of the auditors based on the information provided is that the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to their attention that give cause for concern that the relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

The auditor had brought three matters to the attention of the Board as detailed in the "Issues arising report". Two of the items had been reported to the Executive Committee and have been dealt with; the third was a minute reference.

It was noted that the audit report had made incorrect references.

The Finance Officer was praised for his outstanding management of the Boards finances.

- 1. The Board APPROVED and ACCEPTED the audited annual return and issues arising from the report for 2014-15 and AGREED to the responses and actions taken.**

#### **15/16.26 item 10. Report from the Planning Committee.**

The Planning Officer informed the Board about the items considered by the Planning Committee at its meetings 30<sup>th</sup> July and 9 September 2015 and the decisions taken under delegated powers. The paper received summarised items which had been discussed:

- The Planning Officer reported that the CCB will start charging for pre-application advice.
- She asked members to encourage their authorities to endorse the Management Plan. Chiltern District Council, Dacorum Borough Council and South Oxfordshire District Council have endorsed the Management Plan.
- The Planning Officer and the Chair of the Planning Committee had held a training session at Wycombe District Council for its officers, which had been well attended.

#### **Electrification Great Western Main line**

The Planning Officer gave a presentation on the impacts on the AONB arising from the installation of the rail electrification equipment along the Great Western Main Line.

The work is taking place under Permitted Development rights; however Network Rail, carrying out the work, is still bound by s85 of the CROW Act 2000. It was felt that this installation does not enhance or conserve the natural beauty of the AONB. It will mean there will be a permanent significant adverse impact on the AONB.

The Meeting discussed a considerable number of failures by Network Rail in connection with this project and possible actions that the Board could progress. The Chairman earlier in the year had written to Network Rail expressing the Boards' concerns. A number of immediate actions were agreed which were summarised by the Chief Officer as follows:

1. To write to the Rail Regulator expressing the Board's concerns
2. To write to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Railways Minister.
3. To consider spending money on legal action.
4. To support local action groups proactively
5. To consider the media potential.

11.50 Claire Forest and Cathy Rose joined the meeting.

The above actions are to be worked through and taken to the next Executive Committee meeting for consideration.

The Planning Officer thanked the members for their support.

- 1. The Board NOTED the report from the Planning Officer.**
- 2. The Board AGREED that the actions listed above concerning the electrification of the Great Western Line should be worked through and considered by the Executive Committee.**

## 15/16.27 item 11 HS2 Update

The Countryside Officer updated the members on current work in relation to HS2 and the Select Committee hearings.

1. She reported that further petitioners have been appearing
2. That the CCB has been working with Local Authorities considering other mitigation options.
3. The Countryside Officer and the Conservation & Landscape Officer are supporting work being done on other mitigation tasks.

Ray Payne informed the Board that he, on behalf of the Board, and Chilterns District Council had written to the Select Committee commenting that the closing statement by the Select Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2015, included in the paper for this meeting, had not given the CCB the benefit to comment on the closing remarks.

He had also reminded the Board's agent that the Board presence at the Select Committee hearings is to represent the National Interest and ensure that important landscapes are not disregarded and dismissed.

12.05 Ray Payne left the meeting.

4. The Countryside Officer advised the members that discussions with HS2 on tunnels are ongoing.
5. She gave a brief update on the work Bettina Kirkham is undertaking in relation to the landscape issues.
6. The Board's review panel is refining the long list of "asks".
7. There are remaining mitigation points.
8. There will be further opportunity for petitioning following the publication of the Additional Provisions in the next week.
9. The meeting was informed by Nick Rose that following pressure from Chiltern District Council on the matter that HS2 Ltd had not further consulted with Buckinghamshire as they have done with London and Birmingham, HS2 Ltd have now arranged two drop-in events, on 16<sup>th</sup> October at Ballenger Village Hall and on 7<sup>th</sup> November at Wendover Memorial Hall.

The Members debated the HS2 issues.

The Chairman thanked all working on HS2 in particular the Countryside Officer.

- 1. The Board NOTED the content of the report.**

## 15/16.28 item 12 Report on Chilterns Hillforts HLF bid- Beacons of the Past- Hillforts in the Chilterns Landscape.

The Countryside Officer reported that a first round application has been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Chilterns Hillforts project.

The total cost of the Development Phase would be £ 87,200 (cash and in kind):

HLF development grant:	£50,200
Non cash contributions:	£18,000
Partner cash match funding:	£ 4,200
Volunteer time:	£ 9,800
CCB match funding:	£ 5,000

Total £87,200

The Activities and Learning Officer gave a comprehensive presentation on the 22 known hillforts in and close to the Chilterns AONB linking the archaeological and landscape features to the hillforts. She elaborated on the title of the project and the three strands the project encompasses; discovery, learning and protection. It is intended that the project will start summer 2017. If the 1<sup>st</sup> HLF bid is unsuccessful there is a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance to apply.

The Chairman thanked the Countryside Officer and the Activities and Learning Officer for their work on the HLF submission.

**1. The Board NOTED the progress in submitting the HLF project bid.**

**15/16.29 item 13 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the AONB**

The Information & Interpretation Officer informed the Board of the programme of celebratory events taking place and the publicity underway to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the designation of the AONB.

1. A Chilterns celebratory ale was launched 22<sup>nd</sup> September
2. The Outstanding Chilterns event 25<sup>th</sup> November
3. Chilterns Festive Fayre on 5<sup>th</sup> December, a joint event with the Chiltern Society.
4. Anniversary Tree Planting at Angling Spring Wood on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

**Accord with the Chiltern Society**

The Vice-Chairman introduced the draft version of the accord with the Chiltern Society, which had been circulated. The amendments included in the latest circulated copy include those made by the Chilterns Society following their committee meeting. This document is a memorandum of understanding between the two organisations and it is intended to be signed as part of the anniversary celebrations. The Chief Officer added that this document signals a new phase of the relationship with the Chiltern Society. She thanked the Vice-Chairman for her work on the accord.

Following discussion the members were in agreement to sign the accord once edited.

1. **The Board NOTED and SUPPORTED the programme of celebratory events and activities.**
2. **The Board CONFIRMED approval of the draft accord.**

**15/16. Item 14 30 Priorities for the next 3-6 months**

The Chief Officer laid out her priorities for the next 3 months in summary:

1. Her induction to the Chilterns, getting to know the Chilterns well and the key partners.
2. To take forward the thoughts that have emerged from the Management Review, acknowledging that there are remaining objectives.
3. Business planning and budgeting

She asked members to assist her in the tasks ahead.

The Chairman added that undertaking the Management Review has shown how much the Chilterns Conservation board is at a turning point.

**15/16.31. Date of next meeting:** Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016 location TBC.

Future meetings: Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2016, Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016 and Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October.

Induction training for new members took place following lunch.

The meeting closed 13.00

The Chairman..... Date.....