



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 28<sup>th</sup>  
JANUARY 2016 AT RADNAGE VILLAGE HALL, RADNAGE COMMON ROAD, RADNAGE HP14 4DD  
COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.30 PM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Appointing Body</b>
<b>Appointed by Local Authorities</b>	
Cllr David Barnard	North Herts District Council,
Cllr Jacqueline Burnett	Luton Borough Council
Cllr. David Collins	Dacorum Borough Council
Cllr Ken Janes,	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Heather Kenison	Three Rivers District Council
Cllr Hugh McCarthy	Wycombe District Council
Cllr Ian Reay	Hertfordshire County Council- Chairman
Cllr Nick Rose	Chiltern District Council
Cllr Alan Walters M.B.E.	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
Helen Tuffs	Secretary of State- Vice-Chair
Ian Waller	Secretary of State
Elizabeth Wilson	Secretary of State

<b>Elected by Parish Councils</b>	
Cllr Susan Biggs	Oxfordshire
Cllr Simon Deacon	Hertfordshire
Cllr John Griffin	Oxfordshire
Cllr Tony Penn	Buckinghamshire

<b>Officers</b>	
Kath Daly	CCB Countryside Officer
Deirdre Hansen	Clerk to the Board
Sue Holden	CCB Chief Officer
Chris Smith	CCB Finance Officer
Donna Webb	CCB Administration Officer

**15/16.32. Item 1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Bill Bendyshe-Brown Buckinghamshire County Council, Cllr. Lynn Lloyd South Oxfordshire District Council, Cllr David Nimmo-Smith Oxfordshire County Council, Ray Payne Secretary of State, Cllr Michael Stonnell Bedfordshire Parish Councils

**15/16.33. Item 2 Introduction of new members.**

The Chairman welcomed the new members to the Board and asked them to introduce themselves.

### **15/16.34. Item 3 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

### **15/16.35. Item 4. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held 8<sup>th</sup> October 2015 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### **15/16.36. Item 5. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising not on the agenda.

### **15/16.37 Item 6. Public Question time**

No public present.

### **15/16.38. Item 7. Review Paper Highlights:**

#### **Report from the Executive Committee, Report from the Planning Committee and Communications report.**

The Chief Officer brought a different approach in reporting to the Board and asked for feedback from the members. The new format gives a summary and will provide news. She had the following updates not included in the report presented with the agenda:

1. The Hillforts Project-the Beacons of the Past- had been successful in its Development Phase bid for Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF). Alison Doggett, Helen Tuffs and the Countryside Officer were thanked for their hard work in making this happen.
2. DEFRA Grant. The DEFRA grant for the next 4 years has been confirmed. It has not been reduced, but is dependent on contributions from the Local Authorities. Thanks were expressed to Rory Stewart MP, the National Association of AONB's and others, who have worked hard for this.
3. Gill Gowing reported that she is working with the Chiltern Society on the Design Awards, the papers are due to go out soon.

#### **1. The Board NOTED the papers and the decisions made under delegated authority.**

### **15/16.39. Item 8. Hillforts**

The Countryside Officer gave a verbal update on the 1<sup>st</sup> stage success of the HLF grant of up to £52,000. This is the application relating to the outline of the project and the anticipated needs. It will allow for the employment of a Development Officer and some consultancy work. There is a 2-year period to submit the stage 2 application. It is anticipated that this application will be in the region of £700,000. The project itself aims to engage and inspire a large range of people about Iron Age Hillforts in the Chilterns.

The Countryside Officer and the team were congratulated on their hard work and success. The Board was reminded that the late Shirley Judges, as Board Member, had been the initial driving force behind this project. The Countryside Officer also thanked the Activities and Learning Officer for her contributions to the project.

#### **1.The Board NOTED the update**

### **15/16.40. Item 9. Landscape Partnership Proposal**

The Countryside Officer gave a brief outline of the opportunities of the HLF- Landscape Partnership Programme. The CCB has not tapped into this funding before.

Each scheme is delivered by a partnership made of different partners with an interest in an area of countryside of distinctive landscape character that is recognised and valued by local people.

Community engagement would be essential. Officers from the Board had met with the HLF, who acknowledge that Conservation Boards are already a partnership in itself.

The Countryside Officer broadly described the type of projects the CCB could be looking at. The HLF would only provide 75% of the required funding, so partners would need to contribute match-funding. The work load and the core costs were discussed, acknowledging that this is an important opportunity for the AONB.

**1. The Board AGREED to investigate this opportunity.**

**15/16.41 item 10. HS2 update**

The Countryside Officer informed the Board of the recent HS2 activity and the next steps. The Select Committee had sent the parties away to reach agreement. A conference call with HS2 had been held 27/01/16. The CCB has given HS2 a list of wishes. It was noted that to date virtually none of the “asks” have been agreed.

Cllr Nick Rose gave a brief update on his attendance at the SC last week.

The Countryside Officer was thanked for her work.

**1. The Board NOTED the current position on HS2.**

**15/16.42 item 11 Update on Electrification Great Western Main line**

Gill Gowing reported that she and the Planning Officer had attended a recent meeting with Network Rail. Network Rail had apologised for their omissions, not having given due regard to the procedures and the landscape. Network Rail had also failed to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment on the route. They are now employing design consultants. The CCB is intending to give input to the brief to Network Rail on Landscape Design.

Even if retro-fit will not occur in this instance, the work has been worthwhile for future electrifications in the Chilterns.

Questions were raised about the lack of response from the minister. The CCB had sent correspondence to the minister and the rail regulator.

The Chairman commended the Planning Officer and Gill Gowing for their excellent work on this matter.

**1.The Board NOTED the report from the Planning Officer.**

**15/16.43 item 12 Business Plan and Action Plan 2016-17**

The Chief Officer shared feedback she had received from her meetings with Local Authorities and the AONB network and gave some background information to her presentation of the Business Plan 2016-17. The CCB has strategic, capacity, capability and financial challenges ahead.

She presented strategic priorities for 2016-17 and an action plan. The budget shows a deficit for 2016-17, to be funded from reserves, which cannot be sustained in the long term. It is vital to create a sustainable future. It was noted that the reserves need to create impact, sustainability and return.

Members discussed the presentation, provided suggestions, but queried the number of actions.

The Chief Officer recommended a “change of culture”.

The DEFRA grant still needs to be accepted, which the CCB will do, and the size of Local Authority grants for 2016-17 is not known yet.

The Chairman congratulated the Chief Officer on her excellent presentation.

**1. The Board APPROVED the Draft Business Plan and budget for 2016-17.**

## 15/16.44 item 13 Key Dates

### Board and Committee meetings 2016:

Date	Time	Meeting	Location
24 <sup>th</sup> February	10.30 am	Executive Committee	CCB office
9 <sup>th</sup> March	10.00 am	Planning Committee	CCB office
24 <sup>th</sup> March	10.00 am	Board Meeting	TBC
11 <sup>th</sup> May	9 am-3pm	Planning Committee	CCB office
25 <sup>th</sup> May	10.30 am	Executive Committee	CCB office
23 <sup>rd</sup> June	10.00 am	AGM and Board meeting	TBC
8 <sup>th</sup> September	10.30 am	Executive Committee	CCB office
14 <sup>th</sup> September	10.00 am	Planning Committee	CCB office
13 <sup>th</sup> October	10.00 am	Board meeting	TBC
30 <sup>th</sup> November	10.00 am	Executive Committee	CCB office
8 <sup>th</sup> December	10.30 am	Executive Committee	CCB office

### Other meetings and events planned to date:

Date	Time	Meeting/Event	Location
30th January	10am-4pm	Orchard tree pruning	Bradenham
13th-14th February	9.30am – 4pm	Hedge-laying course	Britwell Hill
9 <sup>th</sup> March	10 am-1pm	Developing community partnerships on commons	Booker nr. High Wycombe
June		Design Awards ceremony	tbc
5 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> July	All day	NAAONB Landscapes for Life conference	Welsh Marshes
6 <sup>th</sup> July	10am -4pm	Chalk Streams forum	

## 15/16.44 Item 14 Any other Business

1. The Chief Officer asked members for their thoughts at the next meeting on her consideration to review the Board allowances. She proposes to review the Board members' allowances due to:
  - a. The anticipated 2016-17 deficit
  - b. The opportunity to streamline meetings
  - c. The CCB paying considerably higher allowances than other AONBs
2. The Chairman mentioned that there will be a new vacancy to the Board at the end of March, Dr Heather Barrett-Mold's appointment comes to an end. There is currently a Secretary of State vacancy. Following a recruitment process, names have been put forward to the Secretary of State, who will make the final choice for filling the two vacancies.

The meeting closed 12.35

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