

**MINUTES OF THE BEADNELL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING WITH
NORTHUMBERLAND AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY
held on Wednesday 18TH October 2023 at 6.00pm in Beadnell W.I. Hall**

Present: Chair- G Martindale, Vice-Chair J Hall
Parish Councillors: A Baker & J Darcy
I Robson – AONB Manager
Clerk: I Hunter
5 Members of the public

Apologies for Absence: Parish Councillors C Williamson & A Nation

Declaration of Interest: None

Request for Dispensation- None

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty- The Chair welcomed I Robson AONB Manager to the meeting.

I Robson provided the following updates/information:

- The AONB team has 7 members of staff, including an apprentice. The core staff is 3.5 full time equivalent. Also, we are currently advertising for a part time post which will be for 14 months to work on the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme.
- He explained 'Coastlands' project, a landscape-scale nature recovery, historic environment and engagement grant application to National Heritage Lottery Funding, which had been unsuccessful, in which the team had invested about £40K in preparation work on the grant application. However, the team are hoping to have a meeting with the National Heritage Lottery grant officers to try to understand why the application was not successful especially as National Heritage Lottery Fund encouraged the AONB Partnership to resubmit their application. If the grant funding application had been successful it would have created an additional 5 posts.
- **Highway Design Guide** – Is on the website, and includes signage clutter etc, however we still need to make some changes to the street lighting & kerbing sections.
We are currently providing training for Northumberland County Council Highway's Officers, and the training will be rolled out to Parish Councillors hopefully before Christmas.
We would like to work with Parish Councils on clutter audits, which will include providing advice and a checklist. It is also, hoped to access some Local Transport Plan funding for this work.
- **Visitor Travel Strategy-** There was an influx of tourists to the coastal area 2020 onwards. This led to a car parking strategy which became a wider visitor travel strategy and is now on the AONB website, which needs to be implemented. The aim is to reduce the number of visits via car and encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking.
- **England Coastal Path-** This was opened in August 2023; the Northumberland section can be promoted as a 7-day trip. A path partnership including Northumberland County Council, AONB team & Natural England will be setup to manage and maintain the footpath, and funding will be allocated to undertake maintenance works.
- **Farming in Protected Landscapes programme-** The programme runs until 2025, we are awaiting information on what happens after 2025. There is still funding available if people have suggestions for projects to improve access for people of all abilities.

One of the projects was where AONB have worked with organisations to provide access to Beadnell beach for wheelchair users, as well as upgrading the part of the toilet block to provide storage for the kit. Also, 2 benches have been installed near the toilet block area for people to use whilst waiting for the kit to become available.

Another project was footpath improvements at Newton-by-the-Sea.

- **Defra-** We were advised there was funding available for projects this financial year and a £40K application was submitted. This will provide a new footpath at Warkwork, provide BANE kit at Bamburgh and at Newton-by-the-Sea.
- **Levelling Up Bill-** The House of Lords have stated that the powers of AONB's should be strengthened, and this will be included in the Royal Assent which will take place in November. This means the wording will change from "due regard of AONB" to "duty of regard of AONB." This will strengthen AONB Management Plans, the framework is to be amended so there will be a greater onerous on Parish Councils and other Authorities to have regard to AONB Management Plans.

The AONB Management Plan will be reviewed and published in October 2025, the review will commence once the outcomes framework & new guidance which will be included within the Levelling Up Bill is issued. An officers steering group will be setup to undertake the review, there will be engagement & consultation on the review. One of the purposes of the new Management Plan will be to conserve and enhance AONB areas, linking to the Environment Act.

Questions & Answers:

- 1- Street Lighting in The Kilns development- I Robson replied that it was his understanding that this had been dealt with, there are to be no street lights on the approach to the estate.
- 2- The Glover report- I Robson replied that the Government had replied in part with a 22-question questionnaire last year. The replies to the 22 questions are due imminently, and I think that will be the level of response we receive to the Glover report.
- 3- The completion of the undergrounding of the power cables on Harbour Road. I Robson replied that an AONB Officer is attending a meeting in York shortly and this will be raised at that meeting.
- 4- Signage clutter, the number of advertising A-boards at the Bullring this summer. I Robson agreed to investigate this, in relation to the Highway Design Guide.
- 5- The width of the road at The Wynding Bamburgh. I Robson replied this area continues to move; therefore, it would be difficult to improve the area.
- 6- Winter opening of Beadell public toilets compared with the winter opening of public toilets in neighbouring parishes. I Robson replied he thought it was an anomaly that other public toilets were open during the winter and Beadnell's were closed. He stated that the Parish Council would need to raise the issue with Northumberland County Council, however, he was sure that AONB Partnership would be supportive of the winter opening of Beadnell public toilets.
- 7- Swinhoe crossroads- have AONB been consulted on the proposed changes to the crossroads. I Robson replied no AONB had not been consulted.
- 8- Swinhoe Road- The passing bays installed as part of The Kiln development- I Robson replied that this is an example of not good practice.
- 9- Extending the speed limit on Swinhoe Road west to B1340. I Robson replied it would need to meet the criteria.

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10- EV chargers being provided for customers by Holiday Lets and potential actions to prevent lights in businesses and Holiday Lets being left on 24/7. I Robson replied he would investigate this.

The date of the next meeting 22nd November 2023 at 6pm

Chair_____Date_____