

**LOCAL NATURE RESERVES STEERING GROUP MEETING**  
**HELD ON TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2019, 10 AM**  
**MEMBERS ROOM, NELSON TOWN HALL**

Present

John Lamb	Lancashire Wildlife Trust	JL	Lee Johnson	Borough of Pendle	LJ
Carol Riley	Alkincoates LNR	CR	Philip Mousdale	Borough of Pendle	PM
Alison Plackett	Gibhill	AP	John Plackett	Gibhill	JP
John Belbin	Ball Grove LNR	JB	David Penney	Greenfield LNR	DP
Louise Cooper	Borough of Pendle	LC			

Apologies

Dave McQuillan	Alkincoates LNR	DM	Maureen Roberts	Quarry Hill LNR	MR
Les Cromey	Ball Grove LNR	LCr			

**Min**  
**No**

**Action**

**1. EMERGENCY MEETING**

1. Malcolm made the following points regarding the Local Nature Reserve Meetings:
  - Malcolm wanted to emphasise that the following points are in no way critical of Lee. Lee puts in a tremendous amount of time and does some very good work for the LNR's.
  - The meetings need to be specific to Local Nature Reserves.
  - The point was that Lee had been called away to attend another meeting, we need to look at the fact that Lee is now only 2 days at Greenspaces and there are no other representatives from the Council, either Councillors or employees. It does make a long process of getting things done. The group understands that the Council is under horrific budget constraints, but it has got to the stage where we are thinking 'what are we doing'.
  - It feels like LNR's are such a low priority, how do the Council perceive them and why do we keep them?
2. Philip responded with the following points:
  - The Local Nature Reserves are valued and so is the work of this group.
  - The Council does have financial struggles. In 2010 there were 450 staff members and now there are 230, with further reductions in the next financial years starting in April 2019.
  - The Government grant disappears next year this will have greater implications for the Council and is likely to affect staffing numbers further.
  - There are no longer portfolio holders, the Council now has a committee system. Philip asked if the groups had contact details of their Councillors? Contact details for Councillors can be found at the Councils website (<https://www.pendle.gov.uk/councillors/name>)
3. David Penney stated the main committee is Policy and Resources, but they do not have a champion for the environment – a Councillor that is in the know about environmental issues. Do the Council have a statutory responsibility for LNR's as they are on PBC land? Philip stated that there is a level of maintenance required and initially there was no budget for LNR's. He went on to say that the Council had set aside some budgets for the LNR's by diverting some money from the parks revenue budgets.
4. Alison stated that we do all this at our level and we do not have any continuity, as there is no executive for the environment. The environment is very poorly viewed and does not progress. Whereas housing is very lucrative. There is also a lack of understanding at the importance of the environment within the Council.
5. Philip stated that the minutes do go to the area committee and if matters arise they will be dealt with. Lee organises the work within resources both staff and budgets.
6. Lee stated that he felt the steering group has been losing its focus a bit and although the wider environmental context was important, he thought that the meetings needed to be centred on the things that we can do and change within the scope of our remit. Lee and Louise had a look at the agenda of the meetings with a view to get it back to focusing on the reserves. Lee proposed the following:
  - The matters arising section should be dropped and these discussed within each agenda item.
  - A representative from each reserve will take a turn being chair person.
  - Any discussions regarding Planning or Governmental Policy could be left to the Any Other Business Section or after the meeting.

- Suggested Agenda:
  - Attendance and Apologies
  - Date and Time of Next Meeting
  - Introduction by Chair
  - Alkincoates
  - Ball Grove
  - Gibhill
  - Greenfield
  - Lomeshaye
  - Quarry Hill
  - Lancashire Wildlife Trust
  - Wildlife in Pendle
  - Any Other Business

7. John B asked why we have four meetings per year and not just an annual meeting? Lee responded by stating it is useful to have everyone around the table to address different issues and as a collective we can solve any problems within the reserves, such as joint work days. He didn't feel that the quarterly meetings were too onerous.
8. David stated that there are no other forums in which Pendle take environment issues seriously, we are the only voice within Pendle. When it comes to Green Infrastructure and the Local Plan, more pressure needs to be put on environmental and biodiversity issues. Biodiversity needs adopting within the local plan.
9. Malcolm agrees these are important issues, but we need to focus and discuss what affects our reserves. The wider issues can be discussed at the end of the meeting. If we are not careful we will become an environmental pressure group. David and Alison stated that the two are linked.
10. Malcolm stated that the MP has attended one of the meetings, but no Councillors attended. Philip asked if Councillors were invited. Carol stated that Councillors do attend the Alkincoates meetings. David did not get any response when he invited Councillors to Greenfield.
11. Philip did point out that when Councillors do talk about the environment with the public, the main issues are refuse, dog fouling and fly tipping.
12. Alison stated that the group does not really have a department, but as Philip pointed out the LNR's have Planning, Greenspaces and the Environmental Action Group. Lee also noted that he does feedback to both planning and greenspaces and the information has influenced the Green Infrastructure. Items such as Green Infrastructure, Local Plan can be discussed under any other business.
13. Malcolm asked about the ESIF bid for Lomeshaye, as there has been no feedback? The Council did not get the grant due to the compulsory purchases, there was political opposition which led to delays and objections from consultations, we are still waiting for the inspectors report. Philip will discuss with colleagues regarding keeping the group informed and being given feedback.
14. Alison has invited several Councillors several times to Gibhill, but they are not interested. This site has been passed twice for LNR status. Part of the site is designated as a Biological Heritage Site. David asked if it had been passed as an LNR, then why has it not been designated. Alison stated budgets and finance are the reasons given.
15. John B stated that the Ball Grove group get representatives from Trawden and Colne Councillors and asked if Ball Grove was under the Town Council? Lee reported that the LNR's are not being transferred to Town and Parish Councils at this stage.
16. Malcolm asked what the way forward is now? Philip stated he will take away what everyone has said, speak to colleagues and look into it.
17. John L said there are two pieces of legislation that apply to LNR's: They need a management plan that has been accepted by Natural England and the NERC act which is statutory but not enforced.
18. The Greenspaces Team will be moving to Environmental Services in April as Neighbourhood Services is being disbanded. It is likely that that EAG will sit within the Landscape Maintenance Section however, Kieron is soon to meet with the Environment Services Manager to determine a way forward. At this stage we are still waiting the final details but it is unlikely that there will be any change in that way that we currently approach our work in the nature reserves and with the groups.
19. Robert will be taking retirement from April with Matt taking over the day to day running of the team. Robert will not be replaced and this will have an impact on the amount of work that the EAG can carry out.
20. The group were happy for their contact details to be shared with Councillors.
21. Philip will provide feedback for the next meeting, which will be held on 12 March 2019.
22. Alison thanked Philip for attending the meeting and listening. Philip stated that the Council appreciate all the hard work the groups do.
23. David asked if it was time the Council have a dedicated Councillor with relation to the environment. Philip stated there was not one at the moment, but the Policy and Resources Committee will be re-done

in May after the elections, this issue should be raised in May.

2. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 12 March 2019, 10 am – 12 noon at **Fleet Street Depot, Nelson.**

**Any volunteers for the first cycle as chair would be gratefully accepted.**

The group thanked Philip for attending the meeting.