

## **North Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership**

24<sup>th</sup> January 2014

Civic Centre, Barnstaple

- 1. Introduction and apologies**
- 2. Declaration of interests**
- 3. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising**  
Rose Day appointed as Acting Vice-Chairman

### **Funding Updates**

Wood is good didn't get through first round  
GHB first-round gone in – Pete Burgess responding to queries. We will hear before the end of the financial year. Work on establishing where bats are. Elaine is leading on community engagement. It is a big landscape scale partnership.

Farm visit – to be later in Spring, and will be combined with next Partnership.

- 4. AONB Manager's Report**  
Elaine's report taken as read.  
Budget and business plan on track

### **Combe Martin HEAP**

National Geographic walks – Dave has started process of walks in ND to fit in with GS – Hartland Walk has already been included, and a second one is to be drawn up for Combe Martin. Also perhaps Braunton Marsh and Braunton Great Field – have plans to provide evidence

Elaine gave a presentation of this year's SDF projects. Final figures will be presented at the next partnership.

### **Planning Summary**

AA work was huge – immense relief that it will not go ahead.  
Strained our resources. We would have needed to find more money to fund Pete's time. DE spending four days a week  
Two big planning applications.

A39 Academy – yet to see full details. Working with developers on viewpoints. No comment yet.

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Ilfracombe – area was left undesignated because Ilfracombe was expected to expand. Green networks important, lighting issues, and skyline issues

Although AA has gone away temporarily, there is still work to be done around this issue

Andrea - National Parks concerned about change of use of barns, etc – other NPs don't want to put their heads above the parapet – inappropriate development in the countryside

Contact NAAONB and MPs – Partnership to raise concerns – guidance around farmsteads.

**Action -Chairman**

## **5. Atlantic Array: Presentation by Dave Edgcombe**

220 sq.km. – bigger than the area of the AONB

5<sup>th</sup> largest in the world

10 miles away – visual impact unacceptable – designated for finest coastal scenery in the country at the time – affected character of coast – Bristol Channel largely undeveloped – industrial scale – effect on special defining qualities – protected landscapes are about undeveloped skyline

effect upon other PLs

Decision to oppose – important – resource implications huge – too many elements to cover it effectively – didn't have resources to go into the landward proposals – concentrated on visual impact – DE 4 days a week plus Pete Leaver – took Dave away from his day job – many thanks to National Trust

National Infrastructure Project and way beyond the skill sets of the Team – not just us – LA planners, too, hadn't come across an application of this size and complexity. However, we have learned a lot. We had no seascape assessment – the only seascape assessment was by the developers themselves. We must work with partners to establish a seascape assessment for the ND Coast Used Fullbrook to get across the visual aspect of proposals. Steve did the round of LA committee meetings

Some councillors said they were unaware of the visual impact until they had seen the work the AONB Team had done

1775 representations made to the AA proposals

Kept away from the pressure groups – they got the credit, but AONB had done a lot of the work

Collective Statement from all affected PLs was not a success, but there were suggestions that statements of common ground should be drawn up. There was success in working with partners – Pembroke Coast NP was a great help and shared their information, and good working with the National Trust on visual impact and photomontages – great success

Previous LCAs and Fixed-post Photography were a great help in putting up a robust argument against the proposal

RWE did use some of our FPP points, which meant that we could make direct comparisons, and could evidence that RWE had underplayed the effects

Basis of AONB arguments – impact on special qualities – but we didn't have the expertise. Drawn into an argument with developers – they downplayed effects – but we needed to talk about the principle of effects upon a Protected Landscape by a national infrastructure project. Economic arguments are king at the end of the day.

Has raised awareness of the AONB – originally the lone voice, but others joined us – our standing has gone up

High cost – DE not able to do other jobs and very stressful

Legacy – now much better placed. Keen to work with partners to get a seascape assessment. Have also strengthened our partnerships with other organisations

Need to share this with NAAONB and ENPA to produce a toolkit for all LPs to benefit from

Elaine – EU challenge on Harbour Porpoises – mobile mammal species – UK has not implemented in full their obligations under the Habitats Legislation

Climate change – there are compatible renewables appropriate for protected landscapes – also an economic argument in economic regeneration. Keep in with the LAs.

## **7. New Management Plan and Delivery Plan Update**

There will be two sizes – A4 and A5. Lots of clicks on consultation, but few comments

National Trust, Natural England, etc. commented. Also EH and Forestry Commission. And other AONBs

RWE criticism that special qualities of AONB were not easily acceptable

Special qualities now listed, and illustrated

4 priorities and 6 core themes

Delivery Plan – most important part of the Plan – what we are going to do

Actions for each of 10 themes

Climate Change is cross-cutting theme

NDC signed off, TDC also, and DCC very soon

The Partnership agreed to the following priorities:

14/15 – Farming and Land Management

15/16 – The Coast

16/17 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

17/18 – Historic Environment

18/19 – Preparing the new Management Plan

[14/16 – year of family agriculture and farming, CAP Reform, agricultural projects]

[15/16 – importance of coast to us]

Some concerns were expressed to how the AONB would deliver the health agenda.

**Action: Chairman to meet with Exmoor National Park**

## **8. New Partnership Members**

Andrea Chick and Jane Elliott both resigned – Andrea has full time post in Bude.

**Action: Chairman to write to them both to thank them for their work.**

### **New members**

Robin Julian UKIP represents Southern Bideford and Hartland for DCC

Caroline Leaver, deputy Chief Exec. of Citizens' Advice – voluntary sector

Alison Boyle – community representative

Vote: Unanimous

MOU with Tarka Country Trust

### **AOB**

BR Peer Group Review

early stage - will keep Partnership informed of the process

Friday 16<sup>th</sup>. May - in Braunton area