



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the Chilterns Conservation Board
HELD ON Tuesday 9th May 2023 at CCB offices, The Lodge, 90 Station Road, Chinnor OX39
4HA commencing at 10.00 AM.**

Present:

Cllr John Griffin	Board Member
Cllr Charles Hussey	Board Member
Cllr Lynn Lloyd	Board Member
Paul Mainds	Board Member-Chair
Cllr Richard Newcombe	Board Member
John Nicholls	Board Member- Deputy Chair
Cllr Sue Rowland	Board Member
Cllr Sir Hector Sants	Board Member

In attendance:

Andy Brock-Doyle	Head of Operations
Deirdre Hansen	Clerk to the Board
Graham Hurst	Finance Officer
<i>Matt Thomson</i>	<i>Head of Strategy & Planning observed the meeting online</i>
Elaine King	Chief Executive Officer
Eloise Small	Administration Assistant
Annette Weiss	Head of Engagement & Partnerships

*Representing Marlow
Film Studios*

Robert Harrison	Planning consultant Arrow Planning
Robert Laycock	CEO of the project
Penelope Tollitt	Planning Advisor

22/23 33. Apologies for absence.

No apologies received from board members.

22/23.34. Declarations of interest

Cllr Richard Newcombe made a declaration of interest as follows:

"I a member of the Buckinghamshire Council Strategic Sites Committee which is likely to be the planning committee which considers the Marlow Film Studios planning application which is on the agenda of the Executive today. It is important that I am not pre-determined in relation to that application when it is heard by Strategic Sites. I have had no part in preparing the Board's objections to the

application. I will listen to the applicant's presentation without comment. I will then leave the meeting in order that I take no part in the discussion. I should be grateful if my departure and return could both be minuted so that there can be no suggestion that I might have expressed an opinion on this application."

22/23.35. Notice of Urgent Business

The Chair notified the meeting of two items of urgent business to be discussed in closed session.

22/23.36 Minutes of the previous meeting 14/02/23

The minutes of the meeting 14/02/23 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

22/23.37 Matters Arising

- The Finance Officer, Graham Hurst, informed the meeting that the budget had been amended as agreed at the March board meeting, but the business plan had not yet been reconciled with the Budget. This will be completed for the June Board meeting.

22/23.38 No public present

22/23.39 Chair's update

1. The Chair welcomed Andy Brock-Doyle, the new Head of Operations, to the Executive Committee meeting.
2. The Chair informed the meeting that interviews for two new Secretary of State appointments to the Board had taken place over three days. Three suitable candidates had been presented to the Secretary of State for the two vacancies.
3. He had attended a Natural England Governance session online.
4. He had had good discussions with Cllrs Lynn Lloyd and Gareth Williams for plans to meet with Local Authorities. An event in the autumn might be possible, after local elections.
5. Local Authority elections will see some board changes. We have been notified that Cllrs Lynn Lloyd and Paul Duckett will be leaving the Board.
6. He has spent time on several internal issues, e.g., planning issues, fundraising strategy, CCB Business Planning, 25-year vision, for which a further meeting will be scheduled.
7. He has supported the Heritage and Archaeology Manager, Wendy Morrison with developing a project with MERL at Reading University.

1. The Committee NOTED the Chair's update.

22/23.40 Presentation by Penelope Tollitt for Marlow Film studios

Marlow Film Studios had requested to present to the CCB on their project to develop a site in the greenbelt adjacent to the AONB (planning application 22/06443/FULEA submitted to Buckinghamshire Council in summer 2022). The Executive Committee observed the presentation.

Cllr Richard Newcombe left the meeting.

Members had the opportunity to ask questions.

The Chair thanked the Marlow Film Studios Team for coming to the meeting and their professional presentation. They left the meeting.

Cllr Richard Newcombe returned to the meeting.

Chief Executive's update

The CEO, Elaine King, had issued a comprehensive report to members. She highlighted the following:

1. Restructuring of the team. The Head of Operations, Andy Brock-Doyle joined the CCB on 4th April and Kate Heppell will take up the post of Head of Landscape on 18th July.
2. The CEO has been line managing 11 members of staff. With the appointments of the Head of Operations and the Head of Landscape the direct line for the CEO will be reduced to seven members of staff.
3. HR strategy. The revised updated staff handbook is being reviewed, using more accessible language. This work is slightly behind schedule. The next step is training for managers to ensure consistent and transparent implementation. HRAG membership was formalised at the last Board meeting, however there will be some changes and we need to formalise how the HRAG works with the other HR work going on. Clerk to note this for the next Board agenda. The Executive Committee asked to have sight of the updated staff handbook.
4. The Head of Operations, Andy Brock-Doyle has been prioritising oversight and support for the projects Mend the Gap and Chalk, Cherries and Chairs. Time will be spent on Chalkscapes in due course.
5. Chilterns Chalkstream project, the new Head of Landscape, Kate Heppell will take over the management of this project once she joins. The project has been busy with a wide variety of events please see the website <https://www.chilternstreams.org/>
6. Green Recovery Challenge Fund. The Chalkstreams and Wetlands meadow project was completed and submitted on time.
7. 25-year vision work is ongoing, and she is exploring how it will integrate with all the other governance and stakeholder engagement work been done, including reviewing the Management Plan, Natural England's designations programme and the CCB's internal governance review.
8. Meetings are taking place with Natural England on their Enhanced Management and Governance project for AONBs. CEO and the Head of Strategy and Planning attend these. NE has advised that less funds are available for phase two of the work and needs to meet certain criteria including adding value to other AONBs. Some discussion took place on this project as NE, does not provide resources to cover CCB staff capacity for either this project or its boundary review project. It was felt important that NE knows the CCB's views on its potential future governance arrangements and is supporting the CCB in engaging with our stakeholders. The CEO was asked to provide more information to the Chair, Deputy Chair and Cllr Sir Hector Sants on how the EMAGA project was developed with NE.

1. The Committee NOTED the CEO's update.

22/23.41 Business Plan

The Head of Strategy and Planning presented the final Business Plan 2023-24 as approved in principle by the Board in March 2023 with a more detailed Delivery Plan for 2023-24.

The Committee asked for more detail on linking the business plan deliverables with the available resources. It was agreed that this would be presented to the board at its June meeting. The work will include identifying work for which funding will need to be sourced.

The Committee considered the Business Plan for 2023-24 and made some observations.

The CEO made the observation that this year 2023/24 the Business Plan is a hybrid plan and going forward the Business Plan will connect more closely with the Resources Plan.

Annette Weiss left the meeting.

- 1. The Committee CONSIDERED the Business Plan 2023-24 as set out, PROVIDED some observations, and AUTHORISED the CEO to finalise the Business Plan as a single working document matching the resources.**

22/23.42 Finance Report

The Finance Officer, Graham Hurst, reported the draft accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023. The final accounts will be presented with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return to the Board for formal approval at the June Board meeting prior to external audit.

Finance:

1. Core income closely matched core expenditure with a small surplus of £3,628.
2. The draft accounts show an overall deficit of nearly £400,000 entirely due to outstanding claims for project expenditure incurred.
3. NLHF funded Beacons of the Past project has been completed successfully and no call for funds has been made on the CCB.
4. Chilterns Chalk Streams Project budget is still in draft and showing a surplus.
5. Chalk Cherries Chairs deficit built up over the last two years is £560,000. The Committee is aware of the action being taken to bring the project up to date.
6. Chalkscapes development stage was finalised in February.
7. Chess Smarter Water Catchment is currently in surplus due to advance funding.
8. Green Recovery Challenge Fund project is in deficit, but this will be repaid in our current claim. We claim after incurring expenditure.
9. Mend the Gap is funded in advance.
10. The internal auditors' visit is due, with the accounts being finalised for the June Board meeting. *(subsequent to this meeting we have discovered that the internal auditors will not visit until after the June Board meeting)*

The Chair thanked the Finance Officer.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the CCB Financial Position on 31st March 2023.**

22/23.43 Head of Operations Update

The Head of Operations, Andy Brock-Doyle Finance Officer, gave a verbal report on the projects he is responsible for.

1. The Chalk Cherries and Chairs project submitted an outstanding narrative report which has been accepted by NLHF and this part of the project reporting is now up to date. There are some queries outstanding on the financial report, but the report is due to be submitted in the next two weeks, which brings us up to date to Quarter 1. He is looking at reprofiling of the project and has had an initial planning session, reaching out to partners. He is also working on an extension of the project, possibly six months. There is approximately £1m left to spend over the next year and it is vital to get a clear plan and budget in place, approved by the steering group, key partners the NLHF. Although reporting on this project has been problematic, causing claiming funds to fall behind, the project has many good elements, and a lot of good work has been done.
2. Mend the Gap, the new manager, Ruth Staples-Rolfe, is looking at stakeholder and partner engagement, planning a proper project framework, which can also be used for future projects. We need to make sure there is a clear plan going forward and we report appropriately on

projects, while making sure we have a robust framework in place. The Mend the Gap Manager, Ruth Staples-Rolfe has met with Board members John Nicholls and Cllr John Griffin, who have been helping the project. Cllr John Griffin had recently met informally with the South Stoke Steering Group who told him that they are happier with the progress now and very pleased with the work that the new project manager is doing.

3. Chalkscapes meeting with CEO in the diary.

Members commented that the Head of Operations is getting to grips with the problems and that lessons learned should be documented and kept up to date.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the report for the Head of Operations.**

22/23.44 Governance and Policies

The Clerk, Deirdre Hansen, updated the Committee on the ongoing work on updating our constitution and policies.

1. The role of the monitoring officer in our constitution has now been updated.
2. Contract Standing Orders have been updated and are currently with the monitoring officer for final approval to bring to the Board in June.
3. Updating our Governance procedures will take time.
4. The CCB's procedures are nearly identical to Local Authority procedures.
5. Like LA's, the CCB has three statutory officers, Monitoring Officer, S151 Officer, and CEO who is also Head of Paid Services.
6. Policies: we have many policies in place, they need to be placed in one file and updated where appropriate. A schedule of policies will be presented to the Board.

- 1. The Committee NOTED the ongoing work to update the CCB's Constitution.**

22/23.45 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) update

The Head of Engagement and Partnerships had presented a progress report and a Gantt chart for key activities and milestones over the next 12 months.

Highlights:

- EDI training for staff and Board Members is scheduled for 26th June and 5th July.
- Skills into Practice training
- Continued development in delivering EDI engagement through our projects, partnerships and communications.

- 1. The Committee to NOTED the EDI update.**

The meeting went into closed session under the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 to discuss personnel and Board matters. The Head of Operations and the Administrative Assistant were asked to leave the meeting.

22/23.32 Next meeting: 11th July 2023- at the CCB offices in Chinnor.

Future meetings: 14th November 2023.

The Chairman.....

Date.....