



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the Chilterns Conservation Board HELD ON Tuesday 3rd May 2022 at Chinnor Village Centre, High Street, Chinnor OX39 4DH commencing at 10.05 am

Present:

Cllr Charles Hussey	Board Member
Cllr Lynn Lloyd	Board Member
Paul Mains	Board Member-Chair
John Nicholls	Board Member- Deputy Chair

In attendance:

Cllr John Griffin	Board Member attended remotely
Deirdre Hansen	Clerk to the Board
Graham Hurst	Finance Officer
Elaine King	Chief Executive Officer

21/22.30 Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from the following Board members: Alison Doggett, Cllr Richard Newcombe, Cllr Sir Hector Sants and John Shaw.

21/22.31 Declarations of interest

None.

21/22.32 Notice of Urgent Business

None.

21/22.33 Chair's update

1. The Secretary of State has appointed Joseph Stewart to replace Alison Doggett, whose appointment end 30 June 2022. He takes up his post on 1 July 2022 for three years with renewal possible.
2. The Chair's, the Deputy Chair, and CEO planned meeting with the CEO of the Cotswolds AONB has been postponed due to Covid.
3. A filing sharing system for the Board has not been completed but is being worked on.
4. The Chair is continuing supporting Local Authorities with the request to allow resumption of hybrid meetings.
5. The Senior Administration Officer and the HR advisor are working on policies and procedures.

6. The Finance Officer was asked to let the Committee know when the money donated by a former volunteer is allocated.
7. The Chair is assisting with the Mend the Gap Programme.
8. The Chair had attended a reception for the Chilterns Landscapes Art Exhibition organised by Chalk Cherries and Chairs hosted by the Wycombe Museum. The exhibition had been a great success, with very diverse attendance, a job well done. He was advised that a Lace-making Taster Day was coming up next.
9. He takes part in meetings of Natural England's management advisory group for the Boundary Extension every two weeks, along with CCB staff.
10. He meets with Geeta Ludhra on EDI.

21/22.34 Review notes of previous briefing (01/02/22)

The minutes of the meeting of 2nd November 2021 had been reviewed at the briefing 01/02/22 and were approved as a true record following the correction of a typing error.

The notes of the briefing 01/02/22 were reviewed, approved as a true record, and signed by the Chair.

21/22.35 Matters arising

All covered in the agenda.

21/22.36 Chief Executive's update

1. The CEO reported that the CCB had submitted its response on the Glover Review. The response had required an enormous input from staff, Board members in particular the Planner.
2. The CEO and Chair had met with the Chairs and Policy leads from Natural England, Historic England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and Chiltern Rangers on 20th April. The CEO and the Hillforts Project Manager had given a presentation and our Board member and MD Chiltern Rangers, John Shaw, had driven the group around the various Chilterns projects. Our guests were amazed, impressed, and had enjoyed the day. It has done wonders for the profile of the CCB.
3. She meets regularly with Martin Tett, Leader Buckinghamshire Council.
4. She is aware that she needs to improve her contacts with more Leaders and CEOs of the other Local Authorities in the Chilterns. She will pick up on conversations with SODC and thanked Cllr Lynn Lloyd for her introductions.
5. The admin team is consolidating and working well.
6. The new website launch is planned for late summer. The CEO confirmed that the Board will be invited to road test it before the launch.
7. The Business Plan has been signed off and the accompanying Delivery Plan is nearly finished.

Committee members questioned the CEO on the benefits of using external consultants as was done when forming the Business Plan. She explained that the use of an external consultant had benefitted the process and also helped develop the senior management team and provided opportunities to get everyone involved. Approval of financing goes through the normal process and is approved by the Finance Officer.

21/22.37 Natural England Designations Programme

The CEO gave a slide presentation on the opportunities and challenges facing the CCB, especially its projects. She also set out proposed changes to its operations.

Some of our current projects:

The Committee discussed the issues and possible outcomes. There are always implications around funding, continuity, legacy, and capacity. The Committee agreed the CCB lacks resources to deliver its work.

The Chair found the conversation helpful, summarised the discussion and thanked members for their contributions. The Committee supported the CEO in her approach and agreed that some external assistance would benefit the organisation.

The Chair thanked the CEO for all her hard work.

1. The Committee NOTED the presentation.

21/22.38 Finance Report and Budget Update

The Finance Officer reported on the Core and Project activities for the year ending 31 March 2022.

1. Core income for the year was £636,670, higher than expected.
 - a. It included an additional grant from Defra of £35,992
 - b. Recharges to three programmes resulted in higher-than-expected revenue.
 - c. And the previously reported legacy payment from a former volunteer £64,504, is now transferred to a specific reserve in memory of that volunteer.
2. Core expenditure for the year was £601,874 higher than budgeted.
 - a. Some cost saving resulting from staff working from home due to covid restrictions and landlord repairs.
 - b. Salary costs higher than budgeted because of timing of recruitment.
 - c. Management consultancy costs of £14,668, although authorised had not been budgeted for.
3. Project income received for the year was £1,084,703 and is lower than expected due to timing.
4. Project expenditure was £1,062,925. Again, timing plays a part in shortfalls and surpluses.

The figures presented are subject to adjustment once the year end reconciliations have been completed.

The Finance Officer and the CEO were thanked for their hard work.

1. The Committee NOTED the CCB financial position at 31 March 2022.

21/22.39 Governance Review

The Deputy Chair reported that the T&F group had met 28 April 2022 to explore in principle the decisions made by the Board at its March meeting. The area discuss were:

- a. The Board and an Advisory Group structure, how to make it large enough to be inclusive, but small enough to be effective. A suggestion was wide as like a conference with topic groups. It was agreed to put discussion on hold until we know what Defra wants from us.
- b. There was consensus that the Executive Committee should retain its name.
- c. Decisions on projects as set out in the Business Plan.
- d. Planning Committee: the present definition of its functions is too narrow, and delegation is not clear. The setting up of an online system has highlighted a lack of inhouse technical capacity. Once up and running it will need bedding in. Terms of Reference in due course will be defined.

e. All to be reported to the Board at the June meeting.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the update.**

21/22.40 EDI.

The Chair informed the Committee that the EDI group is meeting next week.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the upcoming meeting.**

21/22.41 Mend the Gap

No updates to report.

21/22.42 Policies and Procedures

The CEO reported this is being worked on.

21/22.43 Committee Membership

The Chair informed the Committee that the HR Advisory Group will reconvene and will consist of the Chair, Deputy Chair, an Executive Committee Member (at present Cllr Lynn Lloyd), the CEO and the HR Advisor, Carol Hatcliff.

The Group have agreed to convene on Zoom on 4 May, the Clerk to set up the meeting and send out the invitations.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the reconvening of the HR Advisory Group.**
- 2. The Committee NOTED that the clerk will arrange the meeting of the HR Advisory group 4 May 2022.**

21/22.44 June Board meeting and AGM.

The Chair informed the Committee that the next board meeting and AGM will be held 14 June 2022 at Berkhamsted Golf Club.

21/22.45 Any Urgent Business

None.

Next meeting: 19th July 2022. Location TBC

The Chairman.....

Date.....

Following the meetings there was a presentation by Dr Wendy Morrison and Allen Beechey of the CCB on the project proposal *Not Bourne Yesterday*. The NLHF has approved an Expression of Interest and a project application for development phase funding will be submitted at the end of May.