

BLACKDOWN HILLS AONB PARTNERSHIP

Minutes of the Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership Management Group held on Thursday, 7th March 2019 at Churchinford Village Hall, Churchinford

Present:

Cllr Paul Diviani	East Devon District Council
Cllr Frank Rosamond	Mid Devon District Council
Cllr Dave Durdan	Taunton Deane Borough Council
Cllr Graham Long	Blackdown Hills Parish Network
Cllr Bob Nelson	Blackdown Hills Parish Network
Bruce Payne	Special Appointee
David Northcote-Wright	Somerset Wildlife Trust
Heather Stallard	Blackdown Hills Business Association
Elaine Hayes	Special Appointee
John Greenshields	Blackdown Hills Woodland Association
Gordon Field	Blackdown Hills Artist & Makers

Also present:

Blackdown Hills AONB staff team: Tim Youngs (**TY**), Jackie Vaughan (**JV**), Lisa Turner (**LT**), Peter Chamberlain (Devon County Council), Steve Dury (Somerset County Council)

Apologies: Cllr John Berry (Devon County Council); Cllr John Thorne (Somerset County Council); Donna Gowler (Natural England); Martin Turner (Blackdown Hills Hedge Association); Mark Pope (National Farmers Union); Penny Mills/Chris Lewis (CPRE, Devon/Somerset); Cllr Jocelyn Pritchard (Blackdown Hills Parish Network); Clare Groom (Blackdown Hills AONB); James Maben (Development Manager, AONB)

ITEM 1 Introduction	By whom
The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were carried out. Notification received that Cllr Jocelyn Pritchard has moved out of the area and will no longer be representing the Parish Network on the Management Group. A new representative will be nominated by the Parish Network in due course.	BN/ GL
ITEM 2 (Workshop 1): Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership Terms of Reference (ToR) Presentation given at the meeting	
The AONB's Terms of Reference have been updated after a consultation with members of the Officers Support Group and a Management Group 'sounding board' group. The recommended changes were presented to the Management Group for approval and the following comments were received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clarification is required on how the Management Group would remove a member from the board if their behaviour is unacceptable in line with the code of conduct ➤ There should be a conclusion to the document ACTION: The Terms of Reference were approved, subject to two minor changes being made as follows. Management Group ToR 'sounding board' group to decide on i) the change of wording to reflect that a member can be dismissed rather than asking them to resign and ii) add a conclusion to the document.	TY
ITEM 3 (Workshop 2): Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership Management Plan Paper circulated prior to the meeting	
Bob Nelson (BN) commented that the new Management Plan is a great document and requested that a summary document is produced so that it is easier to read. Lisa Turner (LT) responded to say that a summary document is already in development. BN suggested that the 30 th anniversary of the AONB designation in 2021 should be celebrated by focusing on what has been achieved over the last 30 years along with an exhibition of photos.	

<p>ACTION: TY to add the 30th celebration activities to the delivery plan. AGREED: All present at the meeting were in favour of adopting the Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan 2019 – 2024. There were no abstentions.</p> <p>Lisa Turner was thanked for all her hard work on putting the plan together.</p>	TY
<p>ITEM 4 Questions from the public</p>	
<p>No questions raised.</p>	
<p>ITEM 5 Minutes and matters arising from 8th November 2018 Minutes circulated prior to the meeting</p>	
<p>Minutes The minutes were signed by the chairman as a true record.</p>	
<p>ITEM 6 Presentation: Connecting the Culm (CTC) by Steve Dury</p>	
<p>A copy of the Powerpoint slides for the 'CO-ADAPT: Climate adaptation through co-creation' presentation is attached to the minutes.</p> <p>Elaine Hayes (EH) commented that the Management Group will need to understand what AONB core/project work will not be completed within the AONB because the resources have been diverted to the Interreg project.</p> <p>Graham Long (GL) gave details of the earth worm project that he had heard about on Radio 4. Details can be found at http://www.wormscience.org/</p> <p>Bruce Payne requested an overlay of what the Connecting the Culm (CTC) project is delivering from the AONB delivery plan. He also asked how the CTC project will involve the community.</p> <p>ACTION: TY to provide an overlay of the CTC project and give details of how the community will be involved.</p> <p>Gordon Field (GF) commented that the Devon Wildlife Trust Beaver project is working well on the head lake at Otterhead estate and needs to be supported when it comes to an end next year.</p>	TY
<p>ITEM 7 AONB Team</p>	
<p>7.1 AONB Team report Report circulated prior to the meeting</p>	
<p>BN suggested that an App could be developed that gives information on places to visit, walks & cycling routes and compliments the visitor guide.</p> <p>ACTION: TY to discuss with Clare Groom the feasibility of a visitors App.</p> <p>David Northcote-Wright requested more feedback on the Facilitation Fund work and was advised to get in touch with the Facilitator, Gavin Saunders, for more information.</p> <p>No further questions received on the team report.</p>	TY/CG

<p>7.2 2018/19 Financial Summary to date Papers circulated prior to the meeting</p>	
<p>ACTION: BN requested a breakdown of partnership costs to be sent out with the minutes.</p>	<p>TY/JV</p>
<p>ITEM 8 AONB Partnership</p>	
<p>8.1 Making it Local programme update</p>	
<p>Still successfully delivering projects across the project area with the possibility of obtaining further funding in the future.</p>	
<p>8.2 Briefings from partners</p>	
<p>Elaine Hayes: Apologised for her absence at recent meetings due to the workload at Ferne Animal Sanctuary. The charity has recently purchased the farm next door to the sanctuary which has increased their land holding by 50%. Ferne is celebrating its 80th anniversary this year and will be holding an exhibition that displays their work over this period. There will also be lots of events held and details can be found on their website https://www.ferneanimalsanctuary.org/about-ferne/events/</p> <p>David Northcote-Wright: Somerset Wildlife Trust are donating their unwanted grey willow to the Exmoor Mires project which is being used to create dams. Trees are being felled in woods above Yarcombe due to Ash Dieback disease. Beech trees at Dommatt wood are suffering from disease and need felling.</p> <p>Peter Chamberlain: Devon County Council (DCC) are working with the AONB on the Council's commitment to the 3-2-1 tree replacement principle, through which: three saplings will be planted for each mature tree it fells due to ash dieback; two saplings to replace a semi-mature tree; and one new sapling for each ash sapling which is lost. Trees have been planted in Hemyock and details can be found at https://www.devonnewscentre.info/tree-planting-scheme-to-replace-trees-lost-through-ash-dieback/</p> <p>DCC are also working with Devon Wildlife Trust on an alternative bid for the Trees Outside Woods project which was recently unsuccessful.</p> <p>John Greenshields: Two charity walks have been organised to raise funds for the restoration of the Wellington Monument. Details can be found at https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/events/ecb9dac6-4eb0-4782-907b-93f6ba21f9a3/pages/details</p> <p>Cllr Dave Durdan: As from the 1st April Taunton Deane Borough Council will be known as Somerset West and Taunton (SWT). ACTION: Cllr Dave Durdan (DD) to provide LT with the new logo for SWT for insertion in to the new Management Plan.</p> <p>Gordon Field: The bench ends for Dunkeswell Abbey are in Churchstanton church.</p> <p>Cllr Graham Long: The Connecting Devon & Somerset (CDS) programme was put on hold at the end of September 2018 as the contract was not being delivered by Gigaclear. The parish network met with Rebecca Powell MP and Neil Parish MP to discuss the problems with the CDS project and these will be taken forward through parliament by the MP's.</p>	<p>DD</p>

<p>Cllr Frank Rosamond: A paragraph 79 property planning application was submitted to Mid Devon District Council and declined although it had been supported by Hemyock Parish Council. A further speculative housing application has been received for Hemyock.</p> <p>Main hearings for the examination of the Mid Devon Local Plan Review have now concluded and the results should be known by the end of March 2019.</p> <p>Cllr Rosamond thanked everyone for their comradeship over the last twenty years and congratulated the AONB on an excellent state of health.</p> <p>Heather Stallard: The Blackdown Experience event on the 11th/12th May is a two day event showcasing small and independent businesses based in and around the Blackdown Hills. Post meeting note: This event has now been cancelled. A crowd funding campaign will start at the end of April 2019 to raise money for a sculpture of a calf that will celebrate 100 years since the beginning of the Young Farmers Club.</p>	
<p>ITEM 9 Any Other Business</p>	
<p>9.1 Cllr Diviani thanked Cllr Rosamond for all his support and contributions over the last 20 years as a member of the AONB Management Group and wished him well for the future.</p> <p>9.2 Ferne Animal Sanctuary submitted an application to become a member of the AONB Partnership. The application will be forwarded to members for consideration and if no objections are received by Friday 26th April the application will be approved and the organisation informed of the outcome.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>ITEM 10 Date of the next meeting</p>	
<p>Next meeting will be held on Thursday 4th July 2019 from 10am – 1:30pm, venue to be confirmed.</p>	

Signed as a true record:

Chairman.....

Date.....