



# Dorset

Area of Outstanding  
Natural Beauty

Dorset AONB Partnership  
Hosted by Dorset County Council  
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## **Dorset AONB Partnership Board Meeting, 10.00am, Thurs 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

### **Draft minutes**

#### **Present:**

**Chairman:** Jim White (also Dorset Local Nature Partnership - LNP)

#### **Local Authority Members:**

Cllr Peter Webb (Purbeck District Council), Cllr Hilary Cox (Dorset County Council), Cllr Susie Hosford (West Dorset District Council), Cllr Audrey Burch (North Dorset District Council), Cllr Ray Nowak (Weymouth & Portland Borough Council)

#### **Sector representatives:**

Robert Lasseter supported by Louise Stratton (National Farmers' Union - NFU), Rupert Best supported by William Langer (Country Land and Business Association - CLA), Brian Bleese (Purbeck Heritage Network), Sam Rose (Jurassic Coast Trust), Janet Page (DAPTC)

#### **Defra family officers:**

Matt Low (Natural England)

#### **Local Authority officers:**

Alison Turnock (Purbeck District Council - PDC), Trevor Warwick (West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland and North Dorset District Council), Ken Buchan (Dorset County Council),

#### **DAONB Team:**

Steph Aburrow (Stepping into Nature), Katharine Wright (Dorset Food & Drink Coordinator), Sally King (Visitor, Tourism & Access Manager), Sue Dampney (Culture, Community & Learning Officer), Tom Munro (AONB Manager), Richard Brown (Landscape Planning Officer), Kate Townsend (Project Support Assistant)

#### **In attendance:**

Michael Dower and Richard Brown (Dorset & East Devon National Park Campaign); Cllr Paul Kimber (Weymouth & Portland BC)

#### **Apologies:**

Cllr Deidre Skipwith (North Dorset District Council), Alison Moore (Local Enterprise Partnership - LEP), Hannah Jefferson (National Trust), Cllr Hilary Jordan (West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland and North Dorset District Council), Ian Alexander (Natural England), Ian Rees (Countryside Officer), Julie Hammon (Stepping into Nature Project Officer), Jill Hearing (South Dorset Ridgeway Project Officer), Kiera Diment (Dorset Food & Drink)

### **Welcome, introductions and apologies**

Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

## **1. Minutes of last Meeting**

These were agreed as correct.

## **2. 90 Second Partner Updates**

Will Langer: Brexit policy on going.

Ken Buchan: Local Government Review update: CEO in place; interviews for tier 2 roles taking place including for a new 'Director of Place' (Countryside services). Countryside services have been nominated for a LGC Award for their ecological approach to verge maintenance. Durlston Country Park have won £1.8 million of funding from HLF to improve woodlands/ volunteer services etc.

Trevor Warwick: Local Plan update - West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan team going through consultations and analysing responses, due to be published early 2019. NDDC responses nearly all analysed. Due to Local Government re-organisation they won't be taken forward, likely to be a new plan in 2024 to reflect the new geography, either a single or joint plan with Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole.

Cllr Audrey Burch: Last meeting as NDDC representative on this board.

Brian Bleese: Good visit to Brownsea and for the Heritage Network giving shape to the Wild Brownsea / Discover Brownsea projects.

Sam Rose: Secured Coastal Communities Fund money for volunteer funding – encouraging volunteers and skills development. Holding a tourism / business event on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 and encourage attendance.

Cllr Peter Webb: draft PDC Local Plan to be submitted by the end of December, examination early 2019 and expect it will be the only plan that comes into fruition. PW expressed hope that all local authorities coming into Dorset Council have their required land supply allocated, otherwise he fears it will be a developers' charter.

Robert Lasseter: Reported that Brexit is having an impact now; farmers are nervous and have concerns, for example sheep sales are down. Appealed for a slimmer and more streamlined future agri-environment scheme.

Matt Low: NE are looking at high-functioning HLS agreements expiring next year and offering the agreement-holders a 4-year extension.

Janet Page: Complaint that with LGR Town & Parish Councils will become the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier of local government but no one from higher tiers of local government is communicating with them. They will be taking over some services from CC/DC's and are having to set precepts but are in the dark, this may affect provision for tourists etc. Encouraged better communication.

Cllr Ray Nowak: Apologised for his low attendance in recent years owing to ill health. RN expressed interest in the National Park proposal.

## **3. Delivery of the AONB Management Plan**

TM presented on AONB Team delivery.

**RESOLUTION:**

**The board approves and notes the progress made towards delivering the AONB Management Plan 2014-2019, and**

**The board approves payment of grant to Dorset Food and Drink CIC to the value of the reserve being held for Dorset Food and Drink purposes.**

**4. Draft AONB Management Plan 2019-2024**

TM presented the paper.

Discussion points:

- a) HC commended work done.
- b) RL queried if any 'measures of success' were adequately included. TM explained the NAAONB are working on guidelines and they will be included if relevant to plan. In comparison to current plan SEA does this, despite best efforts it is not an uphill trajectory e.g. Brit Valley /Marshwood Vale declines although some of it is outside of our remit. This leads on to the Glover Review.
- c) RB asked if we had considered playing more of a role in electrical generation, TM responded that we are supportive of renewable schemes in keeping with the values of the AONB, but that other areas of the county/country best to deliver this. We are working within our policy framework.
- d) SR asked if the last plan stood the test of time and if we have considered future proofing the new plan. TM said the Action Plan had dated the most therefore not included one this time. The policies have stood the test of time and in new plan have sharpened them, as well as streamlining / amalgamating some common policies.
- e) RL asked if we had checked the plans against other AONBs. TM explained worked closely with other AONBs on a similar time frame which has helped to strengthen ours.

**ACTION: TM to insert section on monitoring and measurables into Chapter 10.**

TM explained the adoption process - the plan will go to Local Councils before the end of March, then adopted by DCC for a limited period and then presented to the new Dorset Council in 2021 (2-3 years-time).

JW congratulated the immense work of the team and review group.

**RESOLUTION:**

**The Board**

- a. Approves the edits made to the consultation draft and recognises this version as final subject to a small insertion, "how do we measure success?"**
- b. Recommends it for adoption by the relevant local authorities and partnerships constituent bodies.**
- c. Recognises the effort made by the AONB review group.**

**5. Review of Protected Landscapes**

TM presented the paper.

TM encouraged partners to respond to the on line questionnaire:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/landscapes-review-national-parks-and-aonbs-call-for-evidence>

And updated the partners that a National Association response is being worked on with draft 'asks' recently published reflecting those in the papers.

Discussion points:

- a) RB queried the extension of the boundary into coastal waters citing Harbour Masters (Portland) would be wary of this and queried the impact it would have on funding for farmers. TM replied that the AONB has a framing role and supports access to funds.
- b) PK queried future economic opportunities that this could bring, in particular for Portland. RB replied that more long-term investment would have positive effects both on the environment and the economy.
- c) BB stated the Dorset Coastal seas has a good set of protective designations and hopes links would develop and livelihoods benefit accordingly.
- d) RN said developers may have a concern that development would be controlled in the area, but others see partnership working as a benefit that enhances opportunities in Portland.
- e) RB stated that Cruise Liners could be better exploited.
- f) RL raised concern that AONB raises funding / attracts volunteers as an entity which could be lost if swallowed up by a bigger organisation. TM explained that we are losing out to others who are better placed to bid. BB explained that there are not many funding sources left. SR said the AONB Partnership should be mindful of its own success moving forward and all it has achieved to date.
- g) RL Asked if this may be an opportunity to change the boundary of the AONB, which is currently difficult to do so. TM explained that this could be possible, Glover is reviewing the current process and will be making recommendations in due course. A list of potential modifications to the boundary is growing – Lamberts Castle, Horn Ash, Portland suggested.
- h) TM was asked if the team had enough evidence to say how successful it had been and answered not as yet but will gather this evidence together if the proposal accepted. RL urged not to be modest about its achievements. He raised concern that a National Park is not a 'Living Landscape' unlike an AONB and that developments could be restricted. He urged for a single point of reference for farmers within the AONB team – a central contact as per the SDR project.

#### **RESOLUTION:**

**The Board approves the nature of the AONB response to the Landscapes Review Call for Evidence and delegates authority to complete and submit a response from the Dorset AONB Partnership to the AONB Manager**

**Richard Brown and Michael Dower gave a presentation on the Dorset & East Devon National Park Campaign – the link to the full presentation is [here](#)**

- a) Discussion points: WL raised queried where the additional funding (£10 million) for National Parks is coming from. RB said it is additional funding from the treasury as Gove wants more NPs in 70<sup>th</sup> year of NPs. Concern raised that council budget would be cut accordingly from central government so no financial benefit to the council in the long term. RB reassured that this would not happen, council budget would remain the same but less overheads in Countryside Management/Planning so more to spend on other areas of council business.
- b) MD said AONBs all struggle to reverse decline in bio-diversity mainly due to funding, farmers are also funded to increase output / productivity at detriment to conservation.

An increase in funds would help to further landscape conservation and build on AONB work achieved so far.

- c) TW queried if areas marked in grey on the map would be included (currently not AONB). RB confirmed they could make the case to be included in response to the Glover Review; it is NE's responsibility to designate new areas. TW said that concerns had been raised to him about the inclusion of towns in any new National Park designation, as they currently are in the Dorset AONB. RB said pressure in designated areas is alleviated but not in areas outside of the designation. AONBs and NPs have the same status but NP authorities have direct responsibility for strategic planning and development control.
- d) MD explained that NPs have a concern for the well-being of the local population, Rangers are crucial to its success, concerned for farmers to survive, can give pre-application advice to assist applicants re. planning applications, better manage tourist hot spots. Can ensure that the AONB 'Action Plan' happens as increased funds means not reliant on others. Timing wise – difficult due to Brexit, Unification and Growth Funds and won't happen quickly.
- e) KB asked if NPs deliver Countryside Management, would areas outside of the NP be included? MD said this would be up for discussion and possibly. KB said they currently work in partnership and it would be an issue to lose this. RB said that partners would be no different on a converging agenda. R Best said that they had not consulted businesses in Portland and would not get support of the Port. R Brown said the Port would be outside of the NP. R Best said access would be included though.
- f) PW asked how, if the planning rules are no different, would more affordable housing be delivered? MD said that NPs can put more resources into bringing forward 'rural exceptions sites'.
- g) RL said bureaucracy is an issue for farmers so if there are 2 planning authorities then there would be an extra level of bureaucracy. RB said it would be similar to as it is now – Local Plan for NP area and non-Local Plan for the remainder, both under a common framework.
- h) HC said that in the next 3 years with government re-organisation this proposal would cut through the 3 new authorities making it very complex. Suggested we don't include East Devon.
- i) AT – said she would provide a link to PDC PDP on National Park proposal, which can be found here - [CM-2017-08-08-proposed-dorset-national-park-KR.docx](#)

**Board agreed proposed resolution as follows:**

***'The Dorset AONB Partnership Board Invites the Glover review panel to evaluate the opportunity to evolve the AONB into a National Park as a future option for Dorset'***

**ACTION: TM to collate any responses from the Board on the NP prospectus, for sending onto RB.**

## **6. Business Plan 2019-2020 Budget Headlines**

TM presented the paper.

### **RESOLUTION:**

**The board approves the proposed budget and funding priorities for the next financial year.**

## **7. Stepping into Nature Presentation**

SA gave an interesting and upbeat presentation on the Stepping into Nature Project, which is now at the half way point, summarising the achievements of the project so far. The project is going well and meeting all its targets.

#### **8. Any Other Business**

JW explained a separate paper had been circulated from LNP inviting the board to endorse their proposed 'Health and Nature Charter' which promotes links between nature, health and well-being. **All agreed that the board are happy to endorse this.**

Cllr Peter Webb said that it was his last meeting on the board (due to LGR). He said it had been a pleasure to be a part of it, congratulated the team and others and wished them every success for the future

Cllr Hilary Cox said this was the same for her.

JW reminded the board that the new Dorset Food and Drink guide is now available and that the Athelhampton Christmas Food Fayre takes place on 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019**

If you wish to have items added to the agenda for that meeting, please ensure suggestions are sent to Tom Munro [t.munro@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:t.munro@dorsetcc.gov.uk) by 5pm Monday 15<sup>th</sup> October so they may be considered by the AONB Steering Group.