

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CLWYDIAN RANGE AND DEE VALLEY AREA
OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY JOINT COMMITTEE
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, GUILDHALL ON
FRIDAY, 24 JUNE 2016**

MEMBERS

Councillors Derek Butler (FCC), Hugh Evans (DCC), Hugh Jones (Chair) (WCBC) and Huw Jones (DCC).

Also Present – Andy Worthington (Chair AONB Partnership), Paul Mitchell (Natural Resources Wales), Howard Sutcliffe (AONB Manager), Gary Williams (Head of Legal and Democratic Services, DCC), Martin Howarth (Parks, Countryside and Rights of Way Manager, WCBC), Ros Stockdale (Regional Route Warden), David Shiel (Assistant AONB Manager), Ceri Lloyd (AONB SDF Officer), Huw Rees (DCC) and Marie Russell (Committee Officer, WCBC),

1 INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bernie Attridge (FCC), Ian Roberts (WCBC) and Tom Woodall (FCC).

There were no declarations of interest.

2 ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

AGREED –

- (i) That Councillor Hugh Jones (WCBC) be appointed Chair of the Joint Committee;**
- (ii) That Councillor Huw Jones (DCC) be appointed Vice Chair of the Joint Committee.**

3 AONB APPOINTMENTS TO WORLD HERITAGE BOARD AND CADWYN CLWYD BOARD

The AONB Officer provided a verbal update in respect of the vacant seats.

AGREED – The Joint Committee support the following proposals:

- (i) That Councillor Huw Jones (DCC) be nominated to represent the Joint Committee on the World Heritage Board;**
- (ii) That Flintshire submit a nomination for the vacant seat on the Cadwyn Clwyd Board;**
- (iii) A report on the requirements of the Joint Committee member on the Cadwyn Clwyd Board and the reporting mechanisms for reporting between them be considered at the next meeting of the Cadwyn**

Clwyd Board.

4 MINUTES OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING

AGREED – The minutes of the Joint Committee Meeting held on 26 February 2016 be received and approved as a correct record agreed.

5 MINUTES OF THE AONB PARTNERSHIP MEETING

The Chair welcomed Andrew Worthington, Chair of the Partnership, to the meeting.

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Officer highlighted the main points within the minutes.

AGREED – The minutes of the AONB Partnership meeting held on 13 May 2016 be received and approved as a correct record.

6 JOINT COMMITTEE OUTTURN AND ACCOUNTS 2015/16 AND BUDGET 2016/17

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Officer presented the report, referring in particular to the Accounting Statement for 2015/16 (Appendix 2), which required formal approval.

During discussion, the following points were noted, in particular:

- The approval and signing of the formal Welsh Audit Office Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2016 was a statutory requirement prior to External Audit carrying out an audit of the accounts.
- Confirmation that the proposed budget was dependent on income from NRW, Welsh Government and the three Local Authorities.
- Effective management of the AONB's revenue budgets would help the delivery of the agreed management plan priorities for the current year.
- A request was made for further detail around how the £44,752 total reserve amount for Project funding would be spent. The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Officer agreed to circulate this information.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that the report be received and its contents noted.**
- (ii) that the Accounting Statement for 2015/16 be approved.**

7 PRESENTATION BY FRIENDS OF THE CLWYDIAN RANGE AND DEE VALLEY

Neville Howell, Founding Trustee, Friends of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley, gave a presentation to the Joint Committee, which provided details under the

following headings:

- Current Membership
- Approved logo design
- Object, from the Constitution (as agreed with the Charity Commission)
- Events Organised to date
- Future Events
- What Next? (promote in neighbouring areas)

The Chair, on behalf of the Joint Committee, acknowledged Neville's enthusiasm and congratulated him on the progress he had made with the Trust.

It was suggested that the presentation could be given to the relevant Scrutiny Committee, at each of the three Local Authorities.

RESOLVED – That the presentation be noted.

8 AONB ANNUAL REPORT

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Officer presented the report, referring in particular to the main points for consideration.

During discussion, the following points were noted, in particular:

- Friends of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley, and in particular its growing membership (over 130 members currently), was one of the highlights of the Joint Committee.
- Loggerheads Country Park had seen major changes and a Planning Application for a second car park had now been approved.
- Ongoing work was taking place in respect of Biodiversity.
- In noting a limited access to resources, the Joint Committee recognised the importance of sustaining connections with CADW and other working groups.
- It was noted that work was being undertaken with Colleges and the Young Farmers Association and that children in urban schools in Wrexham had hosted farms in the Dee Valley Area. It was noted that work was also continuing to take place with Young Rangers. The Chair suggested that links with the farming community should be highlighted more clearly in the report.
- In noting the importance of the agricultural community, it was suggested that an AONB surgery could be set up in Ruthin Market to promote work with farms in adjoining areas.
- The need to promote the work of the AONB. It was proposed that the Annual Report should be sent to all relevant AMs, PMs and Councillors.

The Chair thanked the AONB Officer and all the staff who were carrying out work on a daily basis.

RESOLVED – that the Joint Committee receive and endorse the AONB Annual Report.

9 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND ANNUAL REPORT

The AONB SDF Officer presented the report, referring in particular to the main points for consideration.

During discussion, the following points were noted, in particular:

- Particular reference was made to some of the most successful projects, including 'Actif Woods Wales', 'Countryside Discovery' and 'Clwydian Range Breakfast'.
- Going forward there was currently a £5,000 reduction from last year.
- There had been over 30 expressions of interest.
- It was hoped that Welsh Government would provide additional funding.
- Acknowledgement that Community Councils had contributed towards the cost of projects and that there was a great deal of co-operation.

RESOLVED – that the report be received and its contents noted.

10 SUMMARY OF AONB PLANNING CONSULTATIONS OCTOBER 2015 - MARCH 2016

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Officer presented the report for information purposes only.

During discussion, the following points were noted, in particular:

- Acknowledgement that communication was key to the success of the planning consultation process.
- Responses should be linked to statutory duties and should be evidence based.
- It was proposed that applicants should be given an opportunity to discuss their ideas at a 'drop-in' surgery prior to submission of any planning application.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

11 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Officer presented the report.

During discussion of the report, the following points were noted, in particular:

- A proposal was made to commission a piece of work to map out the numbers of visitors to Loggerheads and the most popular times for those visits, in order that a strategic approach could be taken to dealing with parking issues.

- The need to work in partnership with other bodies to ensure that issues in respect of congestion and parking could be addressed.
- Projects were for the benefit of the local population and not just visitors to the area.
- Other destinations within North East Wales should be promoted as part of the Strategic Plans for 2014-16.
- Confirmation that the AONB Joint Committee was working closely with the Board of the World Heritage Site.
- Recognition that a sub group was looking at national grid lines. This created an opportunity to work with farmers.

RESOLVED – that the report be received and its contents noted.

12 PRESENTATION ON AONB AND NATURAL RESOURCES WALES PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

Ros Stockdale and David Shiel (Assistant AONB Officer) gave a joint presentation which highlighted some of the projects currently supported by the AONB and Natural Resources Wales Partnership Project.

The Chair thanked Officers for their excellent presentation.

RESOLVED – That the presentation be noted.

13 FUTURE MEETING DATES

Resolved – The next meeting of the Joint Committee to be held on 18 November 2016.

Councillor Hugh Jones (WCBC)
Chair