

GEOPARK MEETING

Tuesday 29th January, 2013

MINUTES & ACTION POINTS

Present: Sarah Gatley, Emma Glanville, Carol Gleeson, Christine Grant, Conjella McGuire, Monica Meehan, Joanna McInerney, Pat O'Connor, Flan Quilligan, Tina O'Dwyer, Katherine Webster

ITEM	DETAILS	RESP
1	Review of Minutes Proposed by KW; Seconded by MM.	
2	Proposal on project management of Geopark & Life CGleeson proposed: - amalgamating the Geopark and Life work programmes and management meetings - utilising Advisory Committee as a collective of advisors who could be sekunded onto Steering Group when necessary - utilising LIFE programme to buy in added programme co-ordinators - contributing to Burren Charter through Geopark/LIFE actions (rather than participating in management meetings) CGrant queried whether there would be any implications for LIFE on doing this, CGleeson has checked and all fine. CGleeson outlined vision for engagement with local communities, advisory committee (meet every 6 mths), steering committee (meet every 3 mths) and Management Unit (CCC Project Manager, EU Life External Co-ordinators, GSI Geopark Geologist) Discussion on need for very effective and structured meetings, given size of the overall group. POC highlighted that the Project needs to ensure that the Geopark contribution is clear. EU Life is in fact a project within the Geopark. CGleeson agreed with this and highlighted structure whereby Geopark is the umbrella under which EU Life, GSI Geologist and Interreg Transtourism fit. Action: Group accepted CGleeson's proposal to amalgamate meetings. Total of 16 meetings per annum is envisaged: Steering Committee : 4 Advisory Committee: 2 Irish Geopark Forum: 2	

	European Geopark Forum: 2 Interreg Transtourism: 2 Local Stakeholders (BEN): 4	
3	Progress Report on Activities CG: EU Life: - (outlined series of meetings with various stakeholders from 1st October to 14th March to bring the project to the inception report stage) Infrastructural Programmes - Signage Plan: awaiting decision on funding from Fáilte Ireland; will be integrated with Wild Atlantic Way. FQ indicated it's not certain that this will happen before this season. Paddy Mathews on board and the project is for the entire signage plan, not just the parts that are on the Wild Atlantic Way. While W.A.W. is a spine along the coast, it incorporates loops off that spine that will be included in the overall project i.e. The Burren will be a loop off the spine. CGrant questioned if funding is definitely committed to this nationally. FQ highlighted it's the flagship project for Fáilte Ireland and will be developed over a number of years; FQ also highlighted the advantages and work already completed in the Burren that make it ideally placed to integrate into it e.g. viewing points, heritage trails, signage preparations, Blackhead project. - Blackhead Pull in areas: Report received from NPWS, CGleeson confident any outstanding issues can be resolved. - Ballyreen Commonage development: Potential incorporation into LIFE project as one of 7 case study sites; continued negotiations with landowners pending resolution of water provision issues. Transtourism App - Work ongoing. App being done by Acton BV but Burren Connect providing all information - Awaiting confirmation on logo. Burren Charter • Question of current status of Burren Charter? Proposal in for further funding has been submitted to the Heritage Council through Burrenbeo. Charter hasn't yet reached the stage of being a document that people could sign up to. At present, it is similar to an action plan. CG has resigned from the Burren Management Committee due to pressures of work with additional LIFE project but the Geopark will contribute to the Charter process through implementation of Geopark and LIFE objectives and will support group activities e.g.	

	Education programmes and Winterage Festival Action: • Request update from Burren Charter Management Committee on current status of project. - EG highlighted an event taking place in May that group would be welcome to participate in. Details to follow. Heritage Trails - Access agreements in place for all 11 community trails - Content and imagery collected - Review by National Trails office in Feb/March Supports for BEN - EU Life funding - CLDC funding for research - Destination magazine - Unsuccessful application to EU CIP; will reapply as got very good feedback on why it was rejected CLDC-funded research & BEN activity - Research on baseline, future targets and performance benchmarks will be completed this week. Report considers training, certification and marketing. - TOD gave outline of projects and activities taking place during low season: visitor survey, business survey; food trail development; highlighted key account status with Fáilte Ireland, need to include environmental and conservation learning opportunities in future programmes - Overview of Autumn training programme provided for the B.E.N. was given. This year had a strong focus on developing marketing and product development skills. Future programmes will have greater learning opportunities in the area of environmental management and interpretation.	
4	Geopark Communications & Branding Exercise - Working with Persuasion Republic on communications strategy and identity - CG presented ideas on what Geopark brand will represent – associated attributes (see presentation) - CG presented Visual Identity proposals received from Persuasion Republic - Agreement from group to go with Block Logo with strapline ‘People, Place, Learning, Livelihood’; some discussion took place on symbols palette – add dolmen, bird, cow, butterfly and some rock-related item.	
5	Next Meeting - Wednesday 17th April. - Meeting may take place in the Burren followed by EU Life meeting ‘on location’.	
6	AOB	

	Geologist Position - 2 applications for geologist post and one candidate has been selected. Once candidate has been informed, group will receive formal announcement.	
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