

SURREY HILLS AONB BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4th DECEMBER 2019
AT WARREN FARM BARN**

CORE MEMBERS

*Cllr Susan Parker	Guildford Borough Council
*Cllr Hazel Watson	Mole Valley District Council
*Cllr Rosemary Absalom	Reigate & Banstead BC
*Cllr Mike Goodman	Surrey County Council
*Cllr Denise Turner-Stewart	Surrey County Council
*Cllr Geoffrey Duck	Tandridge District Council
*Cllr Ruth Reed	Waverley Borough Council
*Stephanie Fudge	National Trust
*Andrew Smith	Natural England

ADVISORY MEMBERS

Hugh Broom	National Farmers Union
*Kristina Kenworthy	CPRE
*Mike Waite	Surrey Wildlife Trust
Tim Bamford	CLA
*Liz Cutter	SSALC
*Gordon Jackson	Surrey Hills Society/Surrey Hills Trust Fund
*Wendy Varcoe	Surrey Hills Enterprises CIC

*Members present

IN ATTENDANCE

Rob Fairbanks	Surrey Hills AONB Office Director
Denise Furlonger	Surrey Hills AONB Office
Caroline Price	Surrey Hills AONB Office
Richard Parkinson	Surrey County Council
Ken Bare	Surrey Hills Society
Chris Howard	Surrey Hills Society
Clive Smith	Surrey Hills AONB Office
Ali Clarke	Surrey Hills Arts

Heather Kerswell

		ACTIONS
1	INTRODUCTIONS	

		Mike Goodman welcomed all to the meeting and round the table introductions were made.	
2		APOLOGIES	
		Sarah Jane Chimbwandira, Tim Bamford, Simon Whalley	
3		MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	
	3.1	The minutes of the last meeting held on 4 th September were agreed.	
4		MATTERS ARISING	
	4.1	Item 5.1 Clive Smith said that he is aware of the issue of additional traffic due to large developments outside of the AONB, but he relied on local authorities consulting him about the impacts.	
	4.2	Item 5.1 Gatwick Development Consent Order (DCO). Mike Goodman said that the Gatwick DCO will be out for consultation in 2020 and that it was important that the AONB Board made comment.	CS
5		APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT CHAIR	
	5.1	Mike Goodman stated that he would be stepping down from the AONB Board as his role was changing and that Denise Turner-Stewart would be the Surrey CC representative. He had enjoyed his time on the AONB Board and would always take an interest in the countryside. He explained that his last task was to oversee the appointment of the new Chair. Heather Kerswell left the room so that the Members could discuss the appointment. The Members agreed that they would like an open discussion rather than a secret ballot. That discussion followed and upon a show of hands, the Board agreed unanimously to appoint Heather Kerswell as the new Independent Chair on a three year term. Mike wished Heather all the best in the role and stood down.	
	5.2	Heather thanked Mike for all he had done for the Surrey Hills and said that she was honoured and excited to become the Chair. Over the coming months she wished to meet all Members of the Board individually. Her five priorities were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue the Glover Review with Rob Fairbanks • Look at the immediate funding for the AONB Unit • Apply pressure for movement on the Boundary Review • Understand the regional context and implications of the London National Park City • Deliver the Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan She said that she did not wish to tread on toes at local level but to provide strategic support.	
6		ARRANGEMENTS FOR VICE-CHAIRMAN	

	6.1	Rob Fairbanks said that at the last Board meeting it was agreed that the Statutory Members Group (SMG) would look at the arrangements for the Vice Chairman and were to come back with a recommendation. The recommendation was that the SMG Members would rotate in turn until the next AGM in September when a decision would be made on whether to continue to rotate or elect a Vice-Chairman for the following year. The Board was in agreement. As Guildford BC is the first authority in alphabetical order, Susan Parker will be the Vice Chair until the next meeting, followed by Hazel Watson, then Geoff Duck.	
7		RESPONSE TO GLOVER REVIEW	
	7.1	Rob Fairbanks provided the background and thanked all of the Members who attended the workshop on 24 th October that considered the findings of the Glover Review. The Members felt that the workshop had been really useful. Members discussed the report. Hazel Watson expressed concern about highlighting failures and the Board generally agreed that the response should be positive and aspirational. The Members agreed that the annex should just be used internally and removed from the response.	
	7.2	The Members agreed to delegate the Chair to write to the Secretary of State on behalf of the AONB Board.	HK/RF
8		SURREY HILLS AONB PLANNING REPORT	
	8.1	Clive Smith drew attention to items 1.1 to 1.10 of his planning report regarding opportunities for funding through developer contributions. Andrew Smith added that Natural England has a track record on Net Gain and he would like to be involved in working on the details. Gordon Jackson said the principle of using the Trust Fund as an investment vehicle made sense but there were a lot of issues and relationships that needed addressing, particularly with local authorities.	
	8.2	The Board agreed with the recommendation that this approach should be pursued in future local plan consultations.	CS
	8.3	Boundary Review. Clive said he was hopeful that we would hear something in the new year. Susan Parker asked if tweaks and changes could be made to the candidate areas as it was now 6 years since the process started. Andrew Smith considered that it should be common sense to allow amendments without delaying the process. He would take this point back to Natural England.	AS
	8.4	Heather thanked Clive for his work and the Members noted the report.	
9		SURREY HILLS ACTIVITY REPORTS	
	9.1	Surrey Hills Enterprises CIC In Simon Whalley's absence, Wendy Varcoe provided an update. Wendy highlighted that memberships were up to 124 and was steadily increasing at a rate that could sustainably support the Members. This uplift has resulted in a number of events on the Surrey Hills website provided by businesses which felt like they were an important part of providing the Surrey Hills experience.	

	<p>Wendy highlighted the upcoming events that were listed in the report and also how the recent visit by HRH The Duke of Wessex shone a light on Surrey Hills businesses.</p> <p>Heather thanked Simon and Wendy. The Board noted the report.</p>	
9.2	<p>Surrey Hills Society Gordon Jackson provided an update and highlighted the visit of HRH The Duke of Wessex to present the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service to the Society.</p> <p>Gordon reported that Tilda Street had been engaged to assist with the Society’s social media. Membership was static and the Society would like to recruit more, younger people but recognised that they only have a limited number of volunteers to organise events.</p> <p>Wendy Varcoe thanked the Society for including Surrey Hills Enterprises Members in visits as part of their walks and talks programme.</p> <p>Heather thanked Gordon for the update. The Board noted the report.</p>	
9.3	<p>Surrey Hills Trust Fund Gordon Jackson provided an update and said that they were looking for more advisers. If the Board can think of anyone suitable please let Gordon know.</p> <p>Gordon said that the main focus for the Trust Fund over the last quarter has been Into The Wild which researched the benefits of young people spending time in the countryside. This was profiled at the Symposium and the partners were working on a proposal for Lottery funding.</p> <p>Heather thanked Gordon for the update and the Board noted the report.</p>	ALL
9.4	<p>AONB Unit. Rob Fairbanks highlighted the successful Surrey Hills Symposium at the University of Surrey and thanked the AONB Team and all who were involved in making it happen.</p> <p>The Community Forum held at the Burford Bridge Hotel was very well attended and the feedback had been very positive. Chris Howard said she thought it had been brilliant and would like to see it happen again and be opened up to borough and district councillors too. Kristina Kenworthy requested that CPRE be more involved with it next time. The Environmental Design Guide was launched at the Forum and has been well received.</p> <p>Liz Cutter stated her frustration with getting de-clutter schemes signed off by Surrey Highways and highlighted the ongoing issue in implementing a white line scheme at Coldharbour. Denise Turner-Stewart said she would be happy to pick this up with Liz. Rob thanked Liz for all her hard work and perseverance with this.</p> <p>Rob Fairbanks announced a Defra award of £50k for a Test and Trial Pilot</p>	RF DTS/LC

		<p>Scheme for the new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS). It was planned that this will be link to the theme of nature recovery for the Surrey University Symposium in 2020.</p> <p>Rob offered particular thanks to Caroline Price for all her hard work on the Environmental Design Guide, The Management Plan, and the Surrey Hills Symposium. Caroline added that there will be a new Board website in the new year which will be more functional for Members.</p> <p>The Surrey Arts Symposium had been a great success and Ali Clarke had been successful with the funding for a new Inspiring Views artwork that will be created by Will Nash.</p> <p>Heather congratulated the AONB Team and the family for their achievements. The Board noted the report.</p>	
10		THE SURREY HILLS AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN 2020 - 2025	
	10.1	<p>Rob thanked everyone for taking part in the photo shoot to launch the Management Plan. It had now been formally adopted by all of the core funding local authorities and copies would be sent to officers and Members. Parish councils will also receive copies of the Executive Summary.</p> <p>Susan Parker asked for soft copies to be sent to all planning committees and Kristina Kenworthy asked that a PDF copy is also available. Rob Fairbanks confirmed that the PDF would be accessed on the Surrey Hills website.</p>	
11		ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	11.1	Liz Cutter suggested asking John Evans to provide a presentation on Dark Skies at the next Board meeting. The Board agreed.	RF
	11.2	Susan Parker raised concerns of public opinion of oil drilling in the Surrey Hills and said we should have a negative position on it. Some members queried whether the AONB Board should consider the impacts of specific proposal rather than have a hypothetical position. Clive Smith added that it was important to judge each case on its own merit and assess each proposal against policies in the Management Plan.	
12		DATES FOR 2020 MEETINGS	
		<p>Rob Fairbanks suggested that it could be interesting for the Partnership Tour to be a visit to the Knepp Castle Estate near Horsham, which had established a wilding programme. It was agreed that Rob should investigate with Knepp Castle Estate.</p> <p>Agreed dates for 2020</p> <p>13:30 Wednesday 4th March - Surrey Hills Board 13:30 Wednesday 17th June - Surrey Hills Board Time t.b.c. Friday 3rd July - Partnership Tour 13:30 Wednesday 2nd September - Surrey Hills Board AGM & Meeting 13:30 Wednesday 2nd December - Surrey Hills Board</p>	RF

The above minutes are a true record of the Surrey Hills Board meeting held on Wednesday 4th December 2019.

Signature of Chairman

Date