

HOWARDIAN HILLS AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the meeting held at Hovingham Village Hall on 3 November 2011, commencing at 10.00 am.

PRESENT:-

North Yorkshire County Council: County Councillor Clare Wood in the Chair.

Ryedale District Council: Councillors John Hicks and Robert Wainwright.

Hambleton District Council: Councillor Christine Cookman.

North Yorkshire County Council: County Councillor Caroline Patmore.

Parish Councils: David Pontefract (Hambleton) and Gaynor De Barr (Ryedale).

Country Land and Business Association: Dorothy Fairburn.

National Farmers Union: Stephen Prest.

Ramblers Association: Geoff Eastwood.

Natural England: Eifion Jones and Nancy Stedman.

Officers:

Paul Jackson, Francesca Pert and Maggie Cochrane – Howardian Hills AONB.

Steve Loach (Secretary), Graham Megson and Ian Fielding – North Yorkshire County Council.

Paula Craddock – Ryedale District Council.

Graham Banks – Hambleton District Council.

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

52. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Clerk was not aware of any apologies for absence having been submitted.

53. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2011, having been previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

Minute Number 41 – Matters Arising – Retaining wall at Oulston Bank

The AONB Manager stated that a walling contractor would be assessing the issue shortly and it was expected that a price would be provided for the repairs. County Councillor Patmore emphasised that the situation required attending to as a matter of urgency.

Page 2 – Minute Number 41 – Matters Arising – National Association for AONB's (NAAONB) Activity

The new branding scheme had been incorporated into various items, following discussion with the Chairman. The exact layouts of a new letterhead, Compliment Slip etc had yet to be finalised.

Minute Number 44 – AONB Unit Activity

Paragraph two referred to the possible attendance of Ann McIntosh MP at the annual site visit in July. It was noted that she had attended briefly, but had been called away on Parliamentary business.

Paragraph four – representatives of Hambleton and Ryedale District Councils had taken the necessary steps to further promote the “litter pick” initiative for local towns and villages.

Paragraph five – expanded details of the work of the Community Development Officer at Rural Action North Yorkshire had been provided with this agenda, in respect of the request expressed at the previous meeting.

Paragraph six – in terms of the planning application at Ampleforth (NB error in original agenda papers – should have read Oswaldkirk) it was expected that the planting for the landscape scheme would be taking place appropriately, this season.

Minute Number 45 – AONB Action Programme 2010/11

An item had been placed on the agenda to address the issues raised in relation to renewable energy technologies, as requested at the previous meeting, however, the AONB Manager had been unable to bring in an expert to talk on this matter.

Paragraph six – Susan Briggs had not been invited to attend today's meeting to give a presentation on 'Encouraging Rural Businesses', and, therefore, it was hoped that this would be incorporated into a future meeting.

Minute Number 46 – AONB Business Plan and Action Programme 2011/12

Approval had been given to replace the finger post sign in Hovingham and that would be carried out shortly.

Minute Number 48 – National Association for AONBs - Activity

The Secretary of State visited the AONB on 19 May 2011, but was unable to make an extended visit, therefore an abbreviated itinerary was provided, giving views of landscape conservation work, local community work and a tour of Hovingham.

Minute Number 49 – Development within the AONB

The AONB Manager stated that he had been unable to complete the basic design guidance for new farm buildings as yet, but he hoped to address that in the near future.

Minute Number 50 – Natural England

It was noted that the Shropshire Hills AONB was representing the AONB Family at a forthcoming Natural England meeting, where loss of access payments in the Higher Stewardship Scheme could be raised. Progress on lobbying would be reported to a future meeting.

54. AONB UNIT ACTIVITY

CONSIDERED –

The joint report of AONB Officers detailing their activities and progress achieved by the Unit since the previous meeting in April 2011.

The Committee received a power point presentation of photographs of completed and on going projects referred to in the report that included countryside management works, community projects, volunteer activity and Junior Ranger Club days.

The particular issues highlighted included the following:-

- The development of “the Good Life” initiative which was being rolled out into a number of other areas.
- Proposals to underground BT lines at Dalby in the near future.
- The provision of natural oak log seats to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the AONB on the 19 October 2012. Work was taking place alongside Castle Howard in respect of this. Dorothy Fairburn suggested that the scheme could be expanded to ensure that 25 seats, one for each year, were provided to commemorate this occasion.
- The feasibility of a project to reinstate the mausoleum at Castle Howard had progressed sufficiently and was much less cost intensive than had previously been thought. Further reports on the development of the scheme would be brought to future meetings.
- Nationally the role of AONBs was being recognised by Government and high profile figures, which assisted with the public’s perception of the AONBs and their development.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That further consideration be given to the number of seats to be provided to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the AONB, with a view to providing 25 seats; and
- (b) That the report be noted.

55. AONB INDICATORS

CONSIDERED –

The report of the AONB Manager presenting performance data on the indicators used to measure AONB Partnership performance.

The AONB Manager outlined how the performance indicator management data was no longer a requirement for collection, but assisted with measuring how the service was being provided. He stated that, should Members wish, he would continue to update the performance indicator data and provide reports to future meetings highlighting the facts collected.

Members indicated that if it was of no detriment to the AONB Manager and his team, they would prefer to continue receiving the reports on the performance indicator data at future meetings.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That performance indicator results continue to be provided to future meetings of the Joint Advisory Committee; and
- (b) That the performance indicator results in Appendix 1 of the report be noted.

56. PRESENTATION - RECENT GOVERNMENT POLICY INITIATIVES – NATURAL ENVIRONMENT WHITE PAPER AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The AONB Manager provided a presentation giving details of the following government initiatives:-

Natural Environment White Paper.

National Planning Policy Framework.

Natural Environment White Paper – Briefing July 2011

The AONB Manager highlighted the following:-

- Background to the White Paper.
- Main Aims.
- Protecting the Natural Environment.
- Growing the Green Economy.
- Reconnecting People.
- EU Role.
- Local Nature Partnerships.
- Nature Improvement Areas.
- Other Longer Term Issues.
- Immediate Role.

National Planning Policy Framework

The AONB Manager highlighted the following:-

- 1,000 pages of guidance reduced to 52.
- Local Plan led.
- Favours sustainable development.
- AONB Stature and Importance outlined.
- Suggested amendments to be considered as part of the consultation process.

The Chairman asked whether the AONB had responded to the consultation exercise and the AONB Manager stated that this had been done through the National Association for AONBs, as that reflected the issues highlighted and the stance of the Howardian Hills AONB.

RESOLVED –

That the details of the presentations be noted.

57. PLANNING REGULATIONS FOR DOMESTIC RENEWABLE ENERGY INSTALLATIONS IN THE AONB

The AONB Manager stated that following the issue having been raised at the previous meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee details of the Planning Regulations covering various types of domestic renewable energy installation in the AONB were provided for Members information.

An appendix to the report provided details, however, it was noted that the situation applicable from 1 December 2011 onwards was outlined as that was when a revised General Permitted Development Order would come into effect. It was emphasised that potential applicants should contact their local planning authority before undertaking development to ensure compliance with the most up to date regulations. Details on the relevant permissions required were highlighted for the following:-

- Solar Panels.
- Ground Source and Water Source heat pumps.
- Flues for bio mass combined heat and power systems.
- Air Source heat pumps.
- Wind Turbines.

Listed Building and Conservation Area designations had an impact on what development could be undertaken without planning permission. The AONB designation only had an impact on domestic wind turbine installations. It was noted that National Parks had the same status as AONBs in the regulations.

It was noted that both and Hambleton and Ryedale District Councils might find the table useful and Members suggested that this should be placed on their websites, together with the AONB website, to ensure that the information was available, for all who wished to undertake such development.

The National Association of AONBs had been consulted on the regulations approximately three years ago and some of their suggestions had been included in the revised GPDO.

Members discussed the issue of the erection of wind turbines and it was suggested that the interpretation of planning policy guidance as to whether they could be allowed or not was highly subjective. It was noted that Kent Downs AONB has published guidance in relation to this matter, which had been requested from them, but had not yet been received. It was suggested, therefore, that this issue be further considered at a future meeting of the JAC. It was also suggested that air source heat pumps be given further consideration at a future meeting.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That wind turbines and air source heat pumps be given further consideration at future meetings of the JAC; and
- (ii) That the report and Appendix be noted.

58. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR AONB'S

The AONB Manger provided an oral report which updated Members on the activity undertaken by the National Association for AONBs as follows:-

- Consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework.

- Conference 2011 held in Cornwall.
 - Presentation by Richard Benyon MP.
 - Work with other national organisations.
 - The Wildlife Trusts.
 - Framework of agreements.
 - Annual General Meeting.
 - NAAAONB Strategic and Business Plans.

- Issues were still under discussion regarding the regional co-ordinators and it was noted that once the discussions had been concluded an EGM may be required, in order to amend subscription rates, or, if more appropriate, the matter would be considered at the next AGM. The stance of the Howardian Hills AONB was as stated at the previous meeting.

- Consultation was underway in respect of the Rural Economic Growth Review and AONBs had submitted extensive portfolios of projects in response to this.

- Conference 2012 – this was to be held at York University and the Howardian Hills AONB would be one of the co-hosts. This would be an opportunity for the Howardian Hills AONB to promote its work and raise its profile nationally. As a co-host it was asked that representatives from the Committee and partner organisations put themselves forward to attend the Conference. Assistance would also be required in co-ordinating workshops and field trips. Members asked whether there would be a significant cost to the AONB in co-hosting the Conference and, in response, the AONB Manager stated this would principally consist of staff time and delegate attendance fees. Other costs would be under written by the National Association, which in turn were met by delegate fees.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That delegates for the 2012 Conference, together with those able to provide assistance for workshops and field trips, from Committee Members and partner organisations, provide their availability to the AONB team; and

- (ii) That the information provided at the meeting be noted.

59. AONB BUDGET

CONSIDERED –

The report of the AONB Manager providing details of expenditure during 2011/12 and providing details for Members to consider the anticipated budgetary needs for 2012/13.

Details of the expenditure incurred during 2010/11 were outlined and although there were some variations between the estimated and actual spends on a number of budget heads, the overall profile of the budget showed an 0.8% underspend. It was noted that excluded from the details were the Rural/Urban Schools Twinning project as the claims/payment schedules did not easily fit into the standard financial year

format. A full claim for the Natural England grant was submitted, under the single pot arrangement.

Details of spending under the following budget heads were provided:-

- staffing
- office
- partnership running costs
- PR/events/research
- Sustainable development fund
- AONB enhancement – natural environment
- AONB enhancement – historic environment
- Enjoying the AONB
- Young peoples activities

At the end of the financial year 2010/11 there was a carry forward into 2011/12 of £38,498.

The AONB Manager set out details of the 2011/12 budget, highlighting the following:-

- The agreed budget for the year of £227,732
- The budget did not include the balance of carry forward of £38,498, although £12,544 had already been allocated, as detailed in the report.
- It was too early to make a reliable estimate of anticipated final expenditure, however, the current figures for the year were provided under the same budget headings as provided for the 2010/11 budget (above)
- It was anticipated that there would be a saving in salary costs of approximately £4,400 due to Liz Bassindale being on maternity leave for six months of the current year.
- The single pot arrangement meant that Defra funding was spread across nearly all the budget heads, but could be moved around as the year went on.

Finally the AONB Manager highlighted the potential for 2012/13 budget, which was highlighted in Appendix 5 to the report. He highlighted the following:-

- The exact position of the anticipated level of graduated cut in Defra and NYCC funding had yet to be provided exactly
- The use of variable amounts of reserves could make a significant difference to the number of projects completed.
- Single pot arrangements meant that there was no longer distinction between core and project budgets, however, those terms have been retained to enable the JAC to see the split between staff/office costs and project work.
- Defra would only fund a maximum of 75% of the core costs, therefore, the distinction must still be borne in mind when setting the budget.
- Details of the potential budget under the budget heads as detailed for 2010/11 (above) were provided.

The Chairman emphasised that the exact position for 2012/13 was still in its early days, with potential changes to that situation still to be taken account of.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the details of JAC expenditure during 2010/11 be received for information; and

- (b) that Partner authorities be asked to consider making financial contributions towards the work of the JAC in 2012/13, in line with Appendix 5 and section 4 of this report.

60. JAC PLANNING CONSULTATIONS

CONSIDERED –

The responses submitted by the AONB Manager to Hambleton and Ryedale District Councils in respect of planning applications within the area of the AONB received since the previous meeting. Results of applications already determined were available upon request.

The AONB Manager stated that guidance documents for new agricultural buildings had been sought from Kent and Shropshire to assist him in developing guidance for the Howardian Hills for the use of local authority officers. It was emphasised that this would not prevent the need for the local authority to contact the AONB for comments and planning applications, but would assist them in their processes.

It was asked whether the response to planning applications, from the AONB team, was as onerous as previously. The AONB Manager explained that although these could be time consuming the experience he had gained in responding to such matters assisted in making the process more efficient.

It was noted that there was nothing further to report following the public meeting in respect of the pre-application process for the erection of wind turbines within sight of the AONB at Wenby. It was noted that the application was currently being dealt with by Hambleton District Council. It was noted that until a formal proposal came through it was difficult to make a formal response, although it was useful to have the information in advance of the formal plans.

RESOLVED –

That the responses attached to the agenda be noted.

61. REPORTS FROM PARTNER ORGANISATIONS – ORAL REPORTS

CONSIDERED –

North Yorkshire County Council

It was reported that a bid for Local Nature Partnership development funding of £20,000 had been submitted. It was expected that they would be advised as to whether they had been successful by the end of March 2012.

Natural England

Nancy Steadman stated that Natural England were developing a new role in respect of their relationship with AONBs. Their participation in the future was likely to be much changed and Natural England were unlikely to be involved in discussions on budgets or memberships.

Country Land and Business Association

Dorothy Fairburn outlined a re-organisation of the Association, from a Yorkshire to a Northern Region, which meant that she would be relocating from Easingwold to Scotch Corner. She also mentioned the importance of the Campaign for the Farmed

Environment, details of the Common Agricultural Policy reforms and involvement in the LEPs. She emphasised that a representative of the Association would continue to attend JAC meetings, but it would not necessarily be her.

National Famers Union

Stephen Prest outlined how a review of the Common Agricultural Policy was currently taking place. He also noted that the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group was currently facing financial problems and he asked whether the AONB would be in a position to offer support to that Group. In response it was stated the sympathy of the AONB was with FWAG and support would be offered where possible.

Ryedale District Council

Ryedale were hoping to publish the Local Development Framework shortly however due to the launch of the National Planning Policy Framework publication of the Core Strategy would not be put out to consultation until it had been amended accordingly. A sites document would then follow that. It was noted that the importance of local strategies being robust was being emphasised by national government.

Hambleton District Council

The Local Development Framework for Hambleton was already in place, with site identification, and, although that was subject to a challenge through the Court of Appeal, it was being used as the adopted plan. In terms of the forthcoming National Planning Policy Framework it was noted that the Local Development Framework could be submitted for a Certificate of Conformity and Hambleton were considering doing that.

Ramblers Association

It was noted that the Chief Executive of the Ramblers Association would shortly be stepping down from the position.

62. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the date of the annual site visit be Friday, 27 July 2012
- (ii) that the date and time of the next meeting of the Committee be Thursday, 5 April 2012, at 10am at a venue to be confirmed
- (iii) that the arrangements for the 2012 National Conference in York be provided to Members of the JAC at the next meeting and that it be noted that this would be held on 17-19 July 2012 at York University

The meeting concluded at 12 noon
SL/ALJ/JD