

MEETING OF
THE COTSWOLDS CONSERVATION BOARD
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

HELD AT THE CONSERVATION BOARD OFFICES, NORTHLEACH

TUESDAY 30TH APRIL 2019

Present:

Chairman	-	Liz Eyre
David Broad (until 1.45 p.m.)		Ed Macalister-Smith
Nigel Colston		Brendan McCarthy (until 1.45 p.m.)
Mike Dean		Tony Merry
George Lambrick		Martin Veal
Catherine Le Grice-Mack		

Also in Attendance:

Martin Lane	Director
John Mills	Planning and Landscape Officer
David Shelmerdine	Finance Officer
Simon Smith	Project Development and Business Planning Officer

E 1.1 INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Director drew the Committee's attention to a missing page from the Meeting's papers in relation to Agenda Item (19) and explained that this had been circulated to Members via email in advance of the Meeting.

E 1.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman declared an interest in respect of Agenda Item (9) as she was a Trustee of CCLA Investment Management Limited.

E 1.3 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

E 1.4 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that, subject to the deletion of the word 'complaint' and its substitution by the word 'compliant' in the Decision Reason in regard to Minute 6.12, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee held on 26th February 2019 be approved as a correct record.

Matter Arising:

The Chairman informed the Committee that information relating to Cultural Capital had now been published on the Board's website. Mr. Lambrick explained that he would be contacting various contacts he was aware of who he felt would be able to make suitable comments on this item. The Chairman requested that any comments be forwarded to the Land Management Officer.

E 1.5 MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE BOARD MEETING

The Committee received the unconfirmed Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 26th March 2019.

Matter Arising:

Mr. Macalister Smith requested the following amendment in regard to Minute B 4.5, Matters Arising, deletion of the line 'He added that the working group's purpose should be to establish issues of governance and more staffing policies in the organisation.', and its substitution by the line 'He added that the working group's purpose should be to implement issues of governance arising from the Board's Away Day and to update the staff handbook policies as listed in the index of issues from A-X.'

Both Mr. Macalister-Smith and Mr. McCarthy requested that in future, reference to the Vice-Chairman be amended to Vice-Chair.

E 1.6 MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE BOARD AGM

The Committee received the unconfirmed Minutes of the Board AGM held on 26th March 2019.

E 1.7 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Summary:

To present the internal audit report for 2018/19.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Audit Report topics and comments.
- (ii) Internal Control Objectives.
- (iii) Internal Audit Strategic Plan.

Action(s) Arising:

None.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the Internal Audit Work Programme & Report for 2018/19 be noted;**
- and**

(b) the Internal Audit Strategic Plan for 2018/19 - 2022/23 be noted.

Reason for Decision(s):

The Committee considered the Audit Report to be appropriate and compliant with the necessary regulations.

E 1.8 PROCUREMENT WAIVERS 2018/19

Summary:

To present a summary of any procurements which have not been processed strictly in accordance with Financial Regulations in 2018/19.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Relevant transactions outside of the Board's normal financial procurement rules.

Action(s) Arising:

Mr. Dean agreed to investigate the number of site views in regard to Tewkesbury Borough Council's website for comparison against the Board's own website to further examine the potential for different web providers in the future.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the summary and circumstances be noted by the Committee.

Reason for Decision(s):

This item was for noting only.

E 1.9 2018/19 YEAR END DRAFT FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Summary:

To present a draft financial summary for 2018/19.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Financial Summary 2018/19

Action(s) Arising:

Mr. Lambrick wished the Committee to note the increasing deficit of the Discovery Centre.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason for Decision(s):

This item was for noting only.

E 1.10 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2019/20

Summary:

To report the Board's Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20.

Key Consideration(s):

(i) The Existing and updated Treasury Management Strategy.

Action(s) Arising:

The Committee requested that the Finance Office produce a common terminology in regard to the Board's Reserves Policy.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that:

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

(b) the investment policies be approved.

Reason for Decision(s):

The Committee considered the Strategy to be appropriate and compliant with the necessary regulations.

E 1.11 EVENLODE VALLEY EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Summary:

To present an update on the development on the "Green Ribbon of the Evenlode" project proposal.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Expression of Interest form.
- (ii) Progress to date.
- (iii) Next steps.

Action(s) Arising:

Mr. Lambrick suggested the Board make contact with Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) who undertook work relating to natural and cultural capital.

The Chairman also requested a 'snail trail' regarding the progress in relation to the item be produced and that any Members who had shown an interest in the item be contacted with the potential of forming a working group.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason for Decision(s):

This item was for noting only.

E 1.12 ACCOUNTING FOR HOSTINGS COSTS IN PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Summary:

To invite discussion and comment on the inclusion of hosting costs when developing projects.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) The inclusion of hosting costs in externally funded projects.
- (ii) Hosting costs in bids.
- (iii) Hosting costs in quotes and tenders.
- (iv) Core Funders expectations.

Action(s) Arising:

Mr. Macalister-Smith requested that the Finance Officer and Project Development and Business Planning Officer produce a report detailing a standard format framework for projects at a future Executive Committee Meeting.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the report be noted;**
- (b) a report containing a standard format framework for projects be presented at the September 2019 Executive Committee Meeting.**

Reason for Decision(s):

The Committee considered this to be a suitable approach to help the Committee further understand what the Board had previously and would in future be committing to and what costs could be recovered by the Board.

E 1.13 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL FOR RURAL SKILLS PROGRAMME

Summary:

To present a development proposal for the Rural Skills programme.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Progress to date.
- (ii) Current position of Rural Skills programme.
- (iii) Proposal for Rural Skills development programme.
- (iv) Costed Rural Skills programme development model.

Action(s) Arising:

The Chairman requested that an update in regard to the Rural Skills Programme and the appointment of an apprentice Officer be presented to the Executive Committee in April 2020.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the development proposal approved by the Task and Finish Group be adopted.

Reason for Decision(s):

The Committee noted the overall success of the Rural Skills Programme and considered the proposals recommended by the Task and Finish Group to be suitable recommendations to progress the Programme further in the future.

Note:

The Chairman wished to extend her thanks to the Members of the Task and Finish Group for their work in relation to this item.

E 1.14 CONFIRMATION OF CARING FOR THE COTSWOLDS GRANT AWARDS

Summary:

To provide an update on grants awarded following closure of the fourth call for projects in April 2019.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Progress to date.

Action(s) Arising:

Mr. McCarthy suggested that an information pack regarding the Programme be re-circulated to all Members at the June 2019 Board Meeting.

Ms. Le-Grice Mack drew the Committee's attention to a dark skies and development event taking place in Bath on 6th June 2019 and the fact Members may be interested in attending.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the report and grant awards be noted.

Reason for Decision(s):

This item was for noting only.

E 1.15 UPDATES

TASK AND FINISH AND WORKING GROUPS

Summary:

A progress update on the Board's task and finish and working groups.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Task and Finish and Working Group Remits.
- (ii) Effectiveness of each Task and Finish and Working Group and their timeframes.

Action(s) Arising:

Mr. Lambrick suggested that there needed to be an outcome report from each Group presented annually at the Board's AGM in March.

The Committee also considered that there needed to be a framework for presenting the Business Cases of each group to the Executive Committee and that the development of this framework needed to clearly highlight the outcomes from the individual Groups.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the progress updates be noted;**
- (b) each group be requested to confirm the group's Chairman or lead Officer for the year ahead by the end of May 2019;**
- (c) the remits for task and finish and working groups for 2019/20 be agreed;**
- (d) a framework for presenting the Business Cases of each Group to the Executive Committee be produced in preparation for the 2020 AGM.**

Reason for Decision(s):

The Committee noted the benefits the introduction of the Groups had presented over the past year, but noted in some cases the large work load of certain Groups and the requirement of the Groups to engage with more interested parties other than those connected to the Board.

COTSWOLD'S DISCOVERY CENTRE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Summary:

To provide an update on the Cotswolds Discovery Centre Partnership Board.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) The arranged meetings between the Board and the Friends.

Action(s) Arising:

Following a request by Mr. Dean, the Director agreed to investigate the exact square footage the tenancy at the Discovery Centre covered.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the latest progress report be noted.

Reason for Decision(s):

This item was for noting only.

COTSWOLDS LEADER PROGRAMME UPDATE

Summary:

To present an update on the progress of the LEADER Programme.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Recent completed LEADER projects.
- (ii) Finds already allocated under the Programme.
- (iii) Remaining Funds within the Programme.
- (iv) Future applications and acceptance.

Action(s) Arising:

None.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the latest progress report be noted.

Reason for Decision(s):

This item was for noting only.

E 1.16 GOVERNANCE REVIEWSummary:

To consolidate previous Executive and Board discussions and comments in regard to Governance, including the Board's workshop on 4th March 2019.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) March 2019 Board 'Awayday' Report.

Action(s) Arising:

The Chairman, Vice-Chair and Mr. Macalister-Smith to meet to discuss this item further, following agreement by the Committee.

Decision(s):**RESOLVED that:****1. Constitution**

1a) As a first step to a more comprehensive review, the constitution be updated by the Director, for the June 2019 Board meeting, as follows

- General updating to reflect Executive / Board decisions over the last 12-18 months
- sections relating to Sub Committees to be replaced by those relating to task and finish and working groups.

1b) The Director brings forward to the June 2019 Board meeting options for the modernisation /rationalisation of the current constitution.

2. Business Plan

2a) The Executive in May to agree the format / level of detail for financial information for Business Plan development and quarterly reporting.

2b) The Executive in July to receive the Q1 2019/20 – 2021/22 Business plan review.

2c) The Executive in July to review the initial structure and operating context for the draft 2020/21 - 2022/23 Business plan

3. Staff/Employment Manual

That a proposal to be brought to the Executive in July for the use of an outside HR company, private or public, familiar with public sector ways of working, for a fee to update the current Staff/Employment Manual to reflect up to date HR practices.

4. Policies

That the Director lists, for the July Executive, the current policies, excepting those related to Employment, the date of the last review, and identifies the date by which they should be updated, refined or reviewed. The priority order to reflect Board Member's need to ensure the Board is not at risk in terms of any aspect of its roles and responsibilities.

5. Board Member's role and duties

The Chairman, Vice-Chair and Director review the current Board Member job description, induction process and consider how best to capture Member's range of skills, capitalise on their networks and support their development needs by September 2019.

6. Communications Strategy 2017 - 2022

The Strategy was reviewed by the Executive Committee in November 2018 and will be reviewed again by the Executive in September 2019.

7. Retirement of Patron

In the light of the retirement of our current Patron from the House of Lords the Chairman, Vice-Chair and Director consider a new Patron(s) covering both political and commercial skills post the publication of the National Park Review in October 2019.

8. Links to the Voluntary Warden Network

That Executive Committee members link to each of the voluntary warden area meetings. Attendance by an Executive member at area meetings as appropriate:

- Chairman; North
- Vice-Chair; Central
- Previous Vice-Chair; East
- Catherine Le-Grice Mack; Avon
- To be confirmed; South

With the 5 representatives ensuring clear and consistent messages about the whole AONB and full range of Board activity at the meetings they attend.

Reason for Decision(s):

Following the Board's decision at the March 2019 Board Meeting to establish a working group in regard to establishing issues of governance and developing more staff policies, the Committee considered the recommendations as proposed to be a sensible and logical move to achieving this target.

E 1.17 NETWORK RAIL FUNDING

Summary:

To outline - and provide some context to - the £500,000 of funding that the Board has secured from Network Rail to mitigate and compensate for the adverse impacts of their electrification works in the Cotswolds AONB.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Electrifications works.
- (ii) Impact on the AONB.
- (iii) Funding agreement.

Action(s) Arising:

None.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the funding secured from Network Rail and the context of this funding be noted;**
- (b) the lessons learned from working with Network Rail be noted.**

Reason for Decision(s):

This item was for noting.

E 1.18 COTSWOLDS NATIONAL PARK AMBITION

Summary:

To provide an update on the Board's ambition for a Cotswolds National Park.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Responses to the Glover Review.
- (ii) Cotswold Life Magazine article - Summer 2019.

Action(s) Arising:

None.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the latest progress report be noted.

Reason for Decision(s):

This item was for noting.

E 1.19 A417 UPDATE

Summary:

To provide a progress update on the A417 Missing Link.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Next steps.
- (ii) Correspondence between MPs and Highways England and the Board.

Action(s) Arising:

None.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the latest progress report be noted.

Reason for Decision(s):

This item was for noting.

E 1.20 EXTERNAL BIDS UPDATE

Summary:

To present an update on progress in applying for external funding.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Summary of External Bids.

Action(s) Arising:

None.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason for Decision(s):

This item was for noting.

E 1.21 RECRUITMENT OF THE POST OF DIRECTOR

Summary:

To provide an update on the arrangements being made for the recruitment of the post of Director.

Key Consideration(s):

- (i) Provisional recruitment timetable.

Action(s) Arising:

Ms. Le-Grice Mack commented that as there was only one woman (the Chairman) who had been appointed to the interview panel, she considered that an external female assessor with knowledge of National Parks would be beneficial to be appointed to the panel.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the work to date and the proposed actions and timeline for the recruitment of a new Director be endorsed.

Reason for Decision(s):

This Committee considered the timetable proposed to be both suitable and timely.

E 1.22 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN 2019/20

Summary:

To note the updated Executive Committee Forward Plan for 2019/20.

Key Consideration(s):

None.

Action(s) Arising:

None.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

Reason(s) for Decision(s):

The item was for noting only.

E 1.23 DRAFT AGENDA FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING - TUESDAY 28TH MAY 2019

Summary:

To note the draft Agenda for the Executive Committee Meeting on Tuesday 28th May 2019.

Key Consideration(s):

None.

Action(s) Arising:

None.

Decision(s):

RESOLVED that the draft Agenda be noted.

Reason(s) for Decision(s):

The item was for noting only.

E 1.24 **OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business that was urgent.

The Meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and closed at 2.10 p.m.

Chairman