



**NORTH WESSEX DOWNS AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY**  
**MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP**

***MINUTES of a meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2015 at  
North Wessex Downs AONB office, Denford Manor***

**Present**

Richard Broadhead	Chairman
Megan Cameron	deputising for Robin Edwards
Garry King	
Rowan Whimster	

**In attendance**

Henry Oliver	NWD AONB Director
Julie Baldwin	NWD AONB Partnership Coordinator ( <i>minutes</i> )
Oliver Cripps	NWD AONB Projects & Development Manager

1. **Apologies and Welcome**

The meeting convened at 10:00hrs. Welcome was given by RB and welcomed Megan who was deputising for Robin Edwards. Apologies were received from Moira Hankinson, Robin Edwards, Alison Cross, Ted Hiscocks, Lucy Page, Rose Somerset.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

The minutes were agreed and signed off.

3. **Matters Arising**

**Para 4** – ACTION - HO will continue to converse with Natural England for a representative to the Management Working Group and Council of Partners.

ACTION - PCO to send letter to Sarah Wright thanking her.

**Para 8** – ACTION - HO and RB advised no further progress with this work. **HO** advised that Hungerford are still happy to be 'guinea pigs' for new signs project. One member enquired why this project was being pushed forward as it was originally earmarked as a 'nice to have' project. **RB** advised members that it is a project that the Chairman of the Council of Partners highlighted at the start of his tenure and would like to see further progress when time allows. **HO** advised that he is happy to continue with this project in the background of his current workload.

4. **Budget Update 2015-15 – for information**

**HO** introduced the paper. No comments received from members.

5. **Future Funding and Priorities – presentation and discussion**

**RB** provided a brief background to this paper – Highlighting to members the value of money and where we would be if there are any budget cuts in the next 3-5 years. **HO** explained the Value for Money spreadsheet and slides from the recent core funders

meeting. **GK** asked if the spreadsheet gives a figure on what each local authority saves by having the AONB unit carry out their statutory commitments. **HO** asked members what they believe the reserves that have been accrued should be used for. Any further slicing of the core budget will have a significant impact for what the team does. **RB** advised that the CoP members need to have headline details, briefing them on the implications of further cuts.

6. **Natural England Landscape Condition Monitoring Data**

**OC** introduced the supporting papers and gave an overview on its contents. There is still some more work to add to the report, therefore still a work in progress. **RW** will update the AONB on the current movement on the volunteer capacity for recording conditions of listed buildings, which will be rolled out with next 18 months.

7. **Natural Capital Valuation**

**OC** introduced the paper on behalf of Sam Barker whose project it was during his 6 week internship this summer. Sam came up with recommendations on the values that he derived from eco system services and made good contacts and was able to move the project on. He will be returning to the unit next summer 2016 to complete the project as part of his final dissertation. **RB** asked who the target audience would be for this information. **OC** responded that evidence based on what the AONB has been designated for, its special qualities and its intrinsic value.

**ACTION: OC requested that a letter of thanks be sent to Sam for his work so far.**

8. **Planning Update – for information**

**HO** introduced the paper on behalf of the Planning Advisor, highlighting several issues currently. LP attending this week Vale of White Horse EIP stage 1. The marina in Hungerford whose original plans have now been superseded with further changes. The AONB have yet to comment. **RW** asked what the capacity for future planning issues are and what are we seeing more of. **HO** advised members that small scale solar farms, housing developments, LIA's not being produced properly. It is anticipated that West Berkshire Council will be coming in with major allocations within the next few weeks. Strategically here for the long term. Our job of enhancing and protecting the landscape is being undermined by local councils. **OC** whilst all this is going on we are unable to tap into CIL payments, help local neighbourhood plans, developing positions statements. **RW** mentioned that government action and guidance is having a huge impact on the AONB. **HO** advised members that he may reinstate on the future CoP agendas the Section 85 breaches and report planning issues or maybe within the Director's report a section on Section 85 breaches.

9. **Director's Report – for information**

**HO** introduced the report and provided further updates. Para 9 Oxfordshire – the group are looking at The Thames as a framework on which to address issues such as flood prevention, nature conservation, tourism looking at economic value. **HO** also gave a very brief overview on the work programme, its amendments and updates.

10. **Any Other Business**

Membership – a nomination has been put forward for Gerry Hamersley formerly of Natural England now retired. This was supported by **OC**. There is a need for a Local Authority member, a member with tourism & marketing expertise and also someone with land management background.

**ACTIONS: PCO to disseminate the cv of Gerry Hamersley to members for their vote.**

**Members to provide further suggestions for potential new candidates to the group.**

**Meeting closed 13:25**

**Date of Next Meeting**  
Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015

Signed.....*JR Brean*.....

Date ...*9/12/2015*.....