



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23rd MAY 2012 at THE LODGE, 90 STATION ROAD, CHINNOR OXON. OX39 4HA COMMENCING AT 10.30 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.40PM

Present:

Mike Fox	Board member, Chairman of the meeting
Cllr Bill Storey	Board Member
Cllr Shirley Judges	Board member
Cllr Marion Mustoe	Board member
Ray Payne	Board member
Cllr Jeremy Ryman	Board member
Steve Rodrick	CCB Chief Officer
Chris Smith	CCB Finance Officer

In attendance	
Deirdre Hansen	Clerk to the Board

The Chief Officer explained that Mike woods had retired from his position since the last Executive Meeting. The Chief Officer thanked Mike for his many years of dedicated and valuable service to the Chiltern Conservation Board. His absence was noted and his service was much appreciated.

12/13 -1 Item 1- Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from: Cllr Alan Walters, Cllr John Griffin and Cllr Richard Pushman,

12/13-2. Item 2- Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made.

12/13-3. Item 3- Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman after the following amendments: item 56-15 insertion of "launch" after Ancient Woodland Survey page 22; item 57-16 urgent business changed to "other " business and item 58 deletion of Thursday 24th May 2012 and changed date of Wednesday 19th September to Thursday 20th September.

12/13-4. Item 4- Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting 2nd March 2012:

There were no matters arising.

12/13-5. Item 5- Public Question time

No members of the public were present.

12/13-6. Item 6- Finance Report provisional outturn 2011-12:

The Finance Officer advised members of the Board's likely financial position at the end of the financial year 2011-12. Subject to any final adjustments core expenditure for the year 2011-12 totalled £565,979, £5,501 below the original estimate for the year. Core income was £ 26,429 above the original estimate of £607,724. As a result some changes will be made to restricted and earmarked reserves. The members received detailed explanations of the presented financial figures for the year. The formal accounts will be prepared and presented to the Board in June, and will be subject to audit by the Audit Commission.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the financial outcome and that the formal accounts will be presented to the Board in June.**

12/13-7. Item 7- Internal Auditor's Report:

The Finance Officer presented the findings from the internal auditors, the Hertfordshire Shared Internal Audit Service. The Auditor had conducted a high level review of important and current risks and concluded that an overall Full Assurance on effective management can be provided. No recommendations were found to be necessary. Members had been provided with a copy of the report.

- 1. The Committee NOTED and AGREED the report of the internal auditors.**

12/13-8. Item 8- Medium Term Financial Plan 2012-2015:

The Chief Officer and the Finance Officer outlined the revised medium term plan for the period 2012-2015 as adopted at the last meeting, following the provisional results for 2011-12. The Finance Officer went through the figures and explained the aim to balance the books by 2014-15.

The revised medium term plan had been updated to reflect the provisional results for 2011-12.

- 1. The Committee APPROVED the updated Medium Term Financial Plan for 2012-2015.**

12/13-9. Item 9- HR Report: item moved lower down the agenda.

12/13-10. Item 10- Report on HS2:

The Chief Officer brought the Committee up to date on the current and anticipated activities related to HS2. The main issues are the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment; the HS2 community forum meetings; the development of a mitigation programme and position statement; and the legal challenges. Currently no unplanned expenditure is envisaged.

Summary of current activities:

1. Legal challenges: at least five applications for a judicial review have been made.
2. A formal complaint has been submitted to the EC by the Berks, Bucks and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust on the grounds of non-compliance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) regulations.
3. Consultation on the Scoping report on the draft Environmental Impact Assessment
4. Community Forum Meetings
5. The Business Case for HS2
6. Mitigation.

The Chief Officer presented the Draft Position Statement on Mitigation to the Committee. The Board does not accept the case for HS2 as currently presented. It does not believe that an adequate economic, social or environmental case has been presented to justify the economic and environmental costs. The Board's preferred mitigation option, so called Plan B, is a fully twin bored tunnel from east of the M25 to north of Wendover with no permanent surface access other than via ventilation shafts and no significant disposal of spoil or change to natural topography. In doing so the visible and audible disturbance during and after construction must be minimised. The statement on mitigation was discussed. Ray Payne will assist the Chief Officer in finalising the statement.

The Chief Officer thanked Ray Payne on his input to the statement.

1. **The Committee AGREED that the Board should continue to attend local community forum meetings.**
2. **The Committee AGREED that the Board should accept the invitation to participate in the Planning Forum**
3. **The Committee AGREED that the Board should seek a close working relationship with those bodies represented on the national environmental Forum, if full membership is not offered.**
4. **The Committee ENDORSED the draft Position Statement on Mitigation subject to the agreed amendments.**

The meeting went back to the HR report on Policies and Procedures.

12/13-9. Item 9- Report on HR Policies and Procedures:

n.b. Sally Charman was not in attendance to present her report as she had, inadvertently, not been advised of the change of date of the meeting.

The Chief Officer advised the Committee of the position relating to HR policies and procedures. He provided the Committee with details of changes made to HR documentation as a consequence of legislative changes; future areas which are to be actively monitored to ensure compliance and key staff performance indicators for the year 2011-12.

At least twice a year the Board's Chief Officer and the HR advisor review the Board's employment policies and procedures, in the light of legislative changes and in order to apply good practice so that the CCB remains a responsible and supportive employer. The new employer duties under the Pensions Auto enrolment are being implemented on a staged basis. The staging date is scheduled for between 1 June 2015 and 1 April 2017.

1. **The Committee NOTED that the Board's HR policies and procedures had been reviewed during the year and the necessary amendments made.**
2. **The Committee NOTED that the CCB always aims to show that its decisions are being made in a fair, transparent and accountable way, and when introducing a new policy or practice, the equality impact will be part of the planning from the outset.**
3. **The Committee NOTED that the requirements under the Pensions auto enrolment are monitored and when appropriate any necessary changes will be presented to the Executive Committee for approval.**
4. **The Committee NOTED the exceptionally low level of absences.**

12/13-11. Item 11- AONB Management Plan Review 2014-2019:

The Chief Officer reported that the Board has a statutory duty to publish and review the management plan for the AONB on a five year cycle. The current plan runs until 2013 and a new plan should be in place early 2014. It is estimated that the total cost will be up to £12,000 which should be met from the Development Reserve rather than from the operating, core budget. The Chief Officer outlined the programme for reviewing the AONB Management Plan.

1. **The Committee APPROVED the proposed approach to reviewing the AONB management plan and the programme for its publication.**
2. **The Committee APPROVED expenditure of up to £ 12,000 to be met from the Development Reserve.**

12/13-12. Item 12- Report on Traditional Farmsteads Project

The Chief Officer advised the Committee about the resource commitment and the timetable involved in submitting and managing an HLF project to survey Chilterns Traditional Farmsteads, the report had been circulated. The Board has already authorised a bid to the HLF to seek £75,000 funding for the recruitment and employment of a part-time project officer. There would be a Board commitment of officer and member time and up to £5,000 p.a. from the Development Reserve. The project should be delivered within three years of its start.

The project will help deliver several policies and strategic actions identified in the AONB Management Plan in particular those associated with the Historic Environment, Planning and Development.

The main outputs of this project will be:

1. A database on traditional farm buildings
2. Published guidance on sensitive conservation and conversion
3. Trained volunteers

4. A training programme for planners, architects and developers

The project will be managed on a day to day basis by the Planning Officer and overseen by a steering group comprising two members of the Board, local authority conservation officers, the Chiltern Society with support from English Heritage.

1. **The Committee APPROVED the Board's resource commitment and timetable as detailed in the report.**

12/13-13. Item 13- Proposed new publications- People and Places:

The Chief Officer informed the Committee that the HLF funded People and Places of the Chiltern Hills project had created a large number of profiles of famous people which would make an attractive publication to be sold to the public. The production of a booklet would require an investment of up to £5,000 from the Development Reserve. It would generate an anticipated net income over the next five years of at least £15,000.

1. **The Committee APPROVED the Board's resource commitment to the publication as detailed in the report submitted.**

12/13-14. Item 14- Any other business:

The Chief Officer advised the Committee of

1. The future opportunities arising from the possible transfer of responsibility of National Trails to other bodies.
2. The Defra consultation document on Rights of Way
3. The opportunities that may arise from the future of Forestry Commission sites following the publication of the report to Government now anticipated in late summer.

12/13-15. Future meeting dates: Thursday 20th September 2012 (note change of date) and Wednesday 12th December 2012 at 10.30am at the offices in Chinnor.

The meeting closed at 12.40pm

The Chairman..... Dates.....