

FIFTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE COTSWOLDS CONSERVATION BOARD

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL, CIRENCESTER

TUESDAY 25TH JUNE 2019

Present:

Chairman	-	Liz Eyre
Vice-Chair	-	Brendan McCarthy

Jo Barker	Garry King
David Broad	Simon King
Nicholas Bumford	George Lambrick
Rebecca Charley	Catherine Le-Grice Mack
Nigel Colston	Charles Mathew
Matthew Darby	Tony Merry
Mike Dean	Andrew Parsons
Jacqui Fenn	Daniel Szor
Mollie Groom	Sarah Whalley-Hoggins
Norman Kay	Roger Wilson
Christopher Kenney-Herbert	Clive Webster

Also in attendance:

Mark Connelly	Land Management Officer
Martin Lane	Director
John Mills	Planning and Landscape Officer
Della Morris	Finance and Office Administrator
Mandy Pressland	Office Manager
David Shelmerdine	Finance Officer

Apologies for absence were received from the following:

Adrian Hardman	John Matthews
Martin Horwood	Ben Stokes
David Kerr	David Thackray

Ed Macalister-Smith

Absent:

Liz Hodges

B 2.1 INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman informed the Board that, owing to recent district, town and parish elections, and retirements, the Board had lost a number of long-standing and effective Members and explained that she had since written to the Members thanking them for their service. The Chairman also extended a warm welcome to new Members of the Board - Norman Kay (Stroud District Council), Clive Webster (Cotswold District Council), Ben Stokes (South Gloucestershire County Council) and Sarah Whalley-Hoggins (Stratford-on-Avon District Council).

B 2.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from the Board's Members or Officers.

B 2.3 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been submitted in accordance with the Board's Constitution.

B 2.4 MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

RESOLVED that, subject to the following amendment, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on 26th March 2019 be approved as a correct record:-

- (i) the name 'Jo Barker' be included within Apologies and not Absent.**

B 2.5 MINUTES OF BOARD AGM

RESOLVED that, subject to the following amendments, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board AGM held on 26th March 2019 be approved as a correct record:

- (i) the name 'Jo Barker' be included within Apologies and not Absent;**
- (ii) the name 'Charles Matthew' be amended to 'Charles Mathew'.**

B 2.6 MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Board received the Minutes of the Meetings of the Executive Committee held on 30th April 2019 and 28th May 2019.

B 2.7 APPOINTMENTS TO THE BOARD'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND PLANNING & INFRASTRUCTURE WORKING GROUP

The Director introduced the item and explained that the appointments were required following the recent district, town and parish elections. He informed Members that four Local Authority Members were appointed to the Executive Committee and that there was currently one vacancy.

One Nomination, from Mr. Charles Mathew, was received at the Meeting. There were no further nominations.

RESOLVED that Mr. Charles Mathew be appointed to serve on the Board's Executive Committee until the March 2020 Board AGM.

The Director explained that five nominations, for Board Members David Broad, Matthew Darby, Mollie Groom, Garry King and John Matthews had been received in advance of the Meeting for the three current vacancies on the Board's Planning & Infrastructure Working Group.

There were no further nominations at the Meeting.

The Chairman then invited the five Members to explain to the Board why they considered themselves to be suitable candidates to serve on the Working Group.

Following a ballot by Members present, accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED that, David Broad, Matthew Darby and Garry King be appointed to serve on the Board's Planning & Infrastructure Working Group until the March 2020 Board AGM.

Note:

The Director extended his thanks to all those Members who had been nominated for their interest.

B 2.8 ANNUAL REVIEW 2018/19 AND COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

The Board received a report detailing an overview of recent communications activity.

The Chairman urged all Local Authority Members to circulate the Board's Annual Review with their respective Leaders and Cabinet Members. She also urged Parish Group Members to circulate the Review amongst their group's parish councils.

The Director added that the Board was seeking to develop the 'Caring for the Cotswolds' scheme and was seeking businesses to sign-up to support the

programme. Board Members were asked to be ambassadors and to help the Communications Officer make introductions to local businesses and secure greater sign-up to the Caring for the Cotswolds scheme.

He also reported that the next edition of the Cotswold Lion magazine would be published in July 2019.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the Board's Annual Review 2018/19 be received and actively promoted;**
- (b) the Board continue to promote the 'Caring for Cotswolds' visitor-giving scheme with the objective of growing the membership;**
- (c) the Board anticipate the new issue of Cotswold Lion magazine and support the publication where possible.**

B 2.9 DRAFT TRANQUILITY POSITION STATEMENT

The Board received a report detailing a draft Tranquillity Statement with the recommendation of approval by the Board.

The Planning and Landscape Officer introduced the item and explained that following the Board's adoption of a position statement for Dark Skies at the Board Meeting in March 2019, a position statement on tranquillity would also be well-supported and had already received positive feedback from various local authorities; Historic England and Natural England.

A Member commented that whilst she was pleased to see the role of Board Members outlined within the Statement, she expressed that she found it difficult that no background information had been included regarding the work of dark skies by South Gloucestershire and Bath and North East Somerset Councils. She also commented that a forward policy for dark skies had been agreed at the March 2019 Executive Meeting and enquired as to the progress in relation to this.

The Land Management Officer responded that the dark skies position statement had been adopted by the Board at its March 2019 Meeting. He added that he was aware of the work in Bath and the surrounding area in relation to dark skies and confirmed that he also received invitations to attend their respective meetings.

The Director further explained that the recent dark skies event at Temple Guiting had been well attended and that other aspirations of the Board in regard to dark skies had not progressed as far as had been desired owing to the fact that only two local authorities had agreed to financial contributions. He reported that consequently, only a small level of equipment had been able to be purchased by the Board.

Various Local Authority Members extended their thanks to the Officer for his work on the Statement and explained how the document had been given consideration by their respective authorities in regard to recent decisions made.

Another Member highlighted that reference to the Statement 'not being targeted at temporary and/or infrequent work-day noise' could be misunderstood in regard to licensing applications and he requested that specific reference be made to temporary licensed events to avoid this.

It was also suggested that the Statement and its relation to health and well-being should be circulated to various public health offices for their information, in addition to local authorities and town and parish councils.

RESOLVED that the Board adopt the Tranquillity Position Statement.

Note:

The Chairman wished to extend her thanks to Board Member Mr. George Lambrick and the other Board Members for their work in relation to this item.

B 2.10 REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2018/19

The Board received the annual review of the Board's Corporate Governance Framework and Annual Governance Statement 2018/19.

The Director introduced the item and explained that the Executive Committee had reviewed the documents and had proposed acceptance by the Board. He added that the documents would be submitted to the Board's External Auditors by 28th June 2019 and in response to a Members' question, confirmed that no member of the public had requested to see the accounts in the previous year.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the Corporate Governance Review be agreed; and**
- (b) the Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 be approved.**

B 2.11 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND ANNUAL RETURN 2018/19

The Finance Officer introduced the item and responded to various questions from Members.

A Member commented that whilst he appreciated it was the current method, he did not approve of the accruals accounting as he considered the Board should account for spending only when expenditure was made against it. He also stressed that the Board should be able to match income against expenditure.

The Finance Officer responded that he recognised the potential issues that were caused and reported that he would be raise the Board's concerns to the External Auditors.

Another Member requested that a copy of the April 2019 Executive Committee report providing the full details of this item be circulated to all Board Members via email.

RESOLVED that:

(a) the statement of Accounts 2018/19 be approved;

(b) Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2018/19 be approved.

B 2.12 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2019/20

The Finance Officer introduced the item and explained that the Board was debt-free and had no current borrowing. He added that the report had also been agreed by the Executive Committee at its April 2019 Meeting.

RESOLVED that:

(a) the contents of the Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20 be noted; and

(b) the investment policies be approved.

B 2.13 RESERVES POLICY

The Finance Officer introduced the item and explained that the report had been presented to the Executive Committee at its May 2019 Meeting and also drew attention to the fact that usable and restricted funds had now been separated within the Policy.

RESOLVED that:

(a) the Reserves and Policy Strategy be approved;

(b) the Board continue its current policy of aiming for total level of Useable Funds in the range of £110,000 to £130,000.

B 2.14 A417 MISSING LINK

The Board received a report detailing progress on the Board's input to the A417 'Missing Link' scheme.

The Director introduced the item and explained that the Board had undertaken positive discussions with Highways England and evidence had proven that the Board's input had had been affective in regard to some of the proposals. He also thanked those Board Members who had been involved in the discussions and following a request from a Member, agreed to

circulate a link to the recent submissions made to the Planning Inspectorate, an annex within which provided cost estimates for cuttings compared to tunnels to all Board Members.

A Member commented that, through his membership of Gloucestershire County Council, he was aware of the work that had been undertaken in regard to the scheme and he wish to commend all those involved for their efforts. The Chairman also echoed these comments.

RESOLVED that the progress update be noted.

B 2.15 REVIEW AND REFRESH OF THE ROLE PROFILE / JOB DESCRIPTION FOR BOARD MEMBERS

The Chairman introduced the item and reported that the document had been reviewed by the Executive Committee, having been drafted by the Chairman, Vice-Chair and Director previously.

RESOLVED that the updated Board Member role profile be adopted by the Board.

B 2.16 REVIEW AND UPDATING OF THE BOARD'S CONSTITUTION

The Director informed the Board that the Constitution had been awaiting a review since June 2018 and following the Board's agreement at the March 2019 Board Meeting to continue with Task and Finish and Working Groups after a one year trial period. He also explained that the Government had, in the previous week; issued a new Code of Conduct for public body members and therefore additional amendments updating the Board's Code of Conduct had been included within the revised drafting. The Director concluded that both he and the Board's Monitoring Officer were now satisfied that the documents were now 'fit for purpose'.

RESOLVED that the Executive Committee's recommendation to update the Board's Constitution and Code of Conduct be agreed.

B 2.17 UPDATES

(a) Task and Finish and Working Groups

The Chairman expressed her view that, following conversations with Defra Officers regarding the Cotswolds becoming the 'walking and exploring capital'; the Task and Finish Group would be expected to present some recommendations to the Executive Committee in the immediate future.

RESOLVED that the progress update be noted.

(b) Cotswolds Discovery Centre Partnership

RESOLVED that the progress update be noted.

(c) Cotswolds LEADER Programme Update

The Director, on behalf of the LEADER Programme Manager, informed the Board that three further applications had been approved prior to the Board Meeting resulting in 81 jobs being funded against a target of 94 with a further £82,000 of funding to be allocated at the July 2019 LEADER Meeting.

Various Members expressed thanks to Mr. James Webb, LEADER Programme Manager for his work in relation to this item.

A Member also commented that the Board could present the Programme to LEPs and the Local Industrial Strategy.

RESOLVED that the update report be noted.

(d) Appointment of new Secretary of State Appointees

The Chairman informed the Board that there had been six applications for three Secretary of State positions and that Defra would be presenting the three final candidates to the Secretary of State for appointment in mid-July 2019, but highlighted that, owing to the current political situation, there would be a requirement to wait until a new Prime Minister and consequent Secretary of State and Ministers had been appointed. The Chairman also advised the Board that the Members would look to join the Board from September 2019.

RESOLVED that the oral update be noted.

(e) Recruitment for the post of Chief Executive

The Director informed Members that they would be advised by email of the successful candidate. The Chairman and Vice-Chair would be coordinating a press release at the end of July 2019 regarding the retirement of the current Director.

RESOLVED that the recruitment process and timetable for the post of Chief Executive be noted.

B 2.18 MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

There were no matters to report under this item.

B 2.19 BOARD AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING DATES FOR 2020/21

The Board received the proposed Board and Executive Committee Meeting dates for 2020/21.

RESOLVED that the Board and Executive Committee Meeting schedules be adopted.

B 2.20 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN FOR 2019/20

The Forward Plan for 2018/19 was noted.

B 2.21 DATE OF NEXT CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING - 17TH DECEMBER 2019

It was noted that the next Board Meeting would be held on 17th December 2019, with Board site visits and briefings scheduled for 1st October 2019).

B 2.22 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business that was urgent.

The Meeting commenced at 10.10 a.m. and closed at 11.55 a.m.

Chairman