



## HIGH WEALD JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**A meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee will be held at 10:30 am on Wednesday 26 March at Hendall Manor Barns Heron's Ghyll, East Sussex, TN22 4BU**

- Tea and Coffee available from 10.00 am. Lunch will also be available.
- 1. Apologies
- 2. Members' Interests

Members and officers are invited to make any declarations of any interest that they may have in relation to items on the agenda and are reminded to make any declaration at any stage during the meeting if it then becomes apparent that this may be required when a particular item or issue is considered.
- 3. Urgent matters

Members are asked to raise any urgent matters at this stage and not at the end of the meeting. The Chairman will decide whether the JAC should discuss any items so raised but asks members to give her prior notification of such matters unless urgency prevents it.
- 4. Minutes of the JAC meeting

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the JAC held on 8 November 2013 (page 1)
- 5. Minutes of the Management Board

To note the minutes of the Management Board meeting held on 5 March 2014 (page 10)
- 6. Minutes of the Officer Steering Group

To note the minutes of the Officer Steering meeting held on 11 February 2014 (page 14)
- 7. Matters arising from Minutes
- 8. Revenue Budget 2014/2015

To consider a report by the Deputy Treasurer (page 21) and approve the revenue budget
- 9. High Weald Work Projects

To consider a report by the AONB Director (page 25)
- 10. High Weald AONB Unit Staff

To consider a report by the AONB Director (page 28)
- 11. Risk Management

To consider a report by the AONB Director, Risk Log attached at (page 29)
- 12. Any other business

Decide Joint Advisory Committee Meeting dates for 2014/2015.

**Launch of the High Weald Management Plan 2014-2019**

**'Walk and talk' presentation on the heritage of Hendall Manor buildings and site from David Martin. David is the Senior Historic Buildings Officer at UCL and an expert in medieval and early post-medieval building construction in the South East of England**

**Lunch**

To: ALL MEMBERS OF THE HIGH WEALD AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Samantha Nicholas

Clerk to the High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee  
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## HIGH WEALD AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

8 November 2013 Meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee held at Acorn Tourism, Woodland Enterprise Centre, Flimwell, East Sussex

### Present:

Cllr Mrs J Davison	Sevenoaks District Council, Acting Chair
Cllr M Balfour	Kent County Council
Cllr S Murray	Tonbridge & Malling District Council
Cllr Mrs E Kitchen	Horsham District Council
Cllr Mrs J Soyke	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Cllr R Street	Hastings Borough Council
Cllr M Sydney	Surrey County/Tandridge District Council
Cllr K Blake	Crawley District Council
Cllr Mrs S Tidy	East Sussex County Council
Mrs Alison Field	Forestry Commission
Mr J Seymour	Natural England

### Officers:

Mr M Davidson	Hastings Borough Council
Mr A Fowler	Finance Manager, East Sussex County Council
Mr Thomas Alty	CIPFA Trainee, East Sussex County Council
Mr D Greenwood	Surrey County Council
Mrs R Hotchin	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Mr D Scully	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Mr J Lavender	AONB Director (job share)
Ms S Marsh	AONB Director (job share)
Mr G Mee	Assistant Director CET, East Sussex County Council
Ms G Sherwin	AONB Unit

## PRESENTATION

### **Our Land**

A. Gerry Sherwin, Business Manager for the High Weald AONB Unit, gave a presentation to the JAC, on behalf of Responsible Travel (RT), about the progress to date of the Our Land project. Our Land is the south east's protected landscapes sustainable tourism project run in conjunction with Responsible Travel. A copy of the presentation is included in the Minute Book.

#### A.1 Points of note:

- All tourism businesses that have joined the Our Land website have received support developing their website pages and marketing of their websites.
- Strong interest in the Our Land website, which has received 300,000 web-hits, gained 3,200 facebook followers and generated 5000 customer contacts.
- 92 High Weald AONB tourism businesses are currently using the Our Land website, exceeding the target of 90. More businesses are expected to join by the end of March 2014.
- The majority of tourism businesses promoted by Our Land provide accommodation but Our Land is also keen to attract and recruit businesses that offer a range of activities e.g. bushcraft and falconry. In the High Weald AONB, 17 such businesses are currently promoted on the Our Land website.
- The profile of Our Land has increased as a consequence of working collaboratively with a range of organizations (e.g. the RSPB and Kent Wildlife Trust) and new partners, such as the Forestry Commission, are being sought.
- A High Weald AONB competition was supported by one business offering a prize of a weekend break in a well-appointed treehouse, generating 2000 entries and increasing the database by an additional 1000 contacts. Similar and future competitions are planned.
- Funding for Our Land ceases at the end of March 2014 but RT is required to continue to provide support for the project for a further two years. Representatives from the SE AONB partnerships will remain on the Our Land steering group and protected landscape partnerships elsewhere in the country have shown a strong interest in joining the programme.

A.2 The JAC warmly thanked Gerry Sherwin for covering this presentation on behalf of Responsible Travel . Cllr Mrs Kitchen said she was incredibly impressed with the progress of this project since she was involved with and supported the initial development phase. Cllr Mrs Kitchen requested that the AONB Unit might contact Horsham District Council's Economic and Tourism Officer to raise the awareness of Our Land as there were fewer businesses in this particular part of the AONB.

A.3 Cllr Mrs Tidy wished to know whether there were further funds available to continue the work now that the initial funding stream was due to end. Gerry Sherwin confirmed that the tourism businesses will not be charged to join the programme and that Responsible Travel are seeking further funds and may charge each AONB partnerships £2,500 in order to recruit new businesses. The businesses will also be able to 'buy into' other services that provide them with a higher level of service. Gerry Sherwin also confirmed that the AONB Unit would like to use JAC project funding to run a number of low cost training events for the businesses during 2014/2015.

A.4 David Scully, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council suggested the AONB Unit also meet with the TWBC Economic and Development Officer to discuss the Our Land project.

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 Apologies were received from the following Members and officers:

Councillor Kentfield, Councillor Hersey; Councillor Mrs Moore; Councillor Acraman; Mr P Newdick; Councillor Taylor.

2. MEMBERS INTERESTS

2.1 It was noted that there were no declarations of interest raised by the Members.

3. URGENT MATTERS

3.1 It was noted that no urgent matters were raised by the Members.

4. MINUTES OF THE JAC MEETING - 25 March 2013

4.1 RESOLVED to agree the Minutes of the meeting of 25 March 2013 as a correct record.

5. MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD - 8 October 2013

5.1 RESOLVED to note the Minutes of the Management Board held on 8 October 2013.

6. MINUTES OF THE OFFICER STEERING GROUP - 8 October 2013

6.1 RESOLVED to note the Minutes of the Officer Steering Group held on 8 October 2013.

7. MATTERS ARISING

7.1 In the light of further cuts by DEFRA to the core funds of AONB partnerships, Cllr Sydney wished to see greater consideration given by the Management Board and the AONB Unit to alternative models of funding e.g. Community Interest Companies and Community Trusts, as well as options to exploit the High Weald brand commercially. Cllr Sydney drew the Committee's attention to the Community Interest Company recently established to benefit the Surrey Hills AONB and he commended the draft report, commissioned by the Kent Downs AONB Unit, examining options to raise non-exchequer funding as he believed the report was a thorough study of alternative funding sources.

7.2 Cllr Mrs Tidy stated that the High Weald AONB is a very different area to the Surrey Hills AONB and may not necessarily benefit from the same funding model.

7.2 The Co-Directors again assured the JAC that options for future funding sources has been and continues to be the subject of long-running discussions, some of which have been already used in the High Weald and also that a number of seemingly straight-forward options had been trialled by different AONB partnerships without lasting success.

7.4 RESOLVED to note that Cllr Sydney is to be invited to attend the next Management Board meeting to discuss alternative funding models.

## 8. NOMINATION FOR CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR AND MANAGEMENT BOARD

8.1 The Acting Chair Cllr Mrs Davison took the JAC through the nominations for Chair, Vice- Chair and four additional Management Board members after which voting by the JAC Members took place.

8.2 RESOLVED to note that the following Members have been elected for Chair, Vice-Chair and Management Board:

**Elected Chair:** Cllr Kentfield;

Proposed by Cllr Mrs Davison; seconded by Cllr Balfour

**Elected Vice-Chair:** Cllr Mrs Davison

Proposed by Cllr Kentfield; seconded by Cllr Balfour

**Elected Management Board Member:** Cllr Balfour

Proposed by Cllr Mrs Davison; seconded by Cllr Kentfield

**Elected Management Board Member:** Cllr Mrs Tidy

Proposed by Cllr Mrs Davison; seconded by Cllr Kentfield

**Elected Management Board Member:** Cllr Hersey

Proposed by Cllr Kentfield; seconded by Cllr Mrs Davison

**Elected Management Board Member:** Cllr Acraman

Proposed by Cllr Mrs Tidy; seconded by Cllr Mrs Davison

8.3 Cllr Mrs Davison warmly thanked Cllr Mrs Kitchen for all her work with and support for the Management Board. While Cllr Mrs Kitchen is stepping down from the Management Board she will remain as a Joint Advisory Committee Member for Horsham District Council.

## 9. REVENUE BUDGET 2014/15

9.1 The Committee considered a report on the draft Revenue Budget for 2014/15 by the Deputy Treasurer.

Points to note:

- A balanced budget has been prepared, taking into account nett savings of £2,200. It was recommended that the budget shown in Appendix A and Appendix C be approved as a basis for consultation with the contributing local authorities.
- Nett savings of £2,200 have been identified and included in the core budget. The core budget has been balanced by allocating 83% of the reducing DEFRA contribution to the core budget.
- The local authority contributions, which are in the region of £103, 500 in 2014/15 are likely to generate external funding of at least £365,100 from DEFRA and other organisations.
- Decreasing DEFRA contributions equates to approximately £71,020 but this would not have an impact on 2014/15 core budget as the contributions to the core budget had been increased from 78% to 83%. The forecast reserves at 31 March 2014 are £89,200.
- There will be an increase in staff costs of 1% to accommodate the pay increases of some staff as a result of the Single Status process.
- There will be savings made on office accommodation and equipment provision and Plumpton College were thanked for agreeing to temporarily reducing the annual rent for office accommodation.
- From 2014/15 onwards, it was recommended that there is a need to have a minimum level of reserves of 5% (£16,000) of expenditure to meet costs of contingencies. Reserves will also be required to cover any future staff redundancies.

9.9 Cllr Mrs Tidy stressed that, in her view, the local authorities must to continue to support the AONB Unit or lose a valuable asset. Cllr Mrs Davison added that local authorities are required to have an AONB Management Plan and for each local authority to produce its own Plan would be prohibitively expensive. The AONB Unit was good value for money.

9.10 RESOLVED to note the report and:

- (1) approve the Revenue Budget for 2014/15;
- (2) thank local authorities and DEFRA for their contributions towards core costs and High Weald Heroes and;
- (3) thank Plumpton College for the temporary reduction in office accommodation costs.

## 10. MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

10.1 The JAC considered a report by Sally Marsh, AONB Co-Director, who presented the revised text of the AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 for approval by the JAC. The JAC were reminded that the High Weald AONB was one of the first AONBs to adopt a Management Plan. During the public consultation phase, the Management Plan received approximately 200 responses, which have been considered by the AONB Unit.

10.2 Cllr Mrs Davison offered her services to proof read the Management Plan. It was noted that the images and maps and also the key facts section needs to be finalised.

10.3 Cllr Sydney voiced a concern of whether AONB Management Plans were robust enough to defend protected landscapes from adverse impacts arising from the changes to the Permitted Development Rights. The AONB Co-Director agreed that this was a significant issue and believed it was even more important than ever to have a consistent AONB Management Plan based on evidence and fully supported by the local authorities.

10.4 RESOLVED to note the report and:

(1) approve the revised Plan text as the agreed AONB Management Plan for the period 2014-2019;

(2) approve the supporting documents Performance Monitoring Report, Condition Monitoring Report, Consultation Report, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment and;

(3) authorise the Chairman to write to the partner local authorities recommending the Plan for adoption by April 2014.

## 11. PLANNING ISSUES

11.1 The JAC considered a report by David Marlow, Officer Steering Group (OSG) Chairman on behalf of the OSG. The report considered the current changes to the planning system, as the increasing pressure for housing and the consequent implications for the High Weald.

11.2 The OSG Chairman also wished it to be known that the OSG felt the review of the Management Plan had been a very positive and constructive process and recognised that this was due to Sally Marsh and the AONB Unit's management of the process.

11.3 The JAC discussed the potential impacts to the AONB as a result of the current reforms to the planning system and the considerable pressure being put on local authorities and their areas due to increases in housing demand.

11.4 Cllr Davison reported that in Sevenoaks District Council the Greenbelt policy was being upheld but this is supported by their adopted Plan.

11.5 Cllr Street stated that if housing targets cannot be met within a local authority area then the adjacent authority, which in his case is Rother District Council, would have to take on the burden of the additional targets, which is not possible due to its rural landscape.

11.6 The Co-Director mentioned that the South East and East Protected Landscapes Group will be meeting to discuss how they can influence the Government on this

matter and reflect the work on this already undertaken by the Surrey Hills AONB partnership.

#### 11.7 RESOLVED:

(1) To note the issues arising for the conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB from both the recent and currently proposed changes to Permitted Development Rights and from the increasing pressure to accommodate significant new housing, and endorse the Directors' response to the recent consultation on the former;

(2) Authorise the Chairman to write to the Secretaries of State for Communities and Local Government and for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (also forwarded to other key interests) highlighting the JAC serious concerns over the above issues, drawing on the points highlighted at paragraph 3 & 13-15 of the report;

(3) Ask the OSG to advise further on:

i) the scale of planned and potential future housing development, relative to historic rates, and the likely implications for the main components of landscape character of the High Weald;

ii) the potentials, and priorities, for further cooperation between member local planning authorities on the development of both strategic policies and supporting guidance to ensure effective support for the conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB.

## 12. HIGH WEALD AONB JAC PROJECTS

12.1 The JAC considered a report by Jason Lavender, AONB Co-Director, which set out the projects currently underway within the context of the increasing difficulty generating additional funds.

12.2 In response to the item on the 'Re-stocking of the Weald' report, the JAC had a discussion on the role the Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs) could play in support of this work. Cllr Balfour informed the JAC that the South East LEP had been very supportive of this work. Cllr Mrs Kitchen however felt that the Coast to Capital LEP was not as fully engaged in supporting agriculture as they ought to be.

12.3 Cllr Sydney reported that Surrey Hills AONB partnership is looking to invest in venison as a more healthy meat alternative, and would welcome a meeting with the High Weald Unit to discuss these issues further.

12.6 RESOLVED to note the report.

## 13. ASH DIEBACK

13.1 Alison Field, Area Director of the Forestry Commission, was welcomed to the meeting and reported to the Committee on ash dieback and the work to manage the disease and its impacts.

Points of note:

- Research seems to indicate there is not a single or an easy process available to manage ash dieback. A key issue is how statutory organisations and private landowners can effectively manage diseased and dying trees, particularly in urban areas and along routeways.
- The extent of ash dieback is variable in the country. To the east of Ashford ash dieback is extensive but to the west, there are currently only small pockets of the disease found. The rate of growth of the disease in comparison to France is much slower, which may prove to be a positive factor.
- A tree health advisory group has been established and DEFRA and the Tree Council are considering the issue of diseased trees posing a danger to people and property in urban areas.
- More concerning perhaps is the extent of other tree diseases affecting English woodlands such as chestnut blight. Surveys have shown an increase in the number and extent of diseases year on year.

### 13. NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR AONBS

13.1 The JAC considered a report by the Jason Lavender, AONB Co-Director, on the recent work of the National Association for AONBs.

13.2 The JAC was informed that Cllr Mrs Davison will be attending the National Association of AONBs AGM on 14 November 2013 on behalf of the JAC.

13.3 RESOLVED to note the report.

### 14. HIGH WEALD AONB UNIT STAFFING UPDATE

14.1 The JAC considered a report on staff by the Jason Lavender, AONB Co-Director.

14.2 RESOLVED to note the report and:

(1) send a letter of thanks from the Chairman on behalf of the JAC to be sent to Simon Aguss, the Weald Forest Ridge Landscape Partnership Scheme Manager, expressing their thanks for his work managing a very successful and well-received Scheme.

### 15. IUCN CATEGORY V COMPLIANCE

15.1 The Committee considered a report by the Jason Lavender, AONB Co-Director, that the High Weald AONB had received formal confirmation from the IUCN UK Committee that the area is considered to be of Category V status.

15.2 RESOLVED to note the report.

### 16. THE VALUE OF AONB PARTNERSHIPS

16.1 The JAC considered a report by Jason Lavender, AONB Co-Director, on the findings of Land Use Consultants on the value of AONB Partnerships.

16.2 RESOLVED to note the report.

17. RISK MANAGEMENT

17.1 The JAC considered a report by Jason Lavender, AONB Co-Director on risk management and the associated risk management matrix.

17.2 RESOLVED to note the report.

17.3 The next AONB Joint Advisory Committee meeting is set for 26 March 2014. A time and location will be confirmed in due course.



**HIGH WEALD JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING, 5 MARCH 2014**

Held at the Acorn Tourism, Woodland Enterprise Centre, Flimwell at 10.30 am

Present:           Members:  
                  Cllr B Kentfield           Rother District Council and Chairman of the Management Board  
                  Cllr M Balfour             Kent County Council  
                  Cllr J Davison             Sevenoaks District Council  
                  Cllr S Tidy                 East Sussex County Council  
                  Cllr B Acraman            West Sussex County Council  
                  Cllr Michael Sydney     Tandridge District Council and Surrey County Council

Also Present:

                  Jason Lavender            AONB Director (job share)  
                  Sally Marsh                AONB Director (job share)  
                  David Marlow             Chairman of High Weald AONB Officers Steering Group  
                  Thomas Alty                CIPFA Trainee, East Sussex County Council

**Apologies**

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Christopher Hersey, Mid Sussex District Council.

**Minutes**

2. The minutes of the Management Board meeting held on 8 October 2013, were approved and agreed as correct record by the Chairman.

**Urgent Matters**

4. No urgent matters were raised.

**Budget overview**

Thomas Alty reported on the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee Indicative Budget 2014 -2018.

The budget overview was noted by the Members of the Board.

**Budget 2014-2015**

5. Thomas Alty presented to the Members the budget overview for 2014/2015 and indicative budgets for 2015-2018. It was noted that:
  - There has been no indication that the local authorities will not maintain their current contributions, but formal acknowledgement has not been received from 3 authorities.
  - Defra has confirmed a further cut of 1.2% for 2014/15 bringing their contribution to £255,588.

## **Budget 2015-2018**

6. The budget overview for 2015 - 2018 was presented.  
Defra's letter to the partnership was shared with members indicating the intention that contributions will be held at 2014/15 levels for 2015/16 with the caveat that continuing downward pressure on budgets was likely and contributions levels may change if there are further cuts to Government spending.
7. It was noted that:
  - The budget forecast was based on the assumption that further cuts to Defra's contribution were likely amounting to a 15% cut from 2014/15 levels over the 3 subsequent years, which is in line with Institute of Fiscal Studies' forecasts.
  - Local authority contributions were shown as maintained over the 4 year period and Management Board were asked to consider this assumption under the Business Strategy Agenda Item.

## **Business Strategy 2014/5- 2017/8 and Future Funding Options**

### **Business Strategy 2014/15 -2017/18**

8. Sally Marsh took the Members through the draft Business Strategy paper for 2014 - 2018 highlighting the key budget pressures areas that will have an impact over this period.
9. There was a strong feeling that the Unit's delivery of the core workload of the Management Plan and expert advice to the local authorities was deemed to be of good value for money by all the Members.
10. Members agreed the following points:
  - The Strategy should assume local authority contributions are maintained over the 4 year period.
  - The Institute of Fiscal Studies estimate of likely further cuts to unprotected Government budget was agreed as a basis for budget forecasting.
  - Members will be asked to maintain contributions focusing on value for money, highlighting particularly cost effective delivery of a joint AONB Management Plan, the technical advice provided to local authorities and the value of local authorities working together demonstrating the duty to co-operate.
  - The AONB Unit would be asked to explore what additional services could be offered to local authorities.
  - Priority should be given to exploring opportunities for external funding where this supports core costs.
  - An assessment of the Surrey Hills model for a Surrey Hills Society should be considered where it may assist in delivering AONB core functions such as publication of the Anvil and increasing public understanding
  - Statutory work and core capabilities should be protected and be the priority for the work programme. These were agreed as paragraph 4 i - vi and vii) cooperation between local planning authorities Viii) a shared evidence base.
  - A reduction in on-costs - IT and support services - should be further investigated.
11. It was noted that a revised strategy will be prepared for the next Management Board meeting

## **Future Funding Options**

12. Cllr Michael Sydney verbally reported to the Members on the three organisations that have been initiated to help support the Surrey Hills AONB:
  - The Surrey Hills Society is an independent charity promoting the positive enjoyment of the AONB. It was initially set up with support from the AONB Unit and has over 1000 subscribers. The volunteers organise paid 'walks and talks' and events promoting the landscape. They have a part-time paid administrator paid for by the Society.
  - Surrey Hills Enterprises is a Community Interest Company set up to support AONB through brand development, marketing & promotion, events & projects and educational programmes. They manage the South-East Woodfuel Conference and the Surrey Hills Woodfair.
  - Surrey Hills Trust generates funds to support projects, programmes and activities identified in the Management Plan.
13. The Members discussed how these additional organisations could be reflected in the High Weald AONB business strategy to support:
  - Raising awareness of the High Weald AONB brand to establish a stronger brand identity.
  - Supporting additional projects such as High Weald Heroes.
14. Areas to be considered for action:
  - Establish contact with the Community Interest Companies that cover Kent, East and West Sussex. It was indicated that these organisations often have entrepreneurial support available. Cllr Michael Sydney offered to provide contact information for the Community Interest Companies.
  - Re-establish a Friends of High Weald AONB Society.
  - Members and the Unit to seek further entrepreneurial expertise and sponsors.
  - Collaborative meetings with Members and Officers to develop a priority work schedule.

## **Officer Steering Group (OSG) Update**

15. David Marlow, Chair of OSG, reported back on the OSG Meeting, held at 2pm on 11 February 2015.
16. It was reported that the OSG had produced a holding letter in response to the Lord De Mauley whilst the necessary information was gathered from the local authorities.
17. The OSG have initiated a sub-group to review AONB Policies, using shared evidence base, and develop best practise for planning in the AONB. David Marlow expressed that this was a very positive way to increase the profile of the AONB within the local authorities and important cross boundary collaborative partnership.
18. A new partnership agreement is being develop which will be shared by all local authorities. This will be based on the 'Memorandum of Agreement' and the Wealden Community Landscape Agreement.
19. David Marlow shared the housing number data set with the Members. This was highlighted as one of the areas that local authorities can develop collaborative working. Data set appended.

## **AONB Management Plan adoption review 2014**

20. Sally Marsh confirmed that all authorities have indicated they are in the process of or have adopted the Management Plan.

## **Current projects, project development and staffing update**

21. The AONB Director reported on the following:
- The Brede and Battle Landscape Habitat Fund has been established. It will be supported by the Unit and managed on a contract basis by Paul Cobb, formerly FWAG.
  - Jason Lavender had been invited back to the Prince's Trust to feedback on the progress of the 'Re-stocking the High Weald' project.
  - The part-time position of AONB Communication and Marketing Officer has been filled by Peter D'Aguilar. Peter previously worked with the Forestry Commission at Bedgbury Pinetum.
  - The part-time post of Education Officer for High Weald Heroes has been filled by Janice Cooper. Janice currently also works at Batemans and has vast experience of teaching primary school children in outside living classroom environments. The local Authorities were again thanked for their support in funding this valued programme.

## **Draft JAC Agenda - Launch of the Management Plan**

22. The Joint Advisory Committee meeting will be at Hendall Manor Barns, near Uckfield and the formal launch of the Management Plan will be part of the agenda. The Members and Officers have been requested to confirm their attendance.

## **Risk Management**

23. It was noted that there had been no changes to the Risk Assessment.

## **Any Other Business**

24. Sally Marsh informed the Members that Natural England have published a 'Designation History of AONBs' booklet.
25. A Daily Telegraph article, highlighting the impact of the 'Greater flexibilities for change of use' consultation document on National Parks and AONBs, was brought to the attention of the Members. The High Weald had been specifically mentioned referring to farmstead statistics. The article written by Geoffrey Lean, the Daily Telegraph 'A plot to turn national parks to suburbia' is appended.
26. Cllr Michael Sydney read to the Members a letter from Nick Boles to the Planning Inspectorate. This noted his concern about the misinterpretation of government policy on Green Belt and Local Plan examinations. Letter appended.

## **Date for future Management Board meeting**

22. Dates and times for 2014/2015 Management Board and JAC meeting schedule to be sent as a doodle poll to Members.



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0 3 MAR 2014

Dear Sir Michael Pitt,

### Inspectors' Reports on Local Plans

I was very troubled by the media coverage of the recent Inspector's report on the examination into the Reigate and Banstead Local Plan. On reading the report, I was disturbed by the Inspector's use of language, which invited misinterpretation of government policy and misunderstanding about the local authority's role in drawing up all of the policies in the draft plan. I am writing to restate very clearly the Government's view of Green Belt policy and Local Plan examinations.

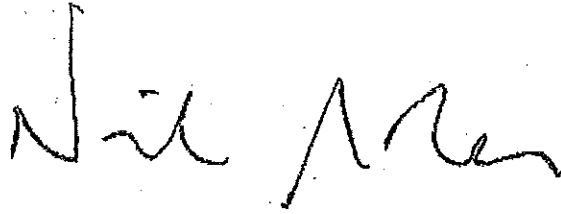
Fundamental to the National Planning Policy Framework and to this Government's planning reforms is the idea that local authorities, and the communities who elect them, are in charge of planning for their own areas. That is why we abolished the top down regional strategies, why we have emphasised the primacy of the Local Plan and why we gave communities the powers to create neighbourhood plans.

Alongside these reforms we were always very clear that we would maintain key protections for the countryside and, in particular, for the Green Belt. The National Planning Policy Framework met this commitment in full. The Framework makes clear that a Green Belt boundary may be altered only in exceptional circumstances and reiterates the importance and permanence of the Green Belt. The special role of Green Belt is also recognised in the framing of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which sets out that authorities should meet objectively assessed needs *unless* specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted. Crucially, Green Belt is identified as one such policy.

It has always been the case that a local authority could adjust a Green Belt boundary through a review of the Local Plan. It must however always be transparently clear that it is the local authority itself which has chosen that path – and it is important that this is reflected in the drafting of Inspectors' reports. The Secretary of State will consider exercising his statutory powers of intervention in Local Plans before they are adopted where a planning inspector has recommended a Green Belt review that is not supported by the local planning authority.

I would be grateful if you could circulate a copy of this letter to all Inspectors and ensure that they understand the need to choose their words carefully and reflect government policy very

clearly in all future reports. I am also placing a copy of this letter in the public domain.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Boles". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**NICK BOLES MP**

# Geoffrey Lean



## Your view

Comment on Geoffrey Lean's views at [telegraph.co.uk/personalview](http://telegraph.co.uk/personalview) or on Twitter @GeoffreyLean

## A plot to turn national parks into suburbia

In the next few weeks, we face losing stealthily but forever some of the greatest glories of the English countryside. Virtually unnoticed, an unprecedented scheme – hidden in a dry official document – is due to ruin landscapes from the Yorkshire Dales to Devon, from the Peak District to the High Weald.

Though apparently innocuous, even beneficial, the plan poses as great a threat to many of the country's National Parks and official Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) as I have come across in four decades of covering them. It will benefit few people in them apart from property developers, some lucky landowners, and those rich enough to be able to afford expensive homes.

True to the old Whitehall ploy of giving really controversial measures stupefyingly boring titles, it is buried in a consultation document called *Greater Flexibilities for Change of Use*. Its implementation, by Eric Pickles's Department for Communities and Local Government, is said to be "imminent".

Unless modified, the measure will give the lie to repeated promises by the Government to "maintain protection" for National Parks and AONBs, made during the *Telegraph's* campaign over its controversial planning reforms. And it will make a mockery of David Cameron's protestation at the time that he would no more endanger beautiful countryside than "I would put at risk my own family".

At first sight, the scheme – brainchild of the iconoclastic planning minister,

Nick Boles – seems unexceptional. It will allow "redundant" farm buildings to be replaced by up to three houses – either by adapting them or tearing them down and rebuilding – without the need to get planning permission.

There are many tens of thousands of such barns and outbuildings, and Mr Pickles, hailing their "huge untapped potential", pledges: "We are determined every one of them is put to good use."

Farmers and landowners are enthusiastic: one survey showed that a quarter of them had at least one suitable building, and were interested in converting it under the scheme. Developers are understandably ecstatic. So what's not to like?

Well, for a start, there is the pragmatic principle that planning is needed to avoid, for example, even more homes being built on flood plains and ensure that too many new developments do not overstrain schools, doctors' surgeries and transport links. And it is not much of a burden; more than four fifths of all planning applications are approved without significant delay. It seems foolish to dispense with it.

Far worse, this particular plan threatens beautiful parts of Britain, where isolated barns, standing alone in fields, make the landscape special. The stone walls and barns of the Yorkshire Dales, for example, are as important as lakes and fells are to the Lake District or cliffs to the Pembrokeshire coast.

No fewer than 4,500 such field barns – mainly erected in the 18th and 19th centuries to store hay and overwinter



Just add roads, sewers, electricity and street lights: field barns around Gunnerside Bottoms in the Yorkshire Dales National Park

cattle – adorn the Yorkshire Dales National Park. They now risk being fundamentally altered – and often torn down and replaced, if they are not strong enough for conversion – to be turned into little clusters of housing.

And that's just the start. Drives and hardstanding will need to be laid down for the new homes, electricity and telephone lines slung to them. "You would have cars, washing lines, greenhouses, and everything else that goes with a home, springing up in some of the most stunning and nationally protected countryside in England," says Peter Charlesworth, chairman of the Dales' National Park Authority.

"There would be major disruption of the landscape to install the basic infrastructure like sewer and water pipes and the [park] authority would be

powerless to control it or prevent it from happening. Valleys full of fields dotted with stone barns could be transformed into a semi-urban environment."

Nothing could prevent such priceless landscapes as around Muker, with some 25 field barns per square kilometre, becoming irreversibly suburbanised.

Similarly, the High Weald AONB, one of northern Europe's best surviving medieval landscapes, is characterised by more than 3,500 historic farmsteads, many with ancient timber-framed buildings that would be prey to demolition for modern housing.

Bill Hitchens, chairman of the Dartmoor National Park Authority, says the scheme would have "a devastating impact" there. His Peak District equivalent, Tony Favell, says it would "change the character of the area

irreversibly". England's nine national park associations have told Mr Boles of their "deep concern".

The official National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty warns of a "proliferation" of houses as the "character of these protected landscapes changes from agricultural to residential". And wildlife groups point out that rare bats and owls that depend on the old buildings will be endangered.

The scheme requires farmers taking advantage of it to seek "prior approval" of their conversion from local authorities in place of planning permission. But this, say the planners, would only enable officials to influence relatively minor matters, like design, and could not be used to stop developments.

Proponents retort that the measure would provide much-needed affordable

houses. If so, this would surely justify some damage to wildlife and the countryside, since local people desperately need them, especially in national parks. But, in practice, they will not get a look-in. Barn conversions are usually expensive and the resulting houses, in prime locations, will go for premium prices to the wealthy, often for second or third homes.

Worse, as the Yorkshire Dales authority says, the plan will "totally undermine" existing schemes to provide for local needs. National Parks, for example, provide for unobtrusive conversions to allow farmers to house relatives and provide affordable homes. But these would be blown away in the free-for-all, making local people worse off. The National Housing Federation, "the voice of affordable housing", has roundly condemned the scheme.

It is scheduled to go through Parliament on the nod during the next weeks. But on Monday Sarah Wollaston, the Tory MP for Totnes – previously a Dartmoor GP – is holding an adjournment debate on it. She says: "It is very important to have living communities in the National Park, but this is providing housing that will only benefit a few people in the wrong places for our fragile landscapes."

She is also worried that it will harm agriculture in the parks, despite giving often needy farmers a welcome windfall, because it could cause them to concentrate on property development rather than farming. It could cause the price of farms to soar, putting them out of reach of new entrants. And by depriving local authorities of any control, it torpedoed the government's professed commitment to "localism".

Other recent planning liberalisations, such as enabling shops to be turned into houses, have been banned in protected areas. No wind farms have been built in National Parks and AONBs. At the very least they should be exempted from this pervasive measure that threatens to destroy their beauty and their inhabitants' chances of affordable housing.

At this late stage, it will probably take the Prime Minister to step in. He should do so, if the permanent suburbanisation of many of Britain's best-loved landscapes is not to become one of his Government's most enduring legacies.

## The planning system is in a shambles as ministers kowtow to property developers

This winter's floods underline the need for more planning, not less. Houses are still being built on flood plains, with errant councils simply failing to inform the Environment

Agency that they are not heeding its warnings.

In a letter published in yesterday's *Daily Telegraph*, leaders of 17 of the country's top professional bodies called for a rethink of the planning

system to ensure that future inundations are minimised through the use of measures, originally canvassed in this column seven weeks ago, to slow the rush of water downstream by holding it

in the hills and installing "sustainable drainage systems" (SUDS).

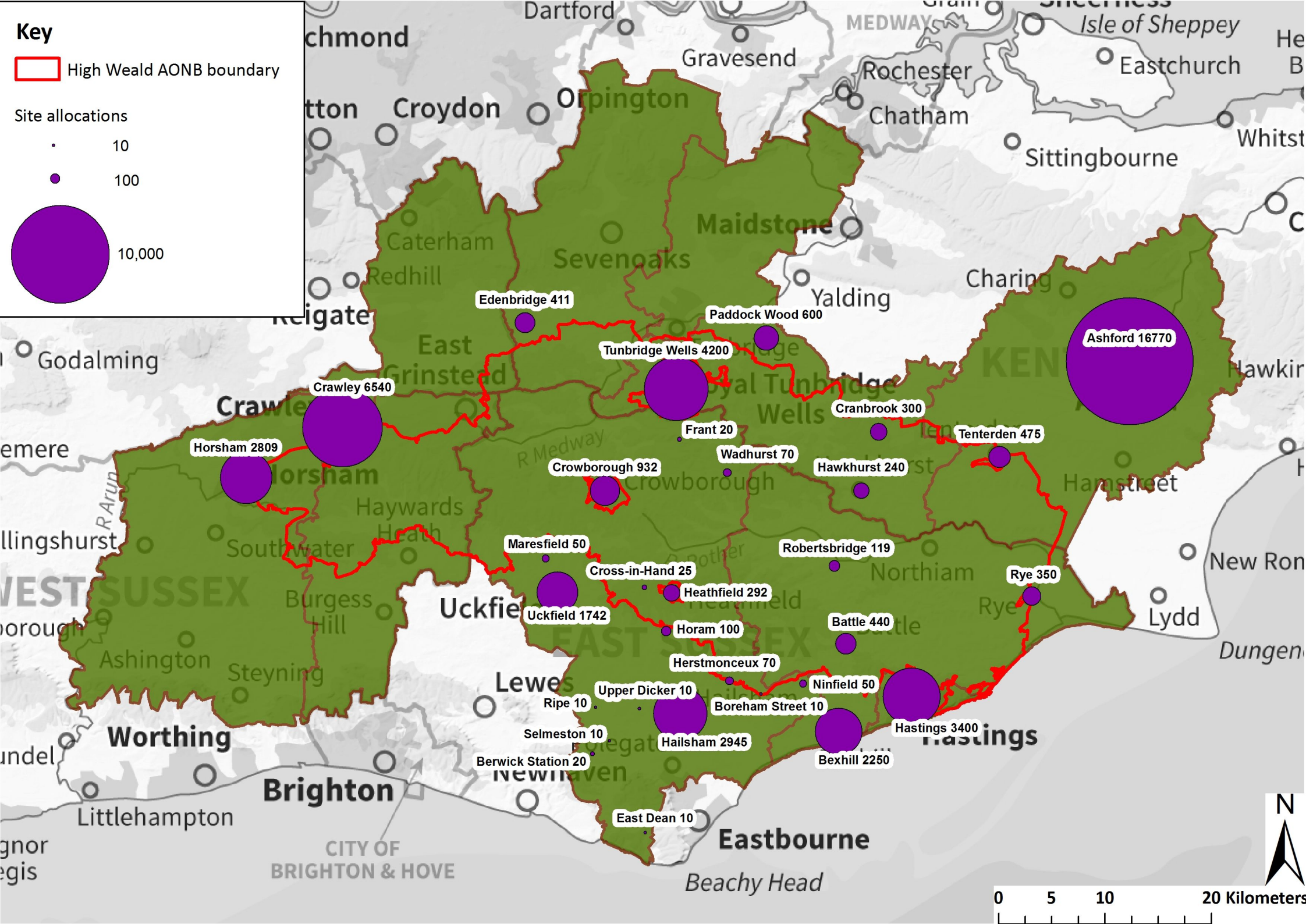
But the thrust of the Government's policies and practices is going the other way. Ministers bend over

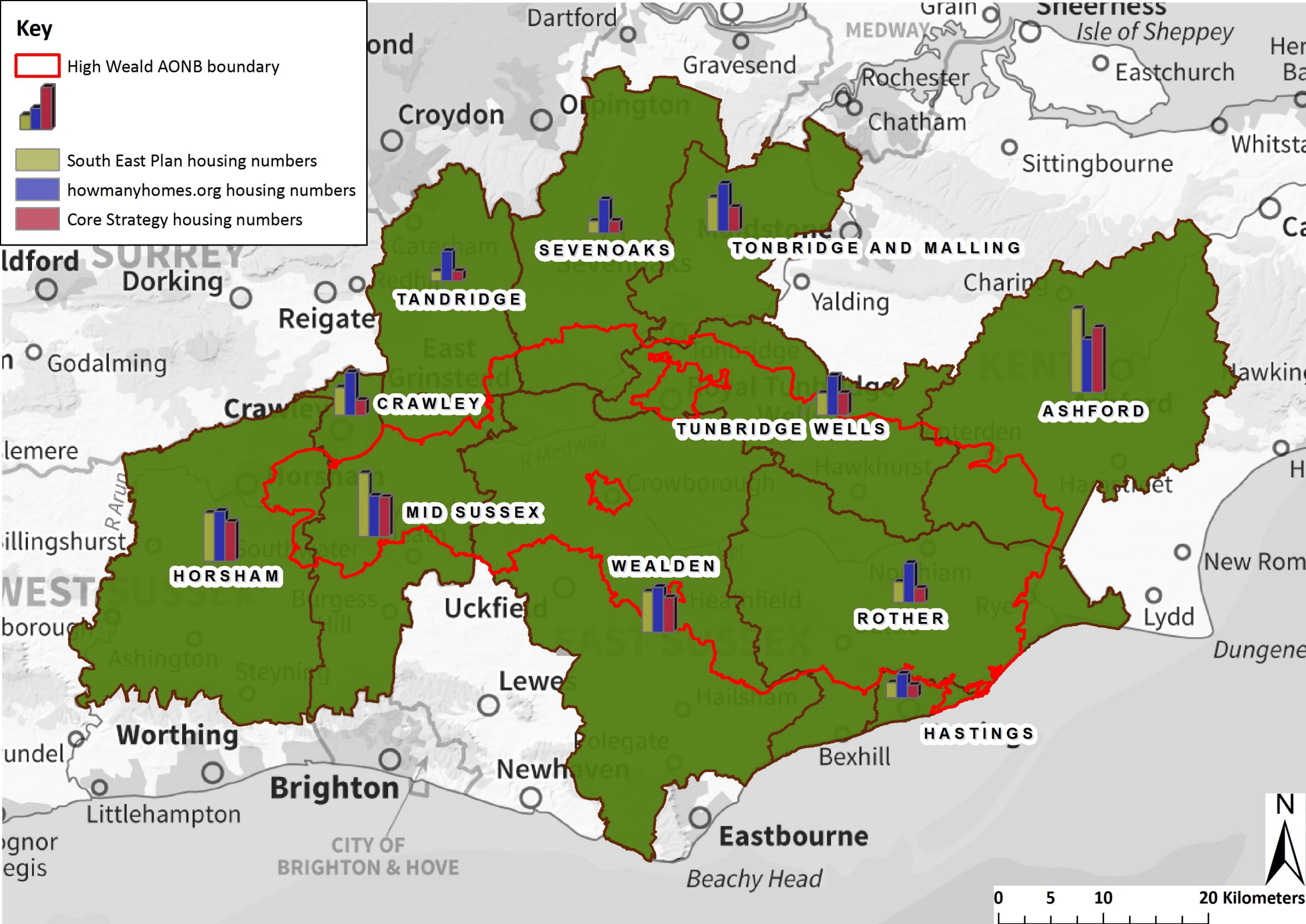
backwards to please developers – who prefer to build on flat greenfield land – and have refused to implement legislation on SUDS that was passed four years ago. They promoted a development

free-for-all in their planning reforms and though they had to modify it after a campaign in this newspaper, they blithely ignore their own rules when they want. The plans to convert barns

(see above), for example, flout undertakings to safeguard protected landscapes and avoid "isolated" new homes in the countryside.

It is high time for an end to this anarchy.





**Key**

- High Weald AONB boundary
- Houses allocated in core strategy
- Houses already built and/or committed
- Total numbers where breakdown unavailable



## High Weald Officer Steering Group

Notes of a meeting of the High Weald Officer Steering Group held on Tuesday 11 February 2014 at 2 pm, Council Chambers, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Town Hall.



Clerk to JAC: Samantha Nicholas

### PRESENT:

David Marlow, Rother District Council (Chair)  
David Scully, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (Vice-chair)  
David Greenwood, Surrey County Council  
David Phillips, Wealden District Council  
Virginia Pullan, East Sussex County Council  
Murray Davidson, Hastings Borough Council  
Ruth Childs, Kent County Council  
Jennifer Hollingum, Mid-Sussex County Council  
Brenda Fazzani, Ashford Borough Council  
Sally Marsh, Co-Director High Weald Unit  
Jason Lavender, Co-Director High Weald Unit  
Andrew Shaw, High Weald AONB Unit

Action

### 1. MINUTES

1.1 The Minutes of the meeting of 8 October 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

1.2 David Scully opened the meeting as David Marlow had been delayed. The following actions from the minutes were reviewed:

Sam Nicholas

**6.1** The Value of AONBs Partnerships report will be sent to the OSG Members. This was originally sent with the JAC Reports, 8 November 2013.

**8.1** Kent CC Solar Farm report is still in draft form. Ruth Child's will enquire to see if this can be distributed to the Members. The Unit are in the process of investigating the best mechanism to distribute more sensitive reports for the Members to view securely.

**9.1** The Restocking of the High Weald Report is to be issued to the Members directly.

**7.3** The OSG Sub-group, to review strategic policies and supporting design guidance, has been initiated and will be discussed further under agenda item 5.

## 2. **APOLOGIES**

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from: Tom Nutt, Crawley BC, Geoff Mee, ESCC, Aeron Rees, Horsham DC, Paul Newdick, Tandridge DC, Jackie Lewis, WSCC, Julia Coneybeer, Natural England, Ria Hotchin, Tonbridge & Malling BC.

## 3 **NPPF- update on response to Chairman's Letter**

- 3.1 David Marlow initiated a discussion around the responses received from the Chairman's Letter from Lord de Mauley and Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP.
- 3.2 Sally Marsh informed the Members that the South East & East AONB Directors group had requested that all AONBs lobby central government individually. Surrey Hills AONB had also received a similar response from central government.
- 3.3 David Phillips informed the Members that Natural England had written to all local authorities requesting a point of contact to conduct a half an hour telephone interview on planning policy issues in the AONB.

It was suggested that the factual information could be collated as a group and where viable each local authority should send a written response to the Unit in relation to the overall policy issues in relation to the AONB.

- 3.4 **Action: A holding response from Cllr Brian Kentfield to be pulled together that highlights the specific housing number pressure on local authorities within the AONB. The Unit will coordinate appeal statements to contribute to the body of evidence to contribute to a final response to the ministerial letter.** Andrew Shaw

**Letter to be circulated to Members.**

## 4 **SETTING OF AONB – presentation of geodata from Natural England (NE)**

- 4.1 Andrew Shaw presented the maps from the High Weald Zones of Potential Visual Impact presentation issued by Natural England.
- The main aim of the tool is to show how visible something may

- be from a particular point in the setting of the AONB.
- 4.2 The tool is based on topography alone and does not take into account existing trees, woodlands and buildings, to provide a worst case scenario. The tool does not depict risk, make assumptions on visual impacts, as this will depend on a variety of factors such as scale, nature, setting of development, whether views are currently masked by woodland or urban areas.
- 4.4 NE will be using this tool in the screening systems, by the planning hub, to help in judging whether a proposal is likely to have visual impacts or not, amongst other considerations.
- The local authorities can receive the GIS data from Michael Knight at NE, E: [Michael.Knight@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:Michael.Knight@naturalengland.org.uk)**
- Ruth Childs explained that NE uses a simple scoring system to assess impact on AONB designation and that this mapping could be part of that simple scoring. David Phillips indicated that it would be useful for appeal decisions and as part of the scoping exercise.
- 4.5 **Action:** The Unit
- It was requested that Julia Coneybeer should be invited to the next meeting to discuss the uses of this data further for local authorities.**
- Presentation has been sent to Members.**
- 5. AONB POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING DESIGN ADVICE – UPDATE**
- 5.1 David Marlow thanked the Members who were able to respond to the questionnaire on current and planned housing numbers. He indicated that he was now in a position to produce a position statement for the sub-group which will lead on AONB policy and design guidance. David Marlow
- Action: David Marlow to produce a synopsis of results and circulate to Members.**
- Please find results appended.**
- 5.2 Andrew Shaw shared with the Members the initial housing data collated from the local authority's core strategies showing site allocations; houses allocated in core strategy; housing already built and or committed and total numbers where breakdown is available. A bar chart is also available depicting these values

- for each local authority
- 5.3 **Action: Information to be distributed to the Members. It was requested that the Members check the data and feedback changes so that this be developed as supporting guidance to the housing pressure within the AONB Please find maps and background data appended** All District Council Representatives  
Sam Nicholas
- 5.4 The High Weald Settlement Design workshop briefing and summary notes were circulated to the Members. Planning sites at Hawkhurst and Cranbrook were reviewed by Brendan Chester-Kadwell, Oldackre Associates and Chris Surfleet, Alliance Planner, Sally Marsh and Andrew Shaw. David Scully was unavailable to attend the site visits.
- 5.5 Ruth Childs highlighted the issue that a lack of guidance for developers led to an off-the-peg vernacular design automatically being chosen for sites in Kent. The group agreed that the findings from this workshop would be useful as part of the sub-committee review of AONB Policy.
- 5.6 The structure of the sub-group was discussed and it was agreed that:  
David Scully would Chair the group.  
External experts would also be co-opted onto the sub-group.  
The following individuals agreed to participate; Ruth Childs, KCC; Virginia Pullan, ESCC; Marina Brigginsshaw, Wealden DC and Andrew Shaw, High Weald AONB Unit.  
Members from Mid-Sussex CC or Tandridge DC would also be invited to participate.  
Post-note: Jennifer Hollingum, Mid-Sussex CC has agreed to participate in sub-group.
7. **GATWICK POSITION – VERBAL REPORT AS**
- 7.1 Andrew Shaw highlighted information from the GATCOM meeting held in November 2013. The key changes are the management of the flight path stacking system to a new process, 'Point Merge'. This may have an impact on tranquillity in the High Weald AONB. The Members were asked whether a unified response should be taken to the JAC. It was discussed that the consideration should be to lessen the impact of noise pollution whilst avoiding tranquil areas of AONB. It was also acknowledge that there would be a trade off between noise

levels and carbon dioxide emissions. The group agreed that Gatwick impacts and noise related issues had a low priority and that no further action was required by the Unit in this regard at present.

**Actions:**

Sam Nicholas

**Andrew Shaw to circulate comments from London Airspace Consultation.**

**Ruth Childs to circulate KCC's response.**

**No further action on Gatwick required at present**

**8. SUSTAINABLE LIVING, AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY AND LAND MANAGEMENT – APPEAL DECISION, DAVID PHILLIPS**

- 8.1 David Phillips led a discussion on the appeal decision at Quicken Wood, Blackboys which had been circulated to the Members. The appeal was allowed and personal permission was awarded to the owners, who have lived in the wood in temporary accommodation, since 2002. This appeal decision was highlighted as a test case as it may lead to other similar appeals being submitted, using sustainable lifestyle as the appeal mechanism.

**9. MOU AND BUDGETS**

- 9.1 Jason Lavender discussed with the group the need to have some mechanism of agreement for budget purposes. The Memorandum of Understanding is in need of renewal. It was explained that with the current financial pressures the Unit would not be able to produce different service level agreements for each local authority. Wealden DC is the only authority that the Unit holds a community landscape agreement with. This is tailored to the annual outputs Wealden DC receives.

Jason Lavender

**Action: It was agreed that the Unit will investigate an alternative partnership agreement which could be adopted by all local authorities.**

**10. MANAGEMENT PLAN APPROVAL AND IMPLEMENTATION**

- 10.1 All local authorities are in the process of adopting the Management Plan and no issues with the process were highlighted at the meeting.
- 10.2 David Phillips informed the group that the adoption of the Management Plan has given him an opportunity to raise its

profile within other services such as Tourism. David Scully also welcomed any opportunities for the Unit to present to services such as the Economic Development Team within Tunbridge Wells BC.

- 10.3 **Action: It was agreed that each local authority would like to receive hardcopies of the final version of the High Weald Management Plan.** The Unit

**Number of copies will be determined by printing costs.**

## **11. AONB UPDATE**

- 11.1 Jason Lavender updated the group on AONB matters:

Phase 2 of the feasibility study of the restocking of the High Weald is underway and should be completed by April 2014.

- 11.2 The funds that were initially raised for the Brede and Battle Landscape Partnership Scheme are to be used to operate a Farm Habitat Enhancement Project. This is a similar fund to the Community Landscape grant and to be managed by Paul Cobb on a contract basis.

- 11.3 It was reported that there has been an appointment of a part-time Communication & Marketing Officer, Peter D'Aguiar. The part-time Education Officer post has also been appointed. Janice Cooper will start at the Unit at the beginning of March. Jason Lavender thanked all the local authorities that had agreed to support the extension of the High Weald Heroes programme.

- 11.4 The Unit will extend an invitation to Lord De Mauley to visit the High Weald AONB.

## **12. ITEMS FOR MANAGEMENT BOARD AND JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

- 12.1 A business strategy draft is to be submitted to the Management Board on 5 March 2014.

- 12.2 The group were informed that the JAC Meeting on Wednesday 26 March, will be held at Hendall Manor Barn nr Heron Ghyll. It will be a celebration of the launch of the High Weald Management Plan. David Martin, Historic Buildings,UCL, will present a 'walk and talk' on the Heritage of the Hendall Manor site.

## **13. AOB – USE OF HLC DATA BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

- 13.1 Brenda Fazzani is in the process of updating landscape policies for Ashford BC and requested to receive best practise

- examples from the other local authorities.
- 13.2 Historic Landscape Character data was discussed and how there may be an opportunity for better interpretation. Invitation was extended to David Scully to join a HLC workshop with Liz Dyson, KCC and Nicola Bannister.
  - 13.3 Next OSG Meeting, time and date to be advised.

Committee: **High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee**  
Date: **26 March 2014**  
Title of Report: **Revenue Budget 2014/15**  
By: **Deputy Treasurer to the Joint Advisory Committee**  
Purpose of Report: **To consider the Revenue Budget 2014/15**

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Advisory Committee is recommended to:

1. **approve the Revenue Budget for 2014/15;**
  2. **thank Defra and partner authorities for their contributions towards core costs and High Weald Heroes.**
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## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report sets out the budget for 2014/15 following a consultation approved by this committee in November 2013.
- 1.2 The budget supports the High Weald AONB Business Plan 2014-2017 which sets out how the High Weald AONB Unit will deliver its core functions and enable implementation of the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2014-2019.

## 2. FINANCIAL APPRAISAL

- 2.1 This report details the forecast out-turn for the current financial year and the proposed budget for 2014/15. Appendix A summarises the forecast out-turn for 2014/15, the proposed budget for 2014/15 and the indicative budget for 2015/16.
- 2.2 The budget assumes that the Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) contribution will be £255,588 for 2014/15 which is 77.5% of their 2010/11 contribution (£329,700). This contribution has been approved by Ministers as set out in a Defra's letter to AONBs of 20 December 2013.
- 2.3 Savings of £5,900 and an increase in Other Income of £4,400 has been required to achieve a balanced budget.

## 3. BUDGET 2013/14

- 3.1 The forecast out-turn for the current financial year shows a small surplus of £2,900. The forecast reserves at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 are £92,100.

#### 4. BUDGET 2014/15

##### Core Budget - Expenditure

4.1 The budget for 2014/15 is presented in Appendix A. It is based on the 2013/14 figures with inflation at the ESCC applied rate of 1% for salaries and 0% for other costs, although there could still be inflationary pressures to costs. The budget allows for:

- (i) Staff costs: a core team of 5.5 FTE staff with incremental progression as a result of revised grades following the Single Status Review of four posts, contributions to the pension fund of 20.10% and inflation at 0%.
- (ii) Accommodation/office equipment costs: rent, rates, office equipment, office maintenance and running costs. It includes savings of £5,800 through a reduction in rent by Plumpton College and a reduction in IT network costs following an in kind upgrade of the network by East Sussex County Council.
- (iii) Core communications: a standstill budget that covers the production of the annual review and minor public relations costs.
- (iv) Partnership running costs: JAC meetings, events, training and audit fees. The increase of £1,300 has arisen from the increase in the NAAONB membership fee following incorporation of AONB regional posts (previously funded by Protected Landscapes project budgets) into the NAAONB core budget.
- (v) Support services: East Sussex County Council's charges for IT, personnel and financial support.
- (vi) Costs of £18,800 arising from the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) accommodation pricing policy have been removed from the budget presented to the JAC in November 2013 as this policy no longer applies. ESCC made a contribution to the budget to match these costs so they have never had a net effect on the budget, however their removal has reduced the JAC's gross expenditure budget.

4.2 In order to achieve a balanced budget, net savings of £2,200 have been made, summarised as follows:

Incremental staff costs	£4,500
Partnership running costs	£1,300
Accommodation/Office Equipment	-£5,800
Additional Other Income	<u>-£2,200</u>
Total Net Savings	<b>£-2,200</b>

##### Core Budget - Income

###### **Defra**

4.3 The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has a funding agreement with AONBs which provides for a flexible 'single pot' contribution for core, projects and the sustainable development fund (SDF).

Defra has reduced its funding to AONBs by 22.5% over four years from 2011/12 to 2014/15, compared with the 2010/11 levels.

- 4.4 The 2013/14 contribution was £276,400 which has been allocated as follows:-
- £214,700 to core expenditure
  - £61,700 to the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) and Projects.
- 4.5 Defra's total contribution for 2014/15 is shown in appendix A. It has been reduced to £255,588 (£214,700 to Core and £40,888 to SDF and Projects), to reflect 77.5% of the 2010/11 contribution.

### **Local Authority Contributions**

- 4.6 The respective levels of support from each authority are shown in Appendix A.
- 4.7 In respect of core costs, all authorities have confirmed their contributions at 2013/14 levels. Kent County Council have provisionally approved subject to the formal approval of their budget in April 2014.
- 4.8 High Weald Heroes has attracted support from the following authorities: East and West Sussex County Councils, and Surrey County Council; the Borough Councils of Hastings, Tonbridge and Malling, and Crawley; and the District Councils of Horsham, Sevenoaks, Wealden, Ashford and Mid-Sussex. Kent County Council have provisionally approved subject to the formal approval of their budget in April 2014. A sum of £3,725 is available to continue the Scheme in those funding partners' areas.

### **Self funding projects**

- 4.9 JAC expenditure on self-funding projects is presented at Appendix B and is estimated to be £163,500.
- 4.10 It is proposed to allocate £40,888 from the Defra 'single pot' to the Sustainable Development Fund (£25,160) and other projects (£15,728).
- 4.11 The total contribution to JAC expenditure on self-funding projects is estimated at £163,500. Appendix B indicates contributions from local authority partners to projects, including High Weald Heroes.
- 4.12 All projects have a balanced budget over the total life of the project. Income is allocated on a pro rata basis over the relevant number of financial years to give a net balance of zero.
- 4.13 A sum of £250,000 has been contributed by East Sussex County Council towards the Developing Battle and Brede Landscape Partnership Scheme and is being held as project income in advance.

## **5. FINANCIAL ISSUES 2015/16 AND BEYOND**

- 5.1 To achieve a balanced budget for 2014/15 savings of £5,800 have been made in the JAC's budget through reductions to accommodation costs and an additional income of £6,400 has been secured.
- 5.2 Based on 2014/15 assumptions it is forecast that the contributions from Defra and local authorities will result in a deficit of £8,700 in 2015/16. This assumes the Defra contribution will not be reduced further in 2015/16 as advised by Defra in December 2013. It does not take into account the impact of the Single Status Review of the Administrator and Team Support Officer posts on the staff budget.

- 5.3 This situation is set to continue with further reductions in the Defra contribution from 2016/17 and inflation and staff pay increments increasing the potential annual deficit.
- 5.3 In the short term Defra funding is being allocated from projects to core functions in order to meet the core budget deficit, with a sufficient project budget being retained to ensure there is a capacity to deliver smaller partnership projects.
- 5.3 Work to identify further savings options and income streams is ongoing and a restructuring of the AONB Unit and redundancies may be required.
- 5.3 From 2015/16 there is a risk, based on early advice from the Treasury, that Defra will not contribute to future redundancy costs. All of the estimated reserves at 31 March 2015 of £92,100 would be required in a worst case scenario of all staff being made redundant.
- 5.5 The number and scale of self-financing projects has declined significantly. Without schemes of a sufficient scale to employ project officers, new self-financing projects will be dependent on whether core staff have the time to develop and deliver project in addition to their core advisory and other activities.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The 2014/15 core budget is a balanced budget which provides the JAC with the capacity to deliver its core functions; albeit with some activities at a reduced level.
- 6.2 The project budget reflects the fact new projects are more modest in scale with their development and delivery dependent on core, not project staff.
- 6.3 On this basis the JAC is recommended to agree the budget.

MO HEMSLEY

Deputy Treasurer to the High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee

2012/13 Actual	2013/14		2014/15					2015/16
	Budget	Outturn	Original Budget	Inflation	Budget Pressures	Other	Budget	Indicative Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Actual Details</b>								
<b>Expenditure</b>								
224.8 Staff costs	228.0	223.4	228.0	1.7	2.8	0.0	232.6	239.5
44.6 Accommodation/office equipment	40.0	42.1	40.0	0.0	0.0	(5.8)	34.2	34.2
3.7 Communication costs	3.5	2.7	3.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5	3.5
10.2 Partnership running costs	6.7	7.0	6.7	0.0	1.3	0.0	8.0	8.0
27.3 Support services	27.3	27.3	27.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	27.3	27.3
<b>310.6 Total Core Expenditure</b>	<b>305.5</b>	<b>302.5</b>	<b>305.5</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>(5.8)</b>	<b>305.6</b>	<b>312.5</b>
219.5 JAC expenditure on self-funding projects	47.0	59.9	44.0	0.0	0.0	69.5	113.5	100.3
59.8 Defra expenditure on self-funding projects	61.8	61.8	61.8	0.0	0.0	(20.9)	40.9	36.4
2.4 Project Enabling Fund expenditure on self-funding projects	1.4	1.4	1.4	0.0	0.0	7.7	9.1	9.9
281.7 Total JAC expenditure on self-funding projects	110.2	123.1	107.2	0.0	0.0	56.3	163.5	146.6
<b>592.3 Total Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>415.7</b>	<b>425.6</b>	<b>412.7</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>50.5</b>	<b>469.0</b>	<b>459.1</b>
<b>Core Contributions</b>								
232.1 Defra	214.7	214.7	214.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	214.7	214.7
22.4 East Sussex County Council	22.4	22.4	22.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	22.4	22.4
12.2 Kent County Council	10.0	10.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	10.0
9.3 West Sussex County Council	9.3	9.3	9.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.3	9.3
2.9 Surrey County Council	2.9	2.9	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9	2.9
7.2 Wealden District	7.2	7.2	7.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.2	7.2
7.2 Rother District Council	7.2	7.2	7.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.2	7.2
5.6 Mid Sussex District Council	5.6	5.6	5.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.6	5.6
6.7 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	6.7	6.7	6.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.7	6.7
4.7 Horsham District Council	4.7	4.7	4.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.7	4.7
3.6 Sevenoaks District Council	3.6	3.6	3.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.6	3.6
0.8 Ashford Borough Council	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.8
1.5 Hastings Borough Council	1.5	1.5	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5	1.5
2.2 Tandridge District Council	2.2	2.2	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	2.2
0.3 Crawley Borough Council	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3
0.3 Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3
(4.5) Other Income	4.0	6.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	6.2	4.4
<b>314.4 Total Core Contributions</b>	<b>303.3</b>	<b>305.4</b>	<b>303.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>305.5</b>	<b>303.8</b>
<b>Local Authority Project Enabling Fund Contributions</b>								
2.4 Project Enabling Fund: (to)/from balances	1.4	1.4	1.4	0.0	0.0	7.7	9.1	9.1
<b>2.4 Total Local Authority Project Enabling Fund Contributions</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>9.1</b>
59.8 Defra contributions to self-funding projects	61.8	61.8	61.8	0.0	0.0	(20.9)	40.9	36.4
219.5 JAC contributions to self-funding projects	47.0	59.9	44.0	0.0	0.0	69.5	113.5	100.3
<b>596.1 Total Contributions</b>	<b>413.5</b>	<b>428.5</b>	<b>410.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>58.5</b>	<b>469.0</b>	<b>449.6</b>
<b>3.8 Transfer (from)/to reserves</b>	<b>(2.2)</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>(2.2)</b>	<b>(1.7)</b>	<b>(4.1)</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>(0.0)</b>	<b>(9.5)</b>
(3.8) Total (surplus)/deficit for year	0.0	(2.9)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.5
85.4 Reserves Brought Forward	89.2	89.2	92.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	92.1	92.1
3.8 Transfer (from)/to reserves	(2.2)	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(0.0)	(9.5)
<b>89.2 Reserves Carried Forward</b>	<b>87.0</b>	<b>92.1</b>	<b>92.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>92.1</b>	<b>82.6</b>

	Budget 2013/14			Outurn 2013/14			Indicative Budget 2014/15		
	Exp	Income	Net	Exp	Income	Net	Exp	Income	Net
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
<b>1 Historic Settlements</b>									
JAC expenditure	3.0			6.7			8.0		
Defra		0.0			(3.7)			0.0	
JAC Partnership Enabling Fund		0.0			0.0			0.0	
Local Authorities		0.0			0.0			(4.0)	
Other		(3.0)	0.0		(3.0)	0.0		(4.0)	0.0
<b>2 Weald and Downs Ancient Woodland Project</b>									
JAC expenditure	0.0			1.2			1.2		
Defra		0.0			0.0			0.0	
Local Authorities		0.0			(1.2)			(1.2)	
Forestry Commission		0.0			0.0			0.0	
Other (including non-AONB NE contributions)		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0
<b>3 Protected Landscapes Joint Working</b>									
JAC expenditure	1.4			1.4			0.0		
JAC Partnership Enabling Fund		(1.4)	0.0		(1.4)	0.0		0.0	0.0
<b>4 Management Plan Review</b>									
JAC expenditure	5.4			3.9			0.0		
Defra		(5.4)	0.0		(3.9)			0.0	
Other					0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0
<b>5 Sustainable Development Fund</b>									
JAC expenditure	30.2			27.4			25.1		
Defra		(30.2)			(27.4)			(25.1)	
Other		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0
<b>6 Living Woods</b>									
JAC expenditure	36.1			32.9			31.8		
Defra		(3.0)			0.0			0.0	
Heritage Lottery Fund		(18.0)			(16.4)			(15.9)	
JAC Partnership Enabling Fund		0.0			0.0			0.0	
Local Authorities		0.0			0.0			0.0	
Other		(15.0)	0.0		(16.4)	0.0		(15.9)	(0.0)
<b>7 High Weald Heroes Phase II</b>									
JAC expenditure	20.1			4.6			18.3		
Defra		(15.1)			(3.7)			(9.1)	
Heritage Lottery Fund		0.0			(0.9)			0.0	
JAC Partnership Enabling Fund		(5.0)			0.0			(9.1)	
Other (primarily charitable trusts)		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0
<b>8 Battle and Brede Landscape Partnership Scheme</b>									
JAC expenditure	8.0			27.7			60.0		
Defra		(8.0)			(22.7)			0.0	
Natural England		0.0			(5.0)			0.0	
Heritage Lottery Fund		0.0			0.0			0.0	
Environment Agency		0.0			0.0			(10.0)	
JAC Partnership Enabling Fund		0.0			0.0			0.0	
Local authorities		0.0			0.0			(50.0)	
			0.0			0.0			0.0
<b>9 Our Land</b>									
JAC expenditure	5.9			4.9			6.6		
Surrey County Council		(5.9)			(4.5)			0.0	
Defra			0.0		(0.3)	0.0		(6.6)	0.0
<b>10 Weald Feasibility Study</b>									
JAC expenditure	0.0			12.5			12.5		
Local Authorities		0.0			(12.5)			(12.5)	
			0.0			0.0		0.0	0.0
JAC expenditure (to Appendix A)	110.1	(47.0)		123.0	(59.9)		163.5	(113.5)	
Project Enabling Fund expenditure (to Appendix A)		(1.4)			(1.4)			(9.1)	
Expenditure Funded by Defra (to Appendix A)		(61.8)			(61.8)			(40.9)	
<b>TOTAL JAC expenditure/income</b>	<b>110.1</b>	<b>(110.1)</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>123.0</b>	<b>(123.0)</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>163.5</b>	<b>(163.5)</b>	<b>(0.0)</b>

**Committee:** High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee  
**Date:** 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014  
**Title of Report:** High Weald AONB projects  
**By:** AONB Director

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to note the report.

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### 1.0 Background

1.1 As a strong partnership organization, the High Weald JAC is an effective advocate for the AONB and it is able to play a leading role identifying and promoting a range of approaches to support the responsible and sustainable management of one of England's finest landscapes. One of the approaches that has consistently proved successful is the initiation and management of a range of projects following bids to external organizations for funds and other support.

### 2.0 Brede Valley Farm Habitat Pilot Project

2.1 Members will recall from the last JAC meeting that the AONB Unit had been unsuccessful with the 2012 and 2013 applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the maximum grant of £2 million to support a large scale Landscape Partnership Schemes (LPS) for the Battle and Brede area.

2.2 However, and in view of the £250,000 the AONB Unit had already secured (which was to be used as a contribution to the proposed Battle and Brede LPS), the AONB Unit has established a pilot farm habitat project for the Brede Valley following a discussion with some interest groups and individuals including landowners and farmers.

2.3 Paul Cobb, a well regarded and experienced farm habitat advisor based in Kent, will be contracted to work with landowners and farmers in the Brede valley to advise, guide and implement farm habitat works in collaboration with the local landowners and farmers. The project is to be a pilot initially and Paul Cobb will work a set number of days this year starting in April and co-ordinate a grant to contribute to habitat enhancement and/or creation works on farms following an application from the farms.

2.4 A project board will consider each application and approve (or not) proposed farm habitat improvements. The members are James Seymour (Natural England), Leo Hickish (Chairman, Sussex Country Landowners Association), Diana Cook (Environment Agency), Fran Southgate (Sussex Wildlife Trust), James Osman (National Farmers Union), Cllr Brian Kentfield and Jason Lavender (High Weald JAC). At the end of the pilot contract the project board will decide whether this pilot project has been successful and if so continue the same approach until the fund is spent.

**3.0 Restocking the Weald. Securing the future of livestock farming in the High Weald's working landscape**

3.1 Dr Bill Vorley gave a presentation on this issue at an earlier meeting of the JAC. The initial report identified a number of specific causes for the decline in livestock farming in the area notably the increase of non-farmers in farmland ownership, an ageing farming population, and the difficulty young and aspiring farmers face getting into the livestock sector and it proposes a range of measures that may address these issues.

3.2 The second phase of this research - a feasibility study - as the first step towards developing and establishing a coordinated partnership scheme for the High Weald AONB and the Low Weald started in November and is due to be completed by the end of May 2014.

**4.0 Our Land – sustainable rural tourism for the south east's protected landscapes**

4.1 Our Land began almost four years ago as a joint collaboration between nine protected landscapes in the south east of England and the private company responsibletravel.com to develop and promote sustainable rural tourism. Tourism businesses are selected to join Our Land based on their efforts to conserve and promote the much-loved features of the protected landscape they operate within.

4.2 In the High Weald a number of successful and fully booked events have been held since November to assist businesses with promotion and marketing and concentrating on the use of social media, making and editing promotional videos, and making use of the High Weald landscape as a 'unique selling point.'

**5.0 Living Woods**

5.1 Living Woods represents the third phase of the High Weald Ancient Woodland Restoration programme and is financially supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Forestry Commission and the Woodland Trust. The AONB Woodland Officer continues to make contact with woodland owners and to provide woodland management advice.

5.2 The project has organized and run a number of events since November. 22 people attended a Woodlands and Game Management seminar hosted by a local shooting syndicate and a charitable trust and supported and attended by the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) and the Game, Wildlife and Conservation Trust (GWCT). 25 people spent a day learning about medieval woodworking techniques from Dr Damian Goodburn of the Museum of London and 50 people attended a wood-fuel demonstration event run in conjunction with the Forestry Commission and the Kent Downs AONB partnership.

**6.0 Kent Food, Farming and Landscape Award - Taste of Kent Awards 2014**

6.1 For the second year the High Weald AONB partnership jointly sponsored the 'Kent Food, Farming and Landscape Award.' This award, also sponsored by the Kent Downs AONB partnership, was won by the Lingham family of Court Farm at Upper Halling. The award is supported by the National Farmers Union and the Country Land and Business Association and forms part of the Produced in Kent inspired Taste of Kent Awards.

## **7.0 Research**

- 7.1** The AONB Research Officer has continued to undertake research on current and emerging rural and land use issues of relevance to the AONB Unit's remit, which can subsequently be used by both the AONB Unit staff and the wider AONB partnership.

## **8.0 High Weald Community Landscape Fund**

- 8.1** This fund, previously known as the Sustainable Development Fund, has continued to provide grants to the local community for social, environmental and economic projects within the AONB. The AONB Unit receives applications for financial support for projects from individuals and local interest groups, which are assessed and awarded by an external Grants Panel. This annual grant runs from April to March each year and this year there is a fund of £15,000 available.

## **9.0 Conclusions and Recommendation**

- 9.1** Given the current financial recession, it is more apparent than ever that the competition for comparatively limited funds is currently very strong. However, the High Weald AONB JAC has a long and successful record raising significant funds from a variety of sources to support innovative demonstration and research projects within the AONB and it is hoped that this hard-won experience will ensure the AONB JAC continues to attract and secure support from a variety of public, private and charitable sources for its work.

Contact: JD Lavender, AONB Co-Director, [j.lavender@highweald.org](mailto:j.lavender@highweald.org)

**Committee:** High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee  
**Date:** 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014  
**Title of Report:** High Weald AONB Unit - Staff  
**By:** High Weald AONB Director

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Advisory Committee is recommended to note the report.

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### **1.0 AONB Communication and Marketing Officer - part-time fixed term post**

**1.1** Members will recall that the core Unit staff posts of Interpretation Officer (full time) and Finance Administrator (part time) had been vacant since 2008 and the Research Officer (full time) had also been vacant since 2012 following Ruth Child's resignation from the post.

**1.2** To fulfil the needs of the AONB work programme, the High Weald Management Board approved the recruitment of a part time AONB Communication and Marketing Officer on a fixed-term contract until the end of March 2015.

**1.3** In February Peter d'Aguilar was recruited to this post and will, among other things, lead events, give presentations, develop and promote the website, work with others to develop and implement communication and interpretation projects, and generally promote the High Weald AONB to a variety of individuals and interest groups.

### **2.0 Education Officer - High Weald Heroes**

**2.1** The well regarded High Weald Heroes (HWH) primary school education project began as a pilot in 2007 and was extended across the entire AONB in May 2009.

**2.2** Although applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund for financial support for a full-time post have been unsuccessful, contributions from local authority partners and Defra have made it possible to fund a part-time post for two years.

**2.3** In February Janice Cooper was recruited to the post and will work closely with schools in the High Weald to encourage children to learn about their local landscape to ensure the children and the wider school community value, gain access to and care for the area in a variety of ways each tailored to the individual school or teachers' needs.

### **4.0 Research Officer - part-time fixed term post**

**4.1** Charles Winchester has had his part-time (three days/week) contract extended until the end of March 2015. Charles will continue to provide technical support for the AONB Unit and undertake the AONB Unit's research and data work programme.

### **5.0 Conclusions and Recommendation**

**5.1** Members are asked to note the report.

Contact: JD Lavender AONB Co-Director, [j.lavender@highweald.org](mailto:j.lavender@highweald.org)

## Agenda Item No. 11

**Committee:** High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee  
**Date:** 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014  
**Title of Report:** Risk Management  
**By:** AONB Director

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

1. Note the report and;
2. Request that the Management Board meet to review significant risks as required and develop options for their management.

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#### 1.0 Background

1.1 Members are aware that as part of the process of producing the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee's annual external accounts ten control objectives are assessed. One of the control objectives is:

- Significant risks to achieving High Weald objectives are recorded and assessed and the adequacy of arrangements reviewed.

1.2 The key risks to the Joint Advisory Committee are set out in Appendix A.

1.3 Given that the Joint Advisory Committee's work is reliant on partnership contributions and the need to successfully raise external funding, the cause of the most significant risks is financial.

1.4 Over the last 3 financial years, a reduction of 16.3% in the Defra contribution has required financial cuts to address the arising budget deficit.

1.5 These cuts have been achieved by planned cuts to the core budget involving: a significant reduction in the communications budget, leading to the loss of the High Weald Anvil; reductions in the staff budget made possible by not recruiting to the vacant Finance Officer and Interpretation Officer posts; ending of the contract with ESCC to provide the clerk service to the JAC; a reduction in the budget for IT development and reduction in the JAC's project/SDF budget.

1.6 The affect of these cuts have, in part, been mitigated through: the work of the JAC's project officers who have delivered communication activities as part of self-financing projects; the absorption of the essential work activities of vacant posts/roles by other staff, in particular the AONB Business Manager and Team Support Officer; and the recruitment of consultants where absolutely necessary to meet the deficit in skills or resources.

## **2.0 Key risks 2014/15 and beyond**

**2.1** Further reductions in financial contributions by the JAC partnership towards the JAC's core business will mean that the JAC will be unable to maintain the current level of work under the Business Strategy 2010/14 headings, which are:

- Preparing, monitoring and reviewing the AONB Management Plan
- Co-ordinating action and enabling delivery of the AONB Management Plan by individuals and communities
- Providing advice and guidance to partners on CroW, Section 85
- Adding value to our partners' wider landscape and environmental objectives within the AONB
- Enabling the JAC to be an effective champion for the High Weald.

**2.2** As a consequence, the key risks to note are:

- AONB Unit staff will continue to undertake the JAC's clerk service (to date provided in turn by West Sussex and East Sussex County Councils) and this may result in a more informal service to the JAC.
- A reduced budget for the AONB Unit's accommodation and running costs will make it more difficult for the AONB Unit to maintain its computer systems to capitalise on developments in Information Technology. This may result in less efficient ways of working.
- Existing staff will have to continue to accommodate the essential work of vacant posts within their own work programmes. Reduced budgets in 2014/15 mean there is no capacity to bring in consultants to provide support if required.
- Self-financing projects employing project officers have now all but ceased (one temporary part-time project officer remains) which limits the opportunities for project activity to fill work gaps left by a reduced core budget.
- There is currently limited 'local' match funding making it difficult to secure external funding from grant-aiding bodies for new self-financing projects.

**2.3** A risk assessment of reduced activity under each business strategy heading was undertaken in the spring of 2014 to identify priorities and make further decisions on financial, staff and other resource allocation. This assessment considers whether there is scope to mitigate the risks and has been presented to and discussed by the JAC Management Board.

**2.4** Funding uncertainty means that it is hard to forecast the number or scale of self-financing projects during and beyond 2014/15. This makes it harder to plan the allocation of core resources between core functions.

### **3.0 Conclusions and Recommendations**

- 3.1** Risk management systems in line with East Sussex County Council policy are in place.
- 3.2** Since 2010/11 the impact of reduced financial contributions to the JAC core work has been mitigated through the work of the JAC's self-financing projects and by increasing the work and remit of existing AONB Unit staff.
- 3.3** From 2014/15 the impact of reducing contributions to core work will be greater and further cuts in 2015/16 will require more radical changes to the JAC's operations.
- 3.4** During 2014, the JAC will need to prioritise core functions so that a direction for making further decisions about resource allocation from 2015/16 onwards can be set.

Contact: JD Lavender AONB Co-Director [j.lavender@highweald.org](mailto:j.lavender@highweald.org)

## Risk Log

<b>Likelihood Ranking</b>	1 = Improbable (<10%); 2 = Unlikely (10-30%); 3 = Less than Likely (30-50%); 4 = More than Likely (50-80%); 5 = Probable (>80%)
<b>Consequence Ranking</b>	1 = Minor; 2 = Moderate; 3 = Significant; 4 = Substantial; 5 = Grave

<b>Likelihood</b>	5					
	4					
	3					
	2					
	1					
		1	2	3	4	5
		<b>Consequence</b>				

<b>Control Rating</b>	
1. Excessive	Controls exceed the level required to manage the risk
2. Optimal	Controls are comprehensive & commensurate with the risk. All controls are working as intended.
3. Adequate	Some shortfall in level of controls but these do not materially affect the level of residual risk.
4. Inadequate	Weaknesses & inefficiency in controls do not treat the risk as intended.

Unit ref	Risk no	Risk What can go wrong	Root Causes How it can go wrong	Owner	Inherent Risk			Controls / Mitigating Actions Preventative & reactive control measures	Control Owner	Residual Risk			
		Format: EVENT leading to CONSEQUENCE resulting in EFFECT ON PROJECT OBJECTIVES			Likelihood	Consequence	Matrix Zone			Control Rating	Likelihood	Consequence	Matrix Zone
	1	Reduced activity/service due to declining budgets 2014/15 and beyond. JAC with a lower profile as a champion for the High Weald. Less proactive work to enable public understanding, management and enjoyment of the AONB.	Public sector spending cuts affecting Defra and local authorities leading to a further reduction in the JAC's budget.	AONB Director	5	4	Red	Unit to take into account direction of government and local authorities. JAC members and officers involved in and supportive of partnership and able to lobby robustly for funds internally and externally. JAC Chairman, on behalf of partnership, to lobby robustly for maintaining contributions. Alternative sources of core income sought. Options to reduce expenditure e.g. accommodation without adversely affecting on service explored. Planned reduction in scope of JAC's work programme.	AONB Director	2	4	Red	

2	Unit unable to attract external funding for the implementation or coordination of projects that meet AONB Management Plan objectives.	Public sector cuts resulting in difficulties securing funds to match external grants e.g. Heritage Lottery Fund. Without commitment from 'local' partners bids for external funds are not feasible and considered weak by potential donor organizations. Unit objectives do not align with grant-aiding bodies objectives. Increased competition for fewer and smaller grants. Target audiences for grant-aiding bodies do not exist within the High Weald.	AONB Director	4	4	Red	Local authorities requested to consider identifying funds to ensure local matched funds can be used to attract external grants and allow partnership projects to be developed. Keep a clear understanding of grant-aiding bodies objectives. Unit to take into account direction of grant-aiding bodies. Fundraising expertise within the Unit developed and maintained. Alternative fundraising options explored.	AONB Director	2	3	4	Red
3	IT needs not met, Unit unable to work efficiently and undertake research activity, fewer outputs, direction of JAC work programme compromised	Poor links to computer network/server results in slow machine operation, inability to download GIS data, update website etc.	AONB Director	3	3	Amber	Technical advice sought and recommendations/solutions implemented.	AONB Director	3	3	3	Amber
4	Loss of grant aid due to self-financing project outputs not being met	Project staff seeking and moving to new jobs as the current contract end date approaches. Project objectives not completed, undue workload on the remaining AONB core staff to complete project work. Adverse affect to the AONB core work remit and much reduced capacity and time to raise funds to support core work.	AONB Director	4	4	Red	Support and funding secured for retention bonuses. Longer notice periods for project staff. Projects developed and managed to ensure that the completion of key/complex outputs are not planned for the end of the contract. Flexibility built into core staff work programmes in order that there is a capacity to finish self-financing projects if required.	AONB Director	3	4	4	Red
5	AONB advice given by Unit staff not up to date and opportunities missed to ensure AONBs remain at the forefront of national policy.	A rapidly changing external policy environment in terms of planning and land use affecting the AONB.	AONB Director	4	4	Red	Liaison with SEEPL colleagues in the region, NAAONB and local authority colleagues to share information. In the short term scrutinize national policy and consider and examine potential future issues, opportunities and developments.	AONB Director	3	3	3	Amber
6	Future possibility that what is being implemented and coordinated by the AONB Partnership is not valued by Defra due to the loss of the dedicated Landscape Policy Unit within Defra. Cabinet reshuffle resulting in the loss of supportive Defra Minister.	Total loss or severe reduction of national government funding and commitment to AONB Partnerships.	AONB Director	4	5	Red	Continued and concerted engagement with Defra and Natural England and ongoing liaison with and reporting on NAAONB/SEEPL work programmes. Active engagement with Defra Ministers directly and in conjunction with NAAONB and SEEPL. Active engagement of High Weald AONB Patrons.	AONB Director	3	4	5	Red