

**Cranborne Chase  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**



**Partnership Board Meeting  
25<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

**Virtual Meeting**

**10.30am Meeting Start**

**MINUTES**

<b>Representative</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Apologies</b>
Nicholas Gosse	Chairman		√
Mike Short	Vice Chairman		√
Cllr Francis Hayden	Mendip District Council	X	
Robert Palmer	Mendip DC Officer		X
Cllr David Tooke	Dorset Council	X	
Matthew Reeks	Dorset Council Officer		X
Ed Gerry	Dorset Council Officer	X	
Cllr Ann Bellows	New Forest District Council	X	
Martin Peacock	New Forest District Council Officer		X
Cllr Lucy Wallace	South Somerset District Council		X
Rachael Whaites	South Somerset DC Officer		X
Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philippe MBE	Wiltshire Council	√	
Cllr Bridget Wayman	Wiltshire Council	X	
Cllr Jose Green	Wiltshire Council	X	
Richard Broadhead	Wiltshire Council Officer		X
Cllr Edward Heron	Hampshire County Council	X	
Garry King	Hampshire CC Officer		X
Cllr William Wallace	Somerset County Council		X
Vacant	Somerset CC Officer		
	Natural England		
Ian Briscoe	Forestry Commission		X

<b>Alistair Fitzgerald</b>	<b>Independent</b>		X
<b>Vacant</b>	<b>Wiltshire Association of Town &amp; Parish Councils</b>		
<b>Mike Jones</b>	<b>Dorset Association of Town &amp; Parish Councils (DATPC)</b>	X	
<b>Francis Taylor</b>	<b>Campaign to Protect Rural England</b>	X	
<b>Becky Butland</b>	<b>National Farmers Union</b>		X
<b>Louise Stratton</b>	<b>National Farmers Union</b>	X	
<b>William Kenealy</b>	<b>Cranborne Chase Landscape Trust</b>		X
<b>AONB Team</b>	<b>Position</b>		
<b>Linda Nunn</b> FT	<b>AONB Director</b>	√	
<b>Richard Burden</b> PT	<b>Principal Landscape and Planning Officer</b>	X	
<b>Shirley Merrick</b> PT	<b>Team Support Officer</b>		√
<b>Mel Capper</b> PT	<b>Communications Officer</b>	X	

## 1. Welcome

Councillor Fleur de Rhe Philippe acted as Chairman for this meeting. Members present for this Zoom meeting introduced themselves.

## 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019 and matters arising

The Actions from the last meeting and updates on those Actions were previously sent out to all members. Those Actions were run through by LN, the majority of which had been completed.

### Actions Item 2

2.1 The Minutes of the meeting were signed as a true record and can now be placed on the AONB website.

3. Councillor Fleur de Rhe Philippe MBE asked if the Board was content to bring Report E forward to enable those representatives present specifically to discuss it, would then be able to leave afterwards. The Board agreed to this change of agenda items.

## Report E

### Blandford Plus Neighbourhood Plan 2

**Purpose:** To update the Board on progress of the Blandford Plus Neighbourhood Plan 2

3.1 Reports had previously been circulated to inform the Members of the history of the consultation process that has been undertaken over the last few years, and the action being taken on behalf of the Board querying the Draft Decision of Dorset Council. Ed Gerry, Dorset Council Community Planning Manager was asked to outline the current situation from the Council's point of view. Dorset Council is consulting on their Draft

Decision to accept the second Examiner's Report, finding the Neighbourhood Plan sound and thereafter to move it to a Local Referendum.

Richard Burden was then offered the opportunity to explain the AONB objections to that course of action. He also suggested that to object to the Draft Decision of Dorset Council now may indeed negate the potential for further, expensive, hearings in the future.

3.2 There was considerable discussion and input from several Board members on both the Draft Decision by Dorset Council and the objection to it by the AONB.

3.3 Regarding the recommendations below, it was decided to undertake a vote on the recommendations, as opinion was divided.

<b>Recommendations Item 3</b>
1. This AONB Partnership Board expresses regret that the Dorset Council appears to be progressing with amending strategic development policies that impact on this AONB and its Setting via the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan 2 rather than the more holistic preparation of the Dorset Local Plan which has recently commenced.
2. Recognising that the Principal Landscape and Planning Officer has delegated authority to act on its behalf, the AONB Partnership Board endorses <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>the objection to the Draft Decision of Dorset Council to find the Neighbourhood Plan sound and move it to a Local Referendum, and</li><li>the joining with Pimperne Parish Council and the CPRE to challenge the Examiner's Report and Dorset Council's proposed actions, including a financial contribution of no more than £1,000 towards the cost of doing so.</li></ol>

Recommendation 1: **Yes 8 - No 1**

Recommendation 2a: **Yes 4 - No 1**

Recommendation 2b: (Local Authorities only) **Yes 4 - 1 Abstention**

<b>Action Item 3</b>
7.1 RB, on behalf of the Partnership, to continue with the objection to the Draft Decision of Dorset Council to find the Neighbourhood Plan sound and move it to a Local Referendum and to join with Pimperne Parish Council and CPRE to challenge the Examiner's Report and Dorset Council's proposed course of action.

#### **4. Report A**

##### **AONB Partner Agreement**

**Purpose:** To inform the Board on the current situation regarding the AONB Partner Agreement 2015-2020

4.1 LN reminded Members of the purposes of this Agreement and that it had expired on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020. There were two options for Members to discuss; one, to roll the Agreement forward one year and make small text changes or, two, redraft the whole Agreement to cover the next five years. If it was agreed to carry the Agreement forward, the minor details that would need revising are:

- The word 'Panel' replaced by 'Board'

- East and North Dorset District Councils would need to be removed from the Agreement
- The timing of the Defra grant and claims schedule would require changing
- The annual Local Authority contributions table would need extending to cover 2020-2021.

<b>Recommendations Item 4</b>
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1. The Board agreed to change the appropriate details to bring the Agreement up to date and extended the Agreement until 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021.
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4.2 A vote was taken to determine if LN should make the suggested changes and extend the Agreement until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

**Yes 8 None against**

<b>Action Item 4</b>
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4.1 LN to make those changes to the Agreement and send that document out to all members.
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**5. Report B**

**AONB Budgets 2019 – 2020 and 2020 – 2021**

**Purpose:** To inform the Panel of the situation regarding budget expenditure to the end of March 2020 and the budget forecast (grant bid) for 2020-21 sent to Defra.

5.1 LN reported the financial situation that the AONB and Wiltshire Council find themselves in due to the Covid 19 pandemic. The 2019-20 end of year accounts are still to be finalised due to the Council's finance department prioritising work relating to local businesses and various grants.

5.2 LN reported on the members of staff that have left the AONB in the last year and the effort in trying to secure external funding from Wessex Water Partners Programme round 6, for the PT Farm Conservation Advisor.

5.3 The completed project work for 2019/2020 was described, along with the SDF spending. LN updated Members on Core spending for salaries and the running costs for the office.

5.4 The projects for this financial year 2020-21 were set out, along with their allocated budgets. Core spending on office running costs and the potential savings of being connected to Wiltshire Council's IT system were explained.

5.5 The Partner Local Authority contributions for the financial year 2020/2021 as set out in paragraph 7.3 remain the same as last year.

<b>Recommendations Item 5</b>
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| 1. The Board noted that core, project and SDF expenditure for 2019-20 cannot be confirmed or verified through Wiltshire Council at this time |
| 2. The Board endorsed current income and planned expenditure for 2020-2021 and noted the LA contributions for 2020-2021                      |

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| 3. The Board endorsed the ongoing search for funds to support the PT Farm Conservation Advisor post as soon as possible, and particularly after 2020-2021, and a further FT post to focus on nature recovery work. |
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<b>Action Item 5</b>
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4.1 LN to send out the end of year finance figures once they have been completed.
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4.2 Councillors to note the requested amount of contribution from their authorities and the staff members on the Board will receive in due course an invoice for that amount.
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## 6. Report C

### Chase and Chalke Landscape Partnership

**Purpose:** To update the Board on progress of the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership (CCLP) Scheme since the last meeting in October 2019

6.1 LN reported on the background of the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme (CCLP) and the funding it received from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Including match funding, the scheme is a £2.7m suite of 20 projects that will run until 2024. Permission to Start was received on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019. The LP team of five began work on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020. The CCLP was essentially a year behind schedule before COVID, which has set all the projects back even further. LN gave a brief summary of its progress:

- Phenomenal progress was being made until COVID-19 necessitated all arrangements to be put on indefinite hold, although the team continue to work on these projects working from home.
- The Time Traveller App is ready to be trialled once lockdown is lifted.
- The ChalkEscape Walking Festival continues to be planned to take place in September.
- The LP Manager post has been re-graded. Fifteen applications were received. LN hopes to interview soon as movements are being relaxed and B&Bs are now able to operate again.
- Six PCs and software licences were purchased from the AONB budget for the LP team.
- LN has taken on the role of CCLP Manager whilst Anne Carney is undertaking much of the writing of briefs and tender procedures and Mel Capper has worked with the LP Communications Officer on a variety of promotional initiatives.

<b>Recommendations Item 6</b>
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1. The Board commends the very considerable work achieved by the LP team since January
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2. The Board notes that the LP Manager post should be filled by the autumn
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The Board congratulated LN on the progress made by the CCLP project in difficult conditions and insisted their congratulations be recorded.

<b>Action Item 6</b>
a. LN to conduct the CCLP interviews for the Manager post and appoint a suitable candidate.



## **7. Report D**

### **Team Work Update**

**Purpose:** To update the Board on the work of the team since October 2019.

#### **7.1 Richard Burden – Principal Landscape and Planning Officer**

- Responding to planning applications.
- Training for staff at Dorset Council in AONB matters with Dorset AONB – postponed.
- Neighbourhood Plans for Blandford +2, Hindon, Pimperne, Coombe Bissett and Shaftesbury
- Local Plans for Wiltshire Council; Mendip DC; New Forest DC; Dorset Heathlands.
- Major housing schemes at Shaftesbury, Blandford, Warminster and Wimborne.
- Contributed to National Association of AONBs requests for information and opinion regarding the Glover Report, Net Environmental Gain, and the proposed new National Landscape Service
- Forestry Commission felling licence / planting consultations
- MONeH: DCMS funded 5G small cell phone networks pilot project.
- Tisbury station sustainable travel discussions and Dark Sky Friendly station proposal.
- Visit to Fontmell Down Forest School
- Blandford Household Recycling and Waste Transfer Centre meeting.
- Reviewed Position Statements and Good Practice Guides before reprint.
- Damerham: advising community regarding unauthorised camping and events.
- International Dark-Sky Reserve - National Group.
- 'Who's Afraid of the Dark' follow up with Bournemouth University postponed.
- Dinah's Hollow and C13 traffic management is being revitalised for a decision by Dorset Council cabinet.
- Work on another potential site for a 'Living Landscape Centre'.

#### **7.2 Tracy Adams – Farm Conservation Advisor**

- Tracy is now the facilitator of the Nadder Valley Farmer Group (NVFG) after successfully applying for Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Funding.
- Group activities with the latest group meeting conducted using Zoom.
- Wildlife surveying has been disrupted by Covid 19.
- There are now seven farmer cluster groups in the AONB.
- New Environmental Land Management Scheme (NELMS) Test finally got under way in January with independent consultants and a facilitator
- Two farmer workshops in March were cancelled and replaced by online presentations and a questionnaire / survey with 28 respondents. Six farms have been chosen to take part in stage two of the Test.

### **7.3 Anne Carney – Funding and Partnerships Officer**

Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership scheme:

- Timetable and finances - reviewed finances and scheme timetable.
- Champions of the Past – this project runs until 2024 and includes LiDAR archaeological survey and investigation of sites, practical conservation work and digital outputs
- Other CCLP consultants briefs for Nurturing Nature, Crystal Clear Ebble, Celebration in Silk and Artists Residencies
- The Monitoring and Evaluation tender for the CCLP scheme has been let to Wingspan Consulting
- Support to the Roman March project; Silk Flags; Community Grants scheme and reporting on Greater Grazing project
- Submitted funding application to Ernest Cook Foundation for LP match funding.
- Co –created the AONB ELMs Test, brief for consultants and reviewed submissions.
- Funding opportunities - Climate Change, Public Art Trail for AONB 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 2021.

### **7.4 Mel Capper – Communications Officer**

- ‘Virtual Spark’ NAAONBs training:
- New website launched May 2020: [www.cranbornechase.org.uk](http://www.cranbornechase.org.uk)
- Hart magazine sample copy produced in order to try and attract sponsors.
- International Dark-Sky Reserve marketing materials.
- Facebook - a large increase in the number of Facebook followers up to 834.
- Instagram - 612 followers which is going up each day.
- Twitter - with over 1,000 followers but we expect this will go up.
- Charlie Waite’s Cranborne Chase photography project has been delayed.
- Mel is part of the communications group for the Defra Tests and Trials project 'Farming for the Nation'.
- Mel is also following Defra and Natural England communication streams around Covid-19 and promoting relevant messages as necessary.

### **7.5 Shirley Merrick – Support Officer**

- Day to day assistance to support the team, especially in getting the office organised.
- AONBs finance requirements and checks through monthly period reports.
- Working from home supporting Richard in his responses to planning applications.
- Packed 300 envelopes with the Management Plan memory stick to send out.

### **7.6 Linda Nunn – Director**

- Involved with all of the work outlined in the reports
- Looking to secure external funding for posts and filling outstanding ones.
- Managing the new LP team, claims and reports, meetings with Heritage Fund;
- Progression of the majority of LP projects

- The AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 has been produced on eco-friendly USBs.
- Co-creating the AONB Delivery Plan with the help of a consultant.
- Nature Recovery Network both within the CC AONB and across neighbouring AONBs for a project called 'Big Chalk'
- Responding to the NAAONBs regarding the 27 recommendations of the Glover Review in order that it can respond to Government
- Health and wellbeing, sustainable tourism and rural regeneration post COVID and the need for AONBs to play a role in those priority areas.

<b>Recommendations Item 7</b>
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| 1. The Board commends the team on the wide variety of core and project work being undertaken, particularly whilst managing the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership team and suite of projects |
| 2. The Board recognised the unavoidable delays (COVID) in appointing a Dark-Sky Advisor and Landscape Partnership Manager, both of whom would be easing the workload                           |
| 3. The Board also recognised that securing long term funding for the PT Farm Conservation Advisor and a new FT Nature Recovery Officer is a priority   |

<b>Action Item 7</b>
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| 6.1 LN to continue to source external funding for at least 2 staff posts   |
| 6.2 LN to hold interviews and appoint a Landscape Partnership Manager and a Dark Sky Advisor as soon as feasible |

**8. Any Other Business**

8.1 Councillor Tooke expressed his interest in finding out more about the Champions of the Past CCLP project and possibly volunteering in the future.

**9. Date of next Board meeting - TBC**

The meeting ended at

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**Cllr Fleur de Rhe Philippe MBE (Standing in for the Chairman)**