



**JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE – MINUTES**

**11.00 am, 11 July 2024, Council Chamber, NNL Office**

**1.0 Attendance and notification of substitutes**

**1.1 Attendance:**

Cllr. Andrew Murday (NYC)  
Sheila Miller (Parish Council rep)  
Paul Trewitt (Parish Council rep)  
Martin Hockey (Ramblers Association)  
Claire Walker (British Horse Society)  
Heather Garnett (Friends of Nidderdale AONB)  
Jan Arger (CPRE)  
Jon Parker (Yorkshire Wildlife Trust)  
Sarah France (National Trust)  
Richard Dimon (Natural England)  
Graham Spooner (NNL Volunteers)  
Andrew Smith (National Farmers Union)  
Richard Bruce (Nidderdale Plus)  
Tom Wheelwright (Moorland Association)  
Stephen Ramsden (CLA)

David Shaftoe (Open Country)

**1.2 Officers:**

Rachael Balmer (NYC)  
Shaun Berry (NYC)  
Sarah Kettlewell (NNL)  
Iain Mann (NNL)

**1.3 Apologies:**

Lisa Harrowsmith (Yorkshire Water)  
Justin Scully (National Trust)  
Sue Welch (Parish Council rep)  
Felicity Cunliffe-Lister (NYC)  
Joanne Wright (Parish Council rep)

**1.4 Substitutes:**

Sarah France for Justin Scully

**2.0 Declarations of interest**

2.1 No interests were declared.

**3.0 Minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2024**

3.1 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record (proposed by RB, seconded by GS).

#### 4.0 Matters arising from the minutes

- 4.1 *Ash Dieback:* Hugh Clear-Hill had provided an update to IM in advance of the meeting. Helen Arnold (Tree & Woodland Manager as NYC) will be developing an NYC woodland plan which will include an approach to dealing with issues around Ash Dieback.  
*Studley Tearooms development:* SF reported on behalf of the National Trust that the application will be going to planning committee in September, following some minor modifications to the plans.

#### 5.0 2024/25 Business Plan

- 5.1 IM circulated a written report prior to the meeting.

Purpose of report: to outline to JAC Members the NNL team's 2024/25 work programme.

Recommendations: JAC Members were asked to note the planned actions in the 2024/25 Business Plan and feedback any comments to the NNL Manager.

IM highlighted the work planned by the NNL team for 2024/25, noting the strategic work to develop the Management Plan, on-going delivery of the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme, continuing farmer and land management advice, access for all work and supporting partner organisations.

- 5.2 MH noted planned work on rights of way. Ramblers Association would welcome this and may be able to help. IM clarified that this would be on NNL promoted routes and the surveys are being undertaken by volunteers.

Action: IM to put MH in touch with NNL Volunteer Coordinator to find out more about the surveying process.

Members discussed the condition and signage of public rights of way across the National Landscape, with concern expressed about both condition and poor waymarking. This includes important named routes such as the Nidderdale Way. There is an opportunity for the NNL team to work with landowners on waymarking, which would be to the benefit of both landowners and walkers.

- 5.3 HG referenced the action to support Friends of NAONB. HG provided an overview of the current position of the charity, highlighting the journey the organisation had gone through in terms of organisational review, Covid and more latterly struggling with engaging new trustees and a changing financial landscape within NNL. The result is that an option to close the charity and donate remaining funds to Yorkshire Dales Millenium Trust, who are very closely aligned to the charitable objectives of Friends, was being explored (where funds would be ring-fenced for NNL). A final decision was being made by YDMT trustees on 12 July as to whether to proceed. TW stated that he viewed this as a very positive step and that the JAC should be fully supportive. He noted that YDMT can access funds that Local Authorities are not eligible for. SR queried how future representation on the JAC would work. IM informed members that he would talk to YDMT and explore the potential of them having a seat in time for the Autumn meeting.

#### 6.0 NNL Nature Recovery Plan

- 6.1 IM circulated a written report prior to the meeting.

Purpose of report: to set out the results of the consultation on the Nature Recovery Plan, seek Members' views on the issues that have been raised and agree to move forward to adopt a final version of the Plan.

Recommendations: JAC Members were asked to:

- i. Consider the proposed responses to the consultation comments, with particular focus on the issues identified in section 5, and agree on their inclusion within the Nature Recovery Plan.
- ii. Agree to adopt the Nature Recovery Plan based on the attached revised draft, subject to the resolution of any outstanding issues.
- iii. Agree that the NNL Manager can finalise and then publish the Nature Recovery Plan in line with the above decisions.

IM introduced the Nature Recovery Plan, which sets out how everyone involved in land management and nature conservation can work together to enhance wildlife across the National Landscape. The Plan was developed following a very constructive nature recovery workshop in December 2023, which brought together farmers, land managers, landowners, land management organisations, conservation NGOs and statutory conservation organisations. The consultation process resulted in responses from 16 organisations and a total of 131 comments.

Most comments can be incorporated into the final document without difficulty, since they add valuable detail and information. A small number of comments require discussion to reach a suitable conclusion.

- 6.2 Members reviewed the comments highlighted in section 5.1 a) to f).
- a) Members agreed addition of reference to predator control; noted that any predator control referenced must be legal; noted that predator control below the moorland line for wading birds is included in the Species Action Plan section.
  - b) Members agreed addition of dry stone walls and cave systems as new sub-habitats to be included.
  - c) Members agreed with inclusion of detailed cross-reference to the Local Nature Recovery Plan.
  - d) Members agreed to add references to tree health and improving woodland resilience, noting that this is a significant issue for landowners.
  - e) Members agreed to add references to specific species movements and/or re-introductions.
  - f) Members agreed to add references to removing barriers to fish and sediment movement, but to also note the potential of some weirs for micro-hydropower generation; and to clarify that sediment movement refers to 'in-river sediment' to ensure no confusion with overland sediment flows that we wish to see minimised.
- 6.3 Members reviewed the comments highlighted in section 5.2 a) to c).
- a) Members considered that the woodland creation target set in the Plan is the right balance between ambitions for woodland cover and recognising constraints on woodland creation linked to wading bird conservation and peatland restoration, so did not agree to the consultation proposal to increase the level of ambition for woodland creation.
  - b) Members considered that seeking interconnections between all waterbodies and wetlands without taking into account the potential spread of invasive species was inappropriate, so did not agree to the consultation proposal that waterbodies and wetlands should all be interconnected, regardless of other issues.
  - c) Members did not agree to setting more targets in the freshwater section of the Plan.
- 6.4 Having considered and agreed on how to respond to the consultation comments (Recommendation i), Members agreed to adopt the Nature Recovery Plan based on the revised draft, subject to the above minor changes (Recommendation ii). Members further agreed to the NNL Manager finalising and then publishing the Nature Recovery Plan in line with the above decisions (Recommendation iii).

## **7.0 Dark Skies Supplementary Planning Document**

- 7.1 This item was not discussed due to lack of time and will be included in the agenda for the autumn JAC meeting.

## **8.0 Access for All Project**

- 8.1 David Shaftoe, the Chief Officer at Open Country, a charity based in Harrogate that enables people with disabilities to access and enjoy the countryside, presented to Members on the issues faced by people with disabilities around countryside access and some of the solutions. He explained the work of Open Country and set out the partnership with the NNL team to deliver a Defra-funded "Access for All" project this year. The project will deliver a range of access improvements for people with disabilities at several different locations in the National Landscape.

## **9.0 Any other business**

- 9.1 There was no other business.
- 9.2 The formal part of the meeting closed and was followed by an afternoon site visit looking at Access for All issues around Pateley Bridge, led by Open Country.
- 9.3 The autumn meeting of the JAC (including elections) is 10 October.