



Members of the Chilterns Conservation Board for the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are hereby summoned to a meeting of the Chilterns Conservation Board Executive Committee on

**18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 10.00am**

**Chilterns Conservation Board  
The Lodge, Station Road, Chinnor OX39 4HA**

**Agenda**

1. Election of Chairman
2. Apologies
3. Declaration of Interest
4. Minutes
5. Matters Arising
6. Public Question Time
7. Finance Report
8. Review of Treasury Management
9. Banking Arrangements
10. HR Advisory Group
11. GWR project update
12. Farm Clusters
13. A.O.B

Future Meetings:

|                            |                                   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <u>Full Board</u>          | 16 <sup>th</sup> October 2019     |
|                            | 26 <sup>th</sup> February 2020    |
|                            | 17 <sup>th</sup> June 2020 (+AGM) |
|                            | 21 <sup>st</sup> October 2020     |
| <u>Executive Committee</u> | 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2020     |
|                            | 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2020          |
|                            | 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020   |



**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON  
Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019 at the offices of the Board, The Lodge, 90 Station Road,  
Chinnor OX39 4HA commencing at 10.00 am**

Present:

|                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Alison Doggett       | Board Member           |
| Cllr. John Griffin   | Board Member           |
| Cllr. Charles Hussey | Board Member           |
| Elaine King          | Board Member           |
| John Nicholls        | Board Member           |
| Paul Mains BEM       | Board Member           |
| Cllr Ian Reay        | Board Member, Chairman |
| Cllr Nick Rose       | Board Member           |

In attendance:

|                 |                              |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Sue Holden      | CCB Chief Officer            |
| Graham Hurst    | CCB Finance Officer          |
| Annette Venters | CCB People & Society Officer |

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Deirdre Hansen | Clerk to the Board |
|----------------|--------------------|

The Chairman welcome Paul Mains as the new Secretary of State appointed Board Member and Annette Venters, People and Society Officer.

He also welcome Elaine King as the new CEO designate, due to start in July.

**18/19.25 Apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Prof. Ray Payne

**18/19.26 Declarations of interest**

Cllr Charles Hussey declared an interest as a member of the Chilterns Tourism Network.

**18/19.27 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> January 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record after the following corrections:

- 18/19.Draft Budget 2019-20 last paragraph amended “prosed” to proposed and in the recommendation amended “RECOMMENED” to RECOMMENDED.

**18/19.28**

**Matters arising**

1. The Chief Officer mentioned that DEFRA is in consultation on a new contract. They are changing the reporting structure.
2. Julian Glover, who is leading the Glover Review that will ensure designated landscapes are fit for the future, had visited the Chilterns.

### **18/19.29 Public Question Time**

No public present.

### **18/19.30 Finance Report**

The Finance Officer had circulated a financial report to the Committee on the financial position to the end of the financial year 2018-19. He went through the figures and reported that the lower than anticipated budget deficit of £8,967 had occurred due to projects being well funded.

The Finance Officer reported that the finances are under control and that he continues to budget cautiously.

1. Core income was close to that budgeted.
2. Core expenditure was also close to budget.
3. Core activity resulted in a small surplus which enables the Board to make a financial contribution to projects.
4. Project income and expenditure remains irregular due to timing and certainty.

The Committee discussed the financial report and future core funding implications.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the financial results for the year ending 31 March 2019.**

### **18/19.31 Budget 2019-20**

The Finance Officer presented the updated budget for 2019-20 with projections for 2020-21.

A core surplus of £15,980 and a project expenditure deficit of £16,750 will result in a total net deficit of £770.

Project funding of £3.75m has been received from National Rail to be spent over the next 5 years in conjunction with the North Wessex Downs AONB and may require budget adjustments. This money is ring fenced, but it does bring with it additional costs and implications for the CCB's financial year end reporting.

From April 2020 the future DEFRA funding settlement may affect the CCB's funding, but no facts are yet available.

The meeting discussed the finances and expressed their thanks to the Finance Officer for his successful and professional management of the finances and acknowledged his diligence and hard work on behalf of the Board.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the Budget 2019-20 update.**

### **18/19.32 Recruitment Update**

The Chairman reported that following a successful recruitment campaign Dr Elaine King has been appointed Chief Executive Officer for the Conservation Board for the Chilterns AONB with effect from July 2019.

The Chairman noted that the recruitment panel were very pleased with the recruitment process and the agency used.

The Chief Officer reported on the recruitment of the Landscape Partnership Scheme team which is coming together and that the Partnership Manager will start in June.

### **1. The Committee NOTED the Recruitment Update.**

#### **18/19.33 Review of Governance Documents**

The Chairman brought the amended Governance Documents to the Committee for review and approval.

The documents had last been reviewed in 2017 and some minor changes have been made.

The Members agreed that the documents should be reviewed annually and that a more substantial review would be undertaken next year.

The Chairman, Chief Officer and Ray Payne will look at the Code of Conduct to see if a review of that should be undertaken.

### **1. The Committee REVIEWED and APPROVED this version of the Governance Documents.**

The Communications Officer joined the meeting.

#### **18/19.34 AONB Management Plan Communications**

The Communications Officer presented the Committee with her launch plan for the Management Plan 2019-2024. The final plan is due for the Board meeting in June.

The launch plan includes a variety of activities, it is the start of an ongoing journey. The Committee was asked for suggestions on promoting the Management Plan. The members discussed the launch plan and reminded the Communications Officer to keep the Glover Review in mind.

The Communications Officer was thanked.

### **1. The Committee DISCUSSED the Communications Plan.**

#### **18/19.35 Future partnership working**

The Chief Officer gave a presentation on future partnership working in the Chilterns. Members thoughts and input was requested to achieve the vision required for effective collaboration. The CCB is, off course itself a partnership.

The need to scale up the care given to the natural landscape was discussed. It was acknowledged that the geographic coverage of the Chilterns is a challenge and connections with all relevant partners in the Chilterns is also a challenge. It was agreed that a multi-layered approach was required, however there is no straightforward way of how to do this. An outcome-based approach was considered as the start of the process.

Members discussed various approaches.

The Chief Officer was thanked for her presentation.

**18/19.36 Functional Review: People and Society**

The Countryside Officer gave a paper and comprehensive presentation of the current CCB activity in her area including scaling up public engagement activity especially in urban areas and future priorities.

The People and Society Officer works with a wide range of partners across the Chilterns. The challenges of getting people on board and managing the growing number of volunteers with the new projects and their delivery was acknowledged as well as the growing list of opportunities.

Members made suggestions and commented on the opportunities to be explored.

The People and Society Officer was thanked for her presentation.

**18/19.37 Any Other Business**

1. The book “Country of Larks “was promoted by a member.
2. It was noted that Bradt’s have produced a new guide to the Chilterns.
3. There will be a sculpture show at Grays Court (National Trust) in June.

**Next meeting: Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 10.00 am at the offices of the Board in Chinnor.**

The Chairman.....

Date.....

**Item 7****Finance Report**

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Author:</b>            | Graham Hurst, Finance Officer  |
| <b>Summary:</b>           | The accounts for the four months to July 2019 show an excess of expenditure of £1,367 which is less than budgeted. |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | To advise members of the Board's financial position at July 2019.  |

**Background**

1. The CCB had an excess of expenditure over income amounting to £1,367.
2. The deficit is less than we would have expected for the first 4 months:
3. Core income has been more than expected partly because we took a cautious view on Local authority contributions when setting our budget. Externally generated income such as fees and interest have been higher than expected
4. Core expenditure is less than budget which largely arises because of timing of expenditure. Overall expenditure is currently forecast to be on budget for the year.
5. Project Income and expenditure is irregular regarding certainty and timing. Where a project is forecast to take more than one year to complete, income and expenditure is spread over that period rather than accounted for as actually received and spent. It should be noted that although funding for the GWR (National Rail) project was received in advance, this project is still at an early stage as regards planning.
6. Overall the CCB finances are within expectations.

**Recommendation**

1. To note the CCB financial results for the four month period to July 2019.

| Finance Report Year to 31 March 2019      | Annual Budget 2019/20 | 4 months Budget | 4 Months to July 2019 |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
|   | £                     | £               | £                     |
| <b>Income</b>                             |                       |                 |                       |
| <b>Public Sector</b>                      |                       |                 |                       |
| Defra                                     | 442015                | 147338          | 147338                |
| Local Authorities                         | 100000                | 33333           | 44093                 |
|   | 542015                | 180672          | 191432                |
| <b>External income</b>                    | 23500                 | 7833            | 9927                  |
| <b>Core Income</b>                        | <b>565515</b>         | <b>188505</b>   | <b>201359</b>         |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                        |                       |                 |                       |
| Employment                                | 390960                | 130320          | 140998                |
| Members' Allowances                       | 12100                 | 4033            | 3622                  |
| Premises                                  | 35000                 | 11667           | 11302                 |
| Office Costs                              | 13000                 | 4333            | 6893                  |
| IT  | 13500                 | 4500            | 5234                  |
| Finance                                   | 13000                 | 4333            | 2613                  |
| Engagement                                | 5000                  | 1667            | 0                     |
| Management Plan review                    | 0                     | 0               | 0                     |
| Special Projects                          | 5000                  | 1667            | 0                     |
| Planning Consultancy                      | 9600                  | 3200            | 3000                  |
| Monitoring and Evidence                   | 2000                  | 3333            | 0                     |
| Outstanding Chilterns mag.                | 7000                  | 2333            | 2019                  |
| Website                                   | 5000                  | 1667            | 0                     |
| Insurance                                 | 4000                  | 1917            | 423                   |
| Travel                                    | 4000                  | 1167            | 1393                  |
| Personnel                                 | 3500                  | 1175            | 720                   |
| National AONB                             | 3000                  | 1000            | 0                     |
| Other costs centres < £3000 budget        | 24399                 | 5041            | 7368                  |
| <b>Core Expenditure</b>                   | <b>550059</b>         | <b>183353</b>   | <b>185585</b>         |
| <b>Core Net income / (expenditure)</b>    | <b>15456</b>          | <b>5152</b>     | <b>15774</b>          |
| <b>Major Projects</b>                     |                       |                 |                       |
| <b>Chalk Streams</b>                      |                       |                 |                       |
| Income                                    | 55000                 | 18333           | 13646                 |
| Expenditure                               | 70857                 | 23619           | 17634                 |
| Net                                       | -15857                | -5286           | -3988                 |
| <b>Chilterns Woodlands contribution</b>   | -5000                 | -1667           | -5000                 |
| <b>Hillforts Delivery</b>                 |                       |                 |                       |
| Income                                    | 276500                | 92167           | 35063                 |
| Expenditure                               | 282656                | 94219           | 42841                 |
| Net                                       | -6156                 | -2052           | -7777                 |
| <b>Landscape Partnership Development</b>  |                       |                 |                       |
| Income                                    | 423450                | 141150          | 34493                 |
| Expenditure                               | 425950                | 141983          | 32741                 |
| Net                                       | -2500                 | -833            | 1752                  |
| <b>HS2</b>                                |                       |                 |                       |
| Income                                    | 5000                  | 1667            | 11877                 |
| Expenditure                               | 5000                  | 1667            | 11877                 |
| Net                                       | 0                     | 0               | 0                     |
| <b>Chiltern Walking / Food Festival</b>   |                       |                 |                       |
| Income                                    | 11665                 | 3888            | 3425                  |
| Expenditure                               | 11665                 | 3888            | 5000                  |
| Net                                       | 0                     | 0               | -1575                 |
| <b>North Chilterns</b>                    |                       |                 |                       |
| Income                                    | 0                     | 0               | 0                     |
| Expenditure                               | 3000                  | 1000            | 289                   |
| Net                                       | -3000                 | -1000           | -289                  |
| <b>National Rail</b>                      |                       |                 |                       |
| Income                                    | 750000                | 250000          | 0                     |
| Expenditure                               | 750000                | 250000          | 263                   |
| Net                                       | 0                     | 0               | -263                  |
| <b>Project Net income / (expenditure)</b> | <b>-32513</b>         | <b>-9838</b>    | <b>-16588</b>         |
| <b>Total Net Income (Expenditure)</b>     | <b>-17057</b>         | <b>-4686</b>    | <b>-814</b>           |
| <b>Grand total income</b>                 | 2087130               | 445710          | 299863                |
| <b>Grand total expenditure</b>            | 2104187               | 451396          | 301231                |
| <b>Grand total net</b>                    | <b>-17057</b>         | <b>-5686</b>    | <b>-1367</b>          |

**Item 8** **Treasury Management Review**

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Author:</b>            | Graham Hurst, Finance Officer  |
| <b>Summary:</b>           | The annual review of the Treasury Management strategy.                           |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | To advise members of the review of the Treasury Management Strategy for 2019-20. |

**Background**

1. It is deemed good practice to annually review Treasury management strategy. The Board previously reviewed this matter in September 2018.
2. The Board's current strategy is to invest surplus funds in deposit accounts of major banking institutions where the risk of losing capital is minimal. The alternative would be to invest directly or indirectly in investment products which may offer a higher interest rate, but the value of the capital invested is also subject to the fluctuations of the market. The Board does not at present deposit money with "secondary" banks.
3. Deposit account rates continue to be low, typically under 1%
4. The CCB currently has over £4m on deposit of which £3.75m is funding received in advance of the GWR project.
5. Deposits are currently held by 2 of the major banks and a major building society.

**Recommendation**

- 1. The CCB continue to maximise interest received from deposit accounts where the risk of losing capital is reduced**



**Item 9**

**Banking arrangements**

**Author:**

Graham Hurst, Finance Officer

**Summary:**

To update banking mandates to include the new CEO.

**Purpose of Report:**

To approve new banking mandates

**Background**

1. Following the departure of Sue Holden and appointment of Dr Elaine King it is necessary to document the changes required to our current bank mandates.

**Recommendation**

1. To authorise Graham Hurst to add Dr Elaine King to the CCB banking mandates and remove Sue Holden

**Item 10** **HR Advisory Group****Author:** Ray Payne, Vice Chairman**Summary:** To propose objectives, outputs currently anticipated, and the membership framework of the HR Advisory Group.

1. The objectives of the HR Advisory Group are described in paragraph 67 of the Conservation Board's Statutory Requirements and Code of Governance (First Edition June 2017, Second Edition June 2019 Version V3A) in the following way:

*The HR Advisory Group shall:*

- a) *Comprise five members including the Deputy Chairman and one member of the Executive Committee and at least two co-opted members all chosen by the Chairman of the Executive Committee in consultation with the chief executive officer;*
- b) *Review all HR arrangements as necessary including the HR Policies, Procedures and Staff Handbook;*
- c) *Provide the Chairman with advice on performance appraisals;*
- d) *Provide the Chairman with advice on remuneration;*
- e) *Provide advice to the Appeals Sub Committee as requested;*
- f) *Conduct a regular confidential staff survey; and*
- g) *Report directly to the Chairman*

2. The HR Advisory Group is a deliberative and advisory group. It does not have any decision-making functions and it will be chaired by the Deputy Chairman and will include the Chief Executive Officer. The two or more co-opted members, unlike the five members, will be treated as non-voting members as defined in paragraphs 27 and 28 of the Code of Governance.

3. The review referred to in sub paragraph (b) of paragraph 2 will include, but not be limited to, the following polices, some of which are in place and will be subject to review and some are yet to be developed:

- Bereavement in the workplace;
- E-mail and internet use;
- Employment health;
- Incentive pay;
- Mental health;
- Remote working;
- Stress management;

- Succession Planning;
  - Sickness and SSP;
  - Wellbeing of the staff;
  - Working from home; and
  - Zero Hours contracts;
4. The advice referred to in sub paragraph (e) of paragraph 2 will include, but not be limited to, the following legal obligations, some of which are in place and will be subject to review and some are yet to be considered, and those referred to in sub paragraph (b):
- Discipline and grievance issues;
  - Discrimination;
  - Employment contracts: full time;
  - Equality and diversity;
  - Employment law: basic;
  - Flexible working;
  - Minimum wage and statutory pay;
  - Pensions;
  - Redundancy;
  - Working parents and carers; and
  - Working time;
5. The reports to the Chairman referred to in sub paragraph (g) of paragraph 2 will include any or all of the matters referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4 together with the following and any related and relevant matters:
- De facto, shadow and other types of director and their duties; and
  - Directors and managers: differences

### **Recommendation**

- 1. To establish an HR Advisory Group for the CCB.**

**Item 12****Farm Clusters**

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Author:</b>            | Graham Hurst, Finance Officer   |
| <b>Summary:</b>           | Enable the CCB to facilitate local farm clusters  |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b> | To enable to CCB to facilitate and administer the activities of two local farm clusters |

**Background**

1. The Countryside Stewardship facilitation fund supports people and organisations that bring farmers, foresters and other land managers together to improve the local natural environment at a landscape scale.
2. Funding is awarded to successful applications through a competitive process. Priority is given to approaches which show partnership and a collective approach across holdings
3. Neighbouring AONBs have entered into arrangements to assist and facilitate local farm clusters.
4. The Chilterns have two embryonic farm clusters and the CCB is well placed to assist them
5. The assistance is not expected to be onerous and will be set out in an agreement
6. It is envisaged that the CCB will manage a separate bank account designated for the purposes of the farm clusters so that all transactions are transparent.
7. For more information see: <https://www.farmerclusters.com/>

**Recommendation**

1. **To approve the CCB entering into an agreement to facilitate local farm clusters and to undertake the relevant administration.**