

Date: 19th June 2019

Report: Recruitment of Independent Chair

Written by: Lisa Creaye-Griffin, Group Manager, Countryside, Surrey County Council, and Rod Shaw, Chairman of Officers Working Group, and Mole Valley District Council

Purpose of Report

To propose the option of recruiting an independent Chair for the Surrey Hills AONB Board

Summary

Following the May elections, there has been a change in all 5 of the borough and district Member representatives on the Surrey Hills AONB Board. This has included the loss of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman who were elected at the AONB Board's AGM on 12th September 2018.

In order to ensure a level of continuity in the future, officers propose that the AONB Board now seeks an Independent Chair. It is proposed that this is for a period of three years. The appointment of an independent (non-political) Chair is common amongst other AONB partnerships and National Park Authorities. It is allowed within the terms of the existing Constitution and the Chair's role (Appendix 1) was agreed at the AONB Board on 12th October 2016.

It is proposed that a Panel is established to review and interview, as necessary, the candidates and to make a recommendation to the AONB Board's AGM in September. The AONB Board should be comprised of the SCC Member (as the accountable body for the Joint Committee), a borough and district member, and a representative of the Surrey Hills family (Surrey Hills Enterprises, Trust Fund and Society). Officers will prepare the terms of reference for the panel, the materials for prospective candidates, the criteria against which to assess candidates, the questions that would be put to candidates and the mechanism for agreeing the candidate to be recommended to the Board. The proposed timetable is:

Wednesday 19 th June	Agree recruitment of Independent Chairman, Timetable, Questions and Panel
Wednesday 25 th June	Advert with the agreed job pack to be promoted through partnership.
Friday 23 rd August	Closing date for applications 12 noon.
Tuesday 27 th August	Panel interviews and recommendation(s) to AONB Board
Wednesday 4 th September	AONB Board elects Chair and Vice Chair at AGM
Wednesday 11 th September	Results announced by e-bulletin to the Partnership

Wednesday 27th November

Chair to launch AONB Management Plan (2020
– 2025) at Surrey Hills Symposium

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

Agree to confirm to seek the recruitment of an independent Chair

Agree the membership of the Panel

Background papers: Surrey Hills AONB Joint Committee Constitution

Attached: Appendix 1. Job Profile of the AONB Chair
Appendix 2. Draft questions for written submission

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Appendix 1

Chair of the Surrey Hills AONB Board

This is a voluntary role, but reasonable expenses will be claimable, based on Surrey County Council's rates of payment.

Main Purpose of Role

To provide leadership and strategic direction to the Surrey Hills AONB Board and the activities of the Surrey Hills Family.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

To chair meetings of the AONB Board and Statutory Members Group and to guide the AONB Director on the agenda and approach to meetings.

To provide advice and guidance to the AONB Director and staff team

To champion the interests of the Surrey Hills AONB and build support for the aims and priorities of the AONB Management Plan and for the work of the Surrey Hills AONB Family.

To foster supportive and inclusive partnerships in support of the work of the AONB, building mutually beneficial relationships with all interested bodies working in the countryside.

To ensure effective cooperation between the Surrey Hills AONB Board and the constituent members of the Surrey Hills Family.

To assist in maintaining an appropriate relationship with the host local authority, balancing the benefits of integration with the interests of all partners and with the need for the Board, the Family and the Partnership to maintain their autonomy.

To represent the AONB Board in a variety of networks (local, regional and national); to participate in activities of the National Association for AONBs, including the annual general meeting.

To take an active interest in the work of the AONB Board, including staff members and Working Groups.

To maintain an understanding of the issues facing the AONB and to undertake such training and seminars as may be necessary.

To fulfil these duties in a manner that is free from political bias and influence.

To encourage AONB Board Members to act in the interests of the Surrey Hills AONB

**CHAIR OF SURREY HILLS AONB BOARD
PERSON SPECIFICATION**

ATTRIBUTES	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Key skills	<p>Leadership.</p> <p>Encouraging involvement and active partnership.</p> <p>Ability to balance a wide range of interests</p> <p>Effective chairing of meetings.</p> <p>Presentational and hosting skills.</p> <p>Advocacy.</p> <p>Analytical skills and confidence in dealing with a wide remit.</p>	
Experience	<p>Experience of committees and Boards.</p> <p>Experience of working with the public, private and voluntary sectors.</p> <p>Experience of overseeing financial management.</p> <p>Experience within the Surrey Hills AONB Board.</p>	<p>Experience of funding programmes and grant aid schemes.</p> <p>Experience of planning policy and decision making.</p> <p>Experience of developing small organisations.</p> <p>Experience of other protected landscape areas.</p>
Knowledge and interests	<p>Good understanding of conservation and environmental issues.</p> <p>Interest in linking social, environmental and economic issues and opportunities facing rural communities, through sustainable development approaches.</p> <p>Knowledge of the Surrey Hills area and relevant contacts.</p> <p>Knowledge of policy, strategy, delivery structures and initiatives relevant to rural areas in England.</p>	<p>Specialist knowledge on topics related to the AONB's remit.</p> <p>Knowledge of and contacts within the regional structures.</p>

Appendix 2.

Draft questions for written submission

1. What attracted you to this position and is a commitment of 2 days per month (with scope for more) viable for you?
2. Looking ahead over the three years' time commitment, what would be the key achievements for the Surrey Hills AONB under your Chairmanship?
3. Sustainable farming and land management practices are critical to the management of the AONB landscape. How can you influence a future UK agricultural policy and arrangements that might benefit the Surrey Hills?
5. The Surrey Hills relies on effective partnership, particularly the collaboration between the AONB Board and the Surrey Hills Enterprises CIC, the Surrey Hills Society and the Surrey Hills Trust Fund, which is held within the Community Foundation for Surrey. How would you ensure greater collaboration to the benefit of the Surrey Hills and each member of the family?
6. Influencing individuals and organisations, including local authorities, to take account of the AONB is a key aspect of the role. Can you outline the important organisations, boards and individuals that you would engage as a priority in the first six months and how you would go about this?

Date: 19th June 2019

Report: Surrey Hills Partnership Annual Tour

Written by: Rob Fairbanks

Purpose of Report

To agree arrangements for Annual Partnership Tour on Friday 5th July

Summary

The Surrey Hills Board is constituted to arrange an annual site visit for the Surrey Hills Partnership as an opportunity for networking between Members, to experience new areas of the AONB and to discuss priority issues relating to the work programme of the Board. It is proposed to extend the invitation to relevant Working Group members, Trustees of the Society and Surrey Hills Enterprises Directors. Local parish councillors will also be encouraged to attend.

For 2019, it is proposed to visit 2 sites to look at issues related to heritage conservation, Surrey Hills Arts, rural traffic management, tourism, the future of food and farming; rural enterprise; recreation, access and tourism.

Outline itinerary

- 0930 Watts Gallery, Compton
Arrival, tea and coffee in the Kiln Room
- 1000 Welcome from Alistair Burtonshaw, Director of Watts Gallery

Introduction and update on AONBs and the work of the Surrey Hills, Rob Fairbanks
- 1100 Visit to:
- Down Lane to look at Highways works and partnership with Thames Water (and photocall)
 - Compton Cemetery Chapel, Grade 1 Listed building
 - Physical Energy sculpture site
- 1300 Lydling Farm

Sandwich lunch

Introduction to Lydling Farm, Angus Stovold, Chairman of Surrey County Agricultural Society
- 1400 Farm Walk
- 1500 Closing remarks and depart

Recommendations

Members are asked to agree the outline arrangements for the Partnership's annual site visit

Background papers:

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