

Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Joint Advisory Committee

The Minutes of the meeting held at Hovingham Village Hall on 22 November 2018, commencing at 10.00 am

Present

Members:

North Yorkshire County Council: County Councillors Caroline Goodrick and Caroline Patmore
Ryedale District Council: Councillor Robert Wainwright (Chairman)
Hambleton District Council: Councillor Christine Cookman
Forestry Commission: James Shallcross
Ramblers: Harry Whitehouse

Officers:

Howardian Hills AONB team: Paul Jackson and Liz Bassindale
North Yorkshire County Council: Daniel Harry, Liz Small and Kate Arscott (Secretary)
Ryedale District Council: Howard Wallis
Hambleton District Council: Ann Stewart

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

115 Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Ryedale District Councillor Fiona Farnell, Victoria Ellis (Ryedale Parish Councils), Sir William Worsley (Country Land and Business Association), Jim Smith (Forestry Commission), Andy Stephenson (National Farmers Union) and Ailsa Kirkup (Natural England).

116 Minutes of the Joint Advisory Committee meeting held on 19 April 2018

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2018, having been previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

117 JAC Virtual Site Tour of 2017/18 Work

JAC members were given a slide presentation of examples of work undertaken in 2017/18.

Members clarified the approaches taken to bracken clearance within the AONB area, with regard to Natural England and Historic England advice. They also discussed the role of volunteers in supporting the Monument Management Scheme, and the encouragement of local action groups to keep village name signs cleared.

118 AONB Unit Activity

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

accompanied by a slide presentation showcasing some of the work undertaken. The Appendices to the report set out the following:-

Appendix 1 - details of the work, meetings and site visits that had been carried out by the AONB Manager and AONB Officers in the period April to November 2018.

Appendix 2 - full details of the grants offered and projects developed to date during the financial year

Appendix 3 - details of the consultations that the JAC had received during the year and the AONB Manager's detailed responses to specific applications

Appendix 4 – full details of the activities and attendance for the 2018-19 Junior Rangers activity sessions

Members sought the AONB Officers' advice with regard to village halls that required support in applying for grants. An example was Brandsby Village Hall which was being damaged by Masonry Bees. Officers advised that there is a Village Halls Officer employed by Community First Yorkshire who may be able to assist or provide appropriate signposting.

In response to a query about the poor appearance of Crayke Castle, the AONB Manager confirmed that there has been no direct involvement with the owners for some time, and little opportunity to take any action, although Hambleton District Council had taken enforcement action in relation to tree felling.

Liz Small undertook to circulate historic environment colleagues for any information or advice on either of the above issues.

Members noted that there was some evidence of vehicles overrunning onto the verge at the new A64 Barton Hill junction.

In response to a member query, the AONB Manager confirmed that Section 106 funding associated with the York Potash mine could not be used for habitat schemes outside the National Park boundary.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

119 AONB Indicators

Members noted a report detailing performance against selected indicators used to measure AONB performance annually. It was noted that it was likely that the new national Key Performance Indicators for AONBs would be in place for the 2018/19 reporting. The AONB Manager particularly drew Members' attention to indicators 4 and 5 relating to financial resources and leverage.

With regard to projected future Defra grant, the Committee was advised that the AONB was benefitting from a protected settlement plus inflation until 2020. It was anticipated that the outcomes from the Glover Review currently taking place would influence the next Comprehensive Spending Review in relation to future AONB funding.

Resolved

That the Performance Indicator results contained in Appendix 1 be noted.

120 AONB Budget

Members noted a report detailing final income and expenditure during 2017/18, setting out the current position with the 2018/19 budget and considering the anticipated budgetary requirement for 2019/20.

The AONB Manager reported that there had been a 5% underspend against the 2017/18 budget, mostly in relation to monument management work funded by Historic England. Reserves of £63,173 were carried forward into 2018/19. 139 volunteer days had been achieved with a value of £7.9k.

The AONB Manager updated the Committee on the latest position in relation to the 2018/19 budget, drawing particular attention to the AONB Enhancement budgets. Based on current spending predictions, it was anticipated that the amount to carry forward into 2019/20 would be approximately £55,500.

In 2019/20 it was planned that staffing would fall back from 2.2 to 2.0 full-time equivalents, following the publication of the new Management Plan. Due to the uncertainty about the level of funding beyond 2020, there was very minimal planned allocation of reserves for next year.

In responding to Members' questions, the AONB Manager confirmed that the relocation of staff to the National Park office in Helmsley was still successful, both in monetary terms and also in terms of networking opportunities and support for the small AONB staff team. It was also likely that the Glover Review would recommend closer working between AONBs and National Parks.

It was confirmed that the grant towards roofing costs at Hovingham Village Hall was only a minority contribution towards the total costs. This was the first example of grant being used to protect investment in a village hall and signalled a shift in the approach towards maintaining the condition of buildings, following previous investments in improvements.

Resolved

- a) The details of the JAC expenditure during 2017/18 be received for information
- b) Partner authorities be asked to make appropriate provision in their revenue budgets for the work of the JAC in 2019/20, in line with Appendix 2 and section 4 of the report.

121 AONB Management Plan Review

Members considered a report on the progress of the AONB Management Plan review and next steps. A detailed review timetable was set out in Appendix 1 to the report. Appendix 2 contained a summary of the 17 responses received in response to the consultation on the Plan review. A schedule of the full responses was provided to all Committee members.

Members raised concerns about the growth of holiday homes, and in particular cabin developments, both within and close to the AONB area, in relation to future economic impact and the sustainability of existing similar businesses. They suggested that consideration be given as to how these matters could be best addressed within the Management Plan and in responding to planning applications. This was separate to the existing practice of raising any concerns about visual and landscape issues through the District Council's established development control consultation procedures.

Members of the Committee acknowledged with thanks the time spent on the review by AONB staff.

Resolved

That the progress and next steps be noted for information.

122 National Activity

The Committee received an update on national issues and the work of the National Association for AONBs, covering the following topics:

- Agriculture Bill
- The Glover Review of Protected Landscapes
- Key Performance Indicators
- Defra grant claiming mechanism
- Anticipated Environment Bill

The AONB Manager briefed the Committee on the current progress of the Agriculture Bill, including a potential plan for the Chairman to write to the local MP in support of a proposed amendment to the Bill from the National Associations for AONBs regarding the inclusion of the words 'landscape quality' in one Clause of the Bill.

He also confirmed that the Chairman would submit a response on behalf of the AONB to the Glover Review call for evidence, and it was possible that the AONB may be requested to host a visit in the spring.

Resolved

That the work being carried out on national initiatives be noted for information.

123 Reports from Partner Organisations

Members of the Committee shared the following information not already covered elsewhere on the agenda:

Forestry Commission

James Shallcross alerted members that next year will be the Forestry Commission centenary. Events include a ceremonial tree planting in Hovingham, as Sir William Worsley is the government-appointed Tree Champion.

He reported on large scale felling to take place in Gilling Wood following an outbreak of Phytophthora, and on rhododendron control taking place in another part of the AONB area.

He also drew Members' attention to a Tree Health event being held in Harrogate in the spring, focusing on ash dieback.

Ryedale District Council

Howard Wallis reported that the public examination of the Ryedale Site Allocation Plan had taken place in October. It was hoped to receive the Planning Inspector's report in January 2019.

He also alerted colleagues that there was a new call for projects related to tourism and distinctiveness under the LEADER programme, through the North York Moors Coast and Hills Local Action Group. Contact the National Park Authority for further information.

North Yorkshire County Council

Liz Small paid tribute to the AONB team's hard work in support of the Ryevitalise bid which is to be submitted next week. She confirmed that the County Council was making a financial contribution and Council staff had also been supporting the development of the bid.

She also confirmed that the County Council had commented on the Environmental Governance and Principles Bill and would be responding to the Glover Review. Liz alerted members to a project being undertaken by the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) on support for the supply chain in relation to food production. She noted that the LEP's boundaries were also currently under review.

Hambleton District Council

Ann Stewart introduced herself to the Committee as one of a number of new appointments to Hambleton District Council's Development Management team. She reported that the identification of further sites had delayed the progress of the Local Plan, which was now due to be considered by Cabinet in June 2019 for approval to consult.

Natural England

The AONB Manager reported on behalf of Natural England that Defra had approved a four year extension of some high level stewardship schemes. However this was not automatic and some schemes may move to the Middle Tier scheme. It was anticipated that the arrangements would be in place until the end of the current Parliament, in line with other agricultural commitments.

124 Date of next JAC Meetings

Resolved

That the next meetings of the Joint Advisory Committee be held on Thursday 11 April and Thursday 14 November 2019 at 10am. That, following a number of meetings at Hovingham Village Hall, the next meetings be held at other locations across the AONB.

The meeting concluded at 12.05pm

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