

High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee



Agenda

Wednesday 27 March 2019, 10.30am, Kilndown Village Hall Church Ln, Kilndown, Cranbrook TN17 2SF followed by lunch.

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 consider the minutes of the last meeting of the JAC held on 28 November 2018 (page 3)
5. Minutes of the Management Board Meeting

To note the matters arising from the Management Board meeting held on 6 March 2019 (page 9)
6. Minutes of the Officer Steering Group

To note the minutes of the last meeting of the OSG held on 30 January 2019 (page 13)
7. AONB Design Guidance for New Developments

To approve the draft version of the AONB Design Guidance (page 19) and to note a presentation from Diane Russell, Rother District Council and the AONB Planning Officer on AONB Design Guidance for New Development, Draft AONB Design Guidance appended.
8. AONB 5 Year Business Strategy

To consider a report and approve the 5 Year Business Strategy report (page 21)
9. Draft Revenue Budget for 2018/19 and Business Plan 2019/2020

To consider and approve a report by the Treasurer on the draft Revenue Budget 2018/2019 (page 26)
10. National AONB 70th Anniversary and JAC 30th Year Anniversary

To consider the report on the events that may be held to celebrate the National and JAC Anniversaries (page 29)
11. Risk Management

To consider a report by the AONB Co-Director on risk management (page 32); Appendix A: High Weald JAC - Key Risks
12. Any other business

Potential date for Joint Advisory Committee Meeting and Awards Ceremony – 27 November 2019

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

Samantha Nicholas
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High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting



Held at 10.30am on Wednesday 27 March 2019, 10.30am, at
Kilndown Village Hall, Kilndown, Kent

Members present:

Cllr B Kentfield	Rother District Council, Vice Chairman
Cllr M Balfour	Kent County Council
Cllr A Pickering	Ashford Borough Council
Cllr C Hersey	Mid Sussex District Council
Cllr M Dickins	Sevenoaks Borough Council
Cllr L Lockwood	Tandridge District Council
Cllr J Soyke	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Cllr P Bradbury	West Sussex County Council
Cllr M Evans	Hastings Borough Council
Cllr I Irvine	Crawley Borough Council
Mr T Bamford	CLA
Mrs J Davison	Community Co-optee

Officers present:

Mr J Lavender	AONB Co-Director, High Weald AONB Unit
Ms G Sherwin	AONB Business Manager, High Weald AONB Unit
Ms C Tester	AONB Planning Adviser, High Weald AONB Unit
Mr A Fowler	Finance Manager, East Sussex County Council
Ms J Hollingum	Planning Officer, Mid Sussex District Council
Mrs D Russell	Design Officer, Rother District Council
Mr M Davidson	Natural Resources Manager, Hastings Borough Council

1. APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Apologies were received from the following Members and officers:
Cllr S Tidy, Cllr L Steeds, David Scully, Virginia Pullan, David Greenwood, Sally Marsh.
- 1.2 The Members were informed that Alison Fields, Forestry Commission has retired. Alison was thanked for her support to the AONB over the years. Matthew Woodcock would stand in whilst her position if being recruited.

2. MEMBERS INTERESTS

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

3. URGENT MATTERS

- 3.1 No urgent matters were raised by the Members.

4. MINUTES OF THE JAC MEETING – 27 November 2018

4.1 It was noted on 4.1 that needed to remove the words ‘not all’

4.2 RESOLVED to amend the minutes and note the minutes of the Management Board held on 27 November 2018 as a correct record

5 MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD– 6 March 2019

5.1 RESOLVED to note the minutes of the Management Board held on 6 March 2019.

6 MINUTES OF THE OFFICER STEERING GROUP – 30 July 2019

6.1 Jennifer Hollingum informed the Members that the OSG meeting had focussed on the adoption of the Management Plan by the local authorities.

6.2 Cllr Irving, Crawley BC and Cllr Lockwood both confirmed that the Management Plan had been adopted. Jennifer confirmed that all local authorities have taken the plan to the various levels of committees and the AONB is awaiting confirmation of their formal adoption.

6.3 In 2017 the Unit held AONB training for Mid Sussex planning officers since this training has been rolled out to Wealden DC in March 2019. Tunbridge Wells BC is hosting a similar training course for their officers and other local authorities that wish to attend in June 2019.

6.4 The local authorities have received the updated Service Level Agreements which follow the timeline of the revised Management Plan and are in the process of being returned.

6.5 There was also a meeting on the AONB Design guidance which is being presented to the Members at this meeting.

6.6 RESOLVED to note: The Minutes of the Officer Steering Group held on 30 January 2019 as a correct record.

7 AONB DESIGN GUIDANCE UPDATE AND PRESENTATION

7.1 Claire Tester gave the background to the development of the AONB Design Guidance for New Builds. The scale of housing approvals and buildings in the AONB is at unprecedented level. A sub-group of the OSG was set up to produce an AONB Design Guide which supported Planners and Developers understanding of the unique characteristics of the AONB.

7.2 In June 2017 Design South East was appointed to help develop the appropriate guidance document. This has been a huge amount of work carried out by the sub-group, chaired by Jennifer Hollingum and written by Diane Russell.

7.3 Diane Russell presented to the Members the outline of the AONB Design Guidance highlighting that this document focussed on places and spaces which sit within the rural

context from a Macro to a Micro Scale. It covers the 10 key principles for building within the AONB. Presentation appended

- 7.4 Cllr Bradbury congratulated the sub-group on the clear and comprehensive guide. He enquired whether there was a hierarchy of importance when developers are trying to balance the key areas. It was confirmed that although there was not any hierarchy of importance the design guidance moves the developers to think about the layout and structure of the new development from an AONB perspective which gives consideration to the longer term impacts of new builds.
- 7.5 Cllr Balfour ask if we can strengthen the plan to ensure the reduction in poor architecture
- 7.6 Cllr Hersey was concerned about how amenity areas for rubbish bins etc were built into the development plans
- 7.7 Cllr Irvine asked whether invasive species could also be mentioned for mitigation
- 7.8 Cllr Evans asked whether eco housing with carbon neutral considerations should have greater weight in the guidance
- 7.9 Cllr Dickins
- 7.8 RESOLVED to approve the draft High Weald AONB Design Guide for Public consultation subject to any minor changes to be agreed by the Management Board**

8. AONB 5 YEAR BUSINESS STRATEGY

- 8.1 .
- 8.2 :

9. DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2019/20

- 9.1 The Committee considered a report by Finance Manager, Andy Fowler, who presented the Revenue Budget for 2019/20.
- 9.2 In Appendix B, shows a growth in expenditure of £4,400 due to the pay increase and the requirement to cover maternity leave.
- 9.2 The accommodation costs have been reduced by £5,700 as business rates are no longer charged.
- 9.3
- 9.4
- 9.5
- 9.6 RESOLVED to note the report and:**

(1) approve the Draft Revenue Budget for 2019/20.

(3) and thanked the local authorities for their support and East Sussex County Council finance and the Unit for the management of the budget

10. ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

10.1 The JAC considered a report by Gerry Sherwin

11. RISK MANAGEMENT AND STAFF UPDATE

11. The JAC considered a report by Jason Lavender on risk management and staffing updates and the associated risk management matrix.

11.2 Jason Lavender explained that the greatest risk has always been retaining staff with exceptional skills. At present the Unit have been lucky in recruiting a highly skilled team which is able to be more agile.

11.3 Mrs Davison asked whether it would be appropriate to show on the risk assessment a movement indicator.

11.5 RESOLVED to note the reports and request that the Management Board continue to meet to review significant risks as required and develop options for their management.

12. A.O.B.

Agenda item: 4

High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting



Held at 10.30am on Wednesday 28 November 2018, 10.30am, at Kew Royal Botanical Gardens, Wakehurst.

Members present:

Cllr Mrs S Tidy	East Sussex County Council, Chairman
Cllr B Kentfield	Rother District Council, Vice Chairman
Cllr A Pickering	Ashford Borough Council
Cllr C Hersey	Mid Sussex District Council
Cllr M Dickins	Sevenoaks Borough Council
Cllr L Steeds	Surrey County Council
Cllr L Lockwood	Tandridge District Council
Cllr H Rogers	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Cllr J Soyke	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Cllr P Bradbury	West Sussex County Council
Mrs A Field	Forestry Commission
Mr T Bamford	CLA
Mrs J Davison	Community Co-optee
Mrs A Field	Forestry Commission
Mrs L Newland	Natural England

Officers present:

Mrs S Marsh	AONB Co-Director, High Weald AONB Unit
Ms G Sherwin	AONB Business Manager, High Weald AONB Unit
Ms C Tester	AONB Planning Adviser, High Weald AONB Unit
Mr A Fowler	Finance Manager, East Sussex County Council
Ms J Hollingum	Planning Officer, Mid Sussex District Council
Mrs V Pullan	East Sussex County Council
Mr I Parkinson	AONB, Meadows Project Officer
Mr W Jones	AONB, GIS Intern
Mrs S Watson	AONB Communication Officer

Guests:

Cllr R Stogdon	Ashdown Forest Conservators
Mr S Alton	Ashdown Forest Conservators

- A. Gerry Sherwin and Iain Parkinson opened the meeting with a presentation on why the Nature Recovery Network Project is so important to the protection of Meadows across the AONB. Presentation appended. Iain Parkinson has been on secondment to the Unit two days a week for the past year and has initiated the Weald Meadows Group to support Meadows conservation and enhancement.

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 Apologies were received from the following Members and officers:
Cllr M Balfour, Cllr Mrs R Moore, Cllr M Evans, Murray Davidson, Cllr Irvine, David Scully.

2. MEMBERS INTERESTS

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

3. URGENT MATTERS

3.1 It was noted that the urgent matter raised by Cllr Lockwood on the Gatwick consultation would be addressed in Any Other Business.

4. MINUTES OF THE JAC MEETING – 28 March 2018

4.1 It was noted that in 5.2 that not all the character components had been listed.

4 RESOLVED to amend the minutes and note the minutes of the Management Board held on 28 March 2018 as a correct record

5 MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD– 31 October 2018

5.1 RESOLVED to note the minutes of the Management Board held on 31 October 2018 as a correct record.

6 MINUTES OF THE OFFICER STEERING GROUP – 26 September 2018

6.1 David Greenwood informed the Members that the officers had thoroughly gone through the responses to the Public consultation and these had been implemented into the final draft of the Management Plan 2019-2024. He thanked the officers for all their efforts with the Management Plan and Sally Marsh and her team for their time with ensuring the Plan has been delivered in a positive manner.

6.2 The officers discussed the review of designated landscapes and how they may input into this review.

6.3 The local authorities have received the updated Service Level Agreements which follow the timeline of the revised Management Plan and are in the process of being returned.

6.4 There was also a meeting on the AONB Design guidance which is making good progress. They also discussed other guidance which sits along -side the Design Guidance including Responsible Planting and Eco-camping guidance which will be discussed at greater lengths at the next meeting. Thanks were given to Claire Tester and the sub-design group for the additional time they have put into developing the guidance.

6.5 RESOLVED to note: The Minutes of the Officer Steering Group held on 26 September 2018 as a correct record.

7 MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019-2024 FINAL VERSION

- 7.1 Sally Marsh took the Members through the timetable for the Management Plan review. The Plan is reviewed every five years and is an 18 month process. This review was agreed to be 'light touch'. The objectives were still seen as fit for purpose, however, due to the 25 Year Environment Plan being launched, two new sections were added: Land-based economy and other rural life (LBE) and Other Qualities(OQ). LBE was as a result of the resurgence of the intentions of the 1949 Act and the intrinsic part that farming and forestry play in maintaining the key character components of the AONB.
- 7.2 Sally Marsh explained that due to discussions with the officers through experiences with the planning appeal process that a more robust set of key characteristics for the components were required.
- 7.3 The front of the Management Plan has incorporated standard policy and legal framework which has been agreed by all the AONBs.
- 7.4 In May 2017 a series of technical consultations were held. This was followed by the Public consultation in July 2018. The Officers Steering Group has also had several meetings to comment on the changes. Sally Marsh formally thanked the officers from all the local authorities that have given support to this process
- 7.5 Once the Management Plan has been approved the final draft will be sent to the Chief Executives of each local authority and the appropriate officer to ensure that it is approved through their internal systems. The Plan will be sent to the Secretary of State by 31 March 2019.
- 7.6 Cllr Bradbury welcomed the fresh look to the management plan which was in an excellent format. He informed the Members that the Parish Map on p.14 still showed an old Parish Cuckfield Rural, which is now known as Ansty and Staplefield. Sally Marsh confirmed that there was minor amendments to be made to the images and text which will be reflected in the final version. It was also confirmed that all local authorities had confirmed that they have the time to put the Management Plan through their internal sign-off processes.
- 7.7 Cllr Dickins congratulated the Unit on the improvement in the character statements. Cllr Soyke welcomed the clear structure, design and excellent quality of the images of the revised Plan. Jason Lavender confirmed that although this is a 'light touch' review the significant changes to the structure of the Plan will help with the production of the new 20 year plan in 2024.
- 7.8 RESOLVED to approve the Management Plan Consultation Draft for public consultation subject to agreement on minor text changes.**
- (1) agreed the final Management Plan 2019-2024 and its supporting papers**
- (2) recommend that individual local authorities formally adopt the Plan before 31st March 2019.**

8. DISCUSSION ON REPORT FOR THE REVIEW OF DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES 2018-19

8.1 Sally Marsh informed the Members of the background to this report. An AONB sub-group had a meeting with Julian Glover on 18 September 2018 and he requested formal consultation from a wide range of charities, partners and trusts. There are also moves that areas of the low Weald such as the greensands ridge should be considered as a National Park or AONB. The paper presented to the Members has not been based on the on-line consultation process but on the areas the AONBs and Parks believe they need to respond to.

8.2 The Members discussed each of the individual headings:

8.2.1 **Status and recognition:** The AONB is the same size as the North York Moors National Park but it has a population that's six times greater. A discussion took place on whether we should clearly say that we do not wish to be a National Park status. It was agreed that this may be a wish in the future and that we should focus instead on section 85 of the CROW Act. It was agreed that text would be amended to reflect the discussion.

8.2.2 **Planning and Development:** A robust discussion took place on whether the Permitted Planning regulations were robust enough. Small scale development around the edges of settlements and conversion of farm buildings to houses is potentially leading to the erosion of the landscape. It was voiced that the legislation was not necessarily the issue it was how this has been interpreted by the local authorities and at Appeal. It was agreed that this section would be modified.

8.2.3 **Land Management and Nature Recovery:**

- i. The AONB is reliant on the landowners to deliver majority of habitat management using traditional methods which are being lost. It was agreed that Natural Beauty and Culture is inter-twined and should be reflected in the status of all protected landscapes.
- ii. Alison Field informed the Members that over 24% of the AONB is covered by woodland and partnership working is essential to ensure the woodlands are viable in the future and 'forestry' should be included as a partner. Alison welcomed the introduction of the low carbon analysis. However, she highlighted that the biggest threat to the future of the woodlands was diseases such as Ash dieback, coupled with climate change which is introducing further tree diseases.
- iii. Cllr Dickins was concerned that the erosion of the current legislation has been underpinned by the decisions at Appeal. Sally Marsh indicated that the National AONBs have tried to provide PINs training to improve the Inspectorates understanding of the landscape and as yet this has not been taken up.

- 8.2.4 **Health and Wellbeing:** It was agreed that AONBs should have a secondary purpose which includes the health and wellbeing.
- 8.2.5 **Governance, operations and expertise:** For AONBs to take on greater responsibility the funding needs to be addressed as total AONBs only currently have 50% of one of the National Parks budget. However, it was agreed that the current governance structure allows the Units to be more agile. Cllr Dickins emphasised that we may be better place seeking a four/five year finance settlement with Defra rather than seeking additional funding now.
- 8.3 **RESOLVED to agree that the Unit will update the briefing paper and circulate this by email to the Members. The Chairman, Cllr Tidy will sign off the final paper for submission to the consultation.**
- 9. REVENUE BUDGET 2017/2018**
- 9.1 The Committee considered a report by Finance Manager, Andy Fowler, who presented the Revenue Budget for 2018/19.
- 9.2 In Appendix B, shows a growth in expenditure of £4,400 due to the pay increase and the requirement to cover maternity leave.
- 9.2 The accommodation costs have been reduced by £5,700 as business rates are no longer charged.
- 9.3 East Sussex CC made the decision to increase the lump sum contribution payment into the pension fund thereby reducing the salary based employee's pension contributions rate. The £4,400 saved has been reallocated to be the JAC's contribution to the increased lump sum.
- 9.4 Kent County Council has reduced its contribution to £9,000 from £10,000. It was highlighted that this year £128,000 of local authority contributions had generated £620,000 of match funding. If the local authority funding continues to be reduced it will impact on the Unit's ability to attain future funding.
- 9.5 Appendix C reflects the projects breakdown and £5,700 has been moved from the project fund to the core fund to balance the budget.
- 9.6 Cllr Pickering asked how the budgets per local authority were allocated. It was confirmed that this was based on % of land in the AONB. Cllr Pickering confirmed that Ashford Borough Councils contribution seemed very low due. He understood this was due to historic reasons and that he would be going to cabinet to request for more support in the future. This was welcomed by the Unit and JAC.
- 9.7 RESOLVED to note the report and:**
- (1) approve the Draft Revenue Budget for 2018/19.**
- (2) commence budget consultation with the local authorities and Defra**

(3) and thanked the local authorities for their support and East Sussex County Council finance and the Unit for the management of the budget

10. NATURE RECOVERY PROJECT

10.1 The JAC considered a report by Gerry Sherwin on the Nature Recovery Project supported by the earlier presentation made by Iain Parkinson.

10.2 RESOLVED to note action being taken to start to deliver the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024

11. RISK MANAGEMENT AND STAFF UPDATE

11. The JAC considered a report by Jason Lavender on risk management and staffing updates and the associated risk management matrix.

11.2 Jason Lavender explained that the greatest risk has always been retaining staff with exceptional skills. At present the Unit have been lucky in recruiting a highly skilled team which is able to be more agile. The Members were introduced to William Jones who started in October as the GIS Intern and Sarah Watson, Communication officer, who is covering the maternity leave for Emma White.

11.3 The other risk is future funding. Jason informed the Members that Rory Stuart ensured a four year funding settlement from Defra which will be reviewed in March 2020.

11.5 RESOLVED to note the reports and request that the Management Board continue to meet to review significant risks as required and develop options for their management.

12. A.O.B.

12.1 Cllr Lockwood informed the Members of the emergency runway consultation at Gatwick. This consultation will run from 18 October 2018 to 5pm on 10 January 2019. Cllr Lockwood urged the Members and the Unit to consult on this as it would have a major impact on tranquillity and health and wellbeing within the AONB. It was noted that the Government had already agreed that the new runway should be at Heathrow.

12.2 It was agreed as each local authority may have different opinions on this particular consultation they should respond independently. The Unit will also consult on the impact of a further runway on the AONB.

12.3 The next date for the JAC meeting is confirmed as Wednesday 27 March 2019.

High Weald Officer Steering Group

Notes of a meeting of the High Weald Officer Steering Group held on Wednesday 30 January 2019, at 2pm Acorn Tourism, Woodland Enterprise, Hastings Road, Flimwell, TN5 7PR

Clerk to JAC: Samantha Nicholas

PRESENT:

Jennifer Hollingum, Mid Sussex District Council (Vice-chairman)

Natalie Bumpas, Wealden District Council

David Scully, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Diane Russell, Rother District Council

Mark Daly, Horsham District Council

Sally Marsh, Co-Director High Weald AONB Unit

Claire Tester, Planning Advisor High Weald AONB Unit

	Agenda Item	Action
1.	MINUTES	
1.1	4.2 The officers were informed that due to the deadline of 18 December 2018 for the consultation on the designated landscapes review, the JAC Members had formed a report that has already been submitted.	
2.	Apologies	The Unit
2.1	Murray Davidson, Helen French, Helen Forster, Kerry Culbert, Marie Killip, Jenny Knowles, Don Baker, Richard Mosinghi, Ian Grundy.	
2.2	It was agreed to move the agenda item 6, Design guidance and supporting documents to the bottom, as this would take the longest time to review.	
3.	Management Plan 2019-2024 adoption within the Local Authorities	
3.1	Sally Marsh confirmed that the JAC Members had approved the final version of the Management Plan 2019-2024 on 27 November 2018. Tunbridge Wells BC confirmed the Plan would be taken to cabinet on 4 March; Rother DC on 11 February; Horsham DC on 7 March; Surrey CC on 5 March; Wealden DC and MSDC took the HWAONB Management Plan to Cabinet on the 11th February.	
3.2	Diane Russell offered to circulate the internal Management Plan	

report for Rother DC once it had been approved. To help other officers who had asked for help with this process. Claire Tester confirmed that she had sent changes to the objectives to Helen Forster, Kent CC, who had initiated this discussion.

3.3 **Action: Diane Russell to circulate Management Plan adoption report once approved** Diane Russell

3.5 Sally Marsh informed the officers that Kent Downs AONB had rolled their Management Plan over for a further year as there were issues with a major development in Dover.

3.6 Once all local authorities have adopted the Management Plan, it will be sent to the Secretary of State. The Unit will be producing 300-400 copies to ensure that all Members within the local authorities will have a hardcopy. The officers confirmed that it would be better to have more if the budget allowed.

3.7 **Action: Unit to increase the numbers of hardcopies to be printed to accommodate Members numbers for each local authority** The Unit

4.0 **Designated Landscapes Review**

4.1 Sally Marsh updated the officers on the review. The call for evidence closed on 18 December 2018. At the JAC Meeting in November the consultation report was modified and approved. Although the panel is taking most of its evidence from the report consultation, Julian Glover has agreed to have a half day visit to the High Weald AONB in May 2019. This is an opportunity to highlight key issues.

4.2 David Scully asked whether at this meeting the unit can show evidence of poor planning decisions due to the changes of the NPPF within AONBs.

4.3 Once details have been confirmed of the meeting local authorities were welcomed to put in any examples that may highlight the key challenges facing the AONB.

5.0 **Update of Legislation and Planning Advice Note**

5.1 Claire Tester confirmed that the Planning Advice Note and template had been updated to reflect the changes in the NPPF and the Management Plan 2019-2024.

5.2 The officers welcomed the update and gave constructive feedback. Tunbridge Wells BC has found that developers have been using it but some of the examples encouraged a tick box activity rather than being specific for the AONB. For example in the template G1 change example to Does the layout constrain the natural geomorphology?
LBE2 page 6 in the mitigation column ... to meet local housing needs including rural based land workers.
S2 p2 Settlement mitigation column add in historic in front of buildings.

5.3 Diane Russell highlighted that a footnote was missing on the advice note page 1 and that 3.2 should have other qualifying bodies added. Claire Tester confirmed that the text in the advice note reflected the text in the Management Plan 2014-2019.

5.4 Action: The unit will send a word version of the Advice Note template to the officers for track changes to be added. **Officers**

6.0 Update on local authority initiatives which impact on the AONB

6.1 Rother DC has put out to consultation their Public Realm Strategic Framework. This is the outcome of 2 years of workshops and the covers all public spaces, including street spacing, planters, grass verges and fieldwork in towns and villages.

6.2 The Responsible Planting Guidance was discussed by the officers. The guide was welcomed as a very useful guidance which some of the local authorities have been looking to develop themselves.

The officers offered constructive improvements to the guide:

- Include other habitats such as shaws, heathland, orchards
- Historic ponds do's and don'ts
- A list of invasive species and native species found predominately in other parts of the UK to avoid
- Yes and No images such as hedge laying through Sussex

Lund

- Biosecurity information as part of soil section.

6.2 There was a discussion on specific species such as Sorbus aria which is native to Northern areas and should not be on the main list. It was also suggested that CAB cards showing visual planting might be useful in the future.

6.3 Wealden DC has produced a housing allocation within the AONB report which due to time constraints used early feedback from the Unit. However Tunbridge Wells BC is in the processing of producing a similar document with early input from the Unit. The local authority has tried to develop a bottom up approach assessing sites on number of units they can sustain within the landscape.

7.0 AONB Training

7.1 A year ago Mid Sussex held a Management Plan training course for their planning officers which included a site visit. Wealden DC is having an office based workshop in February 2019. The opportunity to have tailored training was opened up to other local authorities. David Scully confirmed that he would be happy to host a training session based on the updated Management Plan which could be open to other local authorities. This would be set up for June 2019. David Scully and Claire Tester

7.2 Claire Tester informed the officers that the Unit can offer an advisory service to visit their offices for a day or half a day for AONB planning applications. Claire is starting this process in February in East Sussex CC Head Office.

7.0 Service Level Agreement

7.1 Majority of local authorities have put the Agreement through their internal legal services. Once the Agreements have been returned they will be sent to ESCC for signing. Local authorities were encouraged to put this alongside the timing of the Management Plan adoption process.

- 9.0 Anniversary celebrations 70th year of AONB and 30th year of the Joint Advisory Committee**
- 9.1 Sally Marsh confirmed that anniversary celebrations would be held towards the end of 2019. The Unit will have an awards ceremony thanking individuals that have supported the AONB. It was suggested that there was also food and drink awards as well as land management.
- 9.2 An agricultural conference will also be held with key environmental speakers.
- 10.0 Management Board Agenda:**
- 10.1 Areas to be put on the agenda are as follows:
Word version of design guidance and responsible planting guide; advice note; Glover visit and Anniversary celebrations.
- 11.0 A.O.B**
- 11.1 The officers discussed appeals which have impacted on the AONB.
- 11.2 David Scully informed the Group of the successful appeal at Land At Triggs Farm, Cranbrook Kent, erection of a new access road and twelve dwellings, including provision of 35% affordable housing. This appeal was successful even though it was rejected by officers with a poor understanding of the AONBs requirements. However, in contrast land at Beckley, Buddens Green, was not allowed due to urbanisation and AONB design. The Unit
- 11.3 Action: The officers requested that the Unit circulate any appeals to the officers when appropriate.** Claire Tester
- 12.0 Update on Design Guidance**
- 12.1 The officers discussed the document that was sent through from Design South East. The Group shared their disappointment at the lack of progress made on this document, particularly since the text was sent to the consultant on 3rd December.

- 12.1 **Action: The Unit would discuss next steps with Design South East Claire Tester**
It was agreed that the sub-group would hold a photographic workshop in February and would bring along hard colour copies of good and bad images to put into the design guidance.
- 12.2 Next steps would be to look to find another designer for diagrams and production of the guidance if required. The Unit
- 13.1 Next meeting will potentially be in September 2019

Agenda item: 7

Committee: High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee
Date: 27 March 2019
Title of Report: **High Weald AONB Design Guide**
By: AONB Planning Advisor
Purpose: To approve the draft Design Guide for Public Consultation

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Advisory Committee is recommended to approve the draft High Weald AONB Design Guide for Public Consultation subject to any minor changes to be agreed by the Management Board.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The scale of housing approvals and building in the High Weald AONB is currently at an unprecedented level; the High Weald is experiencing the highest level of housing growth of any AONB in England, from an average of 186 units per year 2001-2011; to 895 units per year 2015-2017¹.
- 1.2 Housing development within the High Weald is necessary and desirable in creating a thriving and successful place, but it is also a responsibility and privilege to make long-lasting interventions in such a special and protected landscape. Past development has shown how this special opportunity has often been squandered on generic housing developments failing to capitalise on the true character of the place, often referencing local distinctiveness merely in superficial detailing or vernacular 'styling' of individual buildings, but without understanding or deploying deeper locally characteristic urban design or place-making elements in layout, grain and massing for example.

2.0 Developing a High Weald AONB Design Guide

- 1.3 In 2017 work started on developing a Design Guide to help balance this current development pressure with the statutory duty on local authorities to conserve and enhance the AONB, and setting the standards expected of new housing development in the High Weald. This work was coordinated by a sub-group of the Officer Steering Group chaired by Jennifer Hollingum from Mid Sussex District Council and including the AONB Unit's Planning Advisor.
- 1.4 In June 2017 a procurement exercise was carried out which resulted in the appointment of consultants Design South East to assist with developing the Guide. This contract has been funded and managed by the High Weald AONB Unit. Since that time there have been a

¹ An Independent Review of Housing in England's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty 2012-2017 NAAONB and CPRE

number of discussions with the sub-group and the wider OSG to gain consensus on the main issues to be covered in the Guide. The High Weald AONB Unit has also fed into this process to try and ensure that the character of the AONB is correctly reflected in the Guide. The drafting of the Guide has been led by Diane Russell of Rother District Council with other members of the sub-group making contributions.

3.0 The Draft Design Guide

- 3.1 The draft Design Guide is appended to this report for consideration by JAC. This is a 'mocked up' version in Word and would need to be properly desk-top published before public consultation. There are a number of images and a forward still to be added.
- 3.2 The Guide is aimed at all those involved in managing the built environment within the High Weald AONB, from designers, developers and highways engineers, through to planning decision makers.
- 3.3 The Guide is broadly based on 'Building For Life', a widely accepted national industry standard, along with the design guidance in the National Planning Policy Guidance, but then explains how these national design principles should be applied in the specific context and distinctive character of the High Weald AONB, and in the context of the Management Plan objectives. Included within this Guide are questions and design prompts to help ensure new developments capture the essential character of the High Weald at every scale of design, from the way new streets are set out, to the grain and massing of development, the treatment of the public realm, green space and natural features, and the character and appearance of buildings themselves.

4.0 Next Steps

- 4.1 Subject to agreement by JAC, the next step would be to put this Design Guide out to public consultation. This would need to be done jointly by all the Local Planning Authorities and in accordance with their Statements of Community Involvement to ensure that they could adopt the Guide as a Supplementary Planning Document at the end of the process. This would give the Guide significant weight in the planning process.
- 4.2 The intention is to run the consultation during June and July of this year and to include at least one workshop with the development industry to both promote the Guide and get their practical input to it.
- 4.3 Responses to the consultation would be collated by the AONB Planning Advisor and taken back to the sub-group and the OSG for guidance on any amendments to the Design Guide. It would then be brought back to JAC in the Autumn for final sign-off.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 The Joint Advisory Committee is recommended to approve the draft High Weald AONB Design Guide for Public Consultation subject to any minor changes to be agreed by the Management Board.

Contact: Claire Tester, High Weald Planning Adviser claire.testers@highweald.org

Agenda Item: 8

Committee: High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee

Date: 27th March 2019

Title of Report: AONB Unit Business Strategy 2019 - 2024

By: AONB Director

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

Approve the Business Strategy 2019 – 2024 as a direction for the work of its staff unit for the next five years.

1.0 Background

1.1 The five-year business strategy is informed by the AONB Management Plan and it sets the direction of the work programme of the AONB Unit. The strategy is supported each year by a detailed annual work plan, which prioritises and guides the AONB Unit's activity and allocates financial and personnel resources.

1.2 In line with the most recent business strategy, this strategy will also need to acknowledge the resource constraints within which the AONB Partnership and many of its key partners are operating within as these are likely to continue well into the future. Unlike some earlier business strategies (which proposed ambitious work programmes and sought external funds to realize them) this strategy focuses on maintaining the effective delivery of the JAC's core activities: this is the pragmatic approach.

1.3 We have been very successful raising significant external funds to support the work of the AONB JAC partnership but raising funds takes time and the competition for funds has increased. Because of this we are focused on maintaining and building a small and resilient core team with individuals competent across a range of disciplines.

2.0 Key issues for the 2019 – 2024 business strategy

2.1 **The Glover Review.** In May 2018 the Secretary for State for the Environment announced an independent review of England's National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to look at how these designated landscapes meet the country's needs in the 21st century. The review team is not expected to report their findings until late in 2019 and given it is impossible to predict the outcome of the review with any certainty, its significance to the work of the AONB Partnership remains unknown at this stage.

- 2.2 **Funding.** Between 2009 and 2015 the AONB Partnership accommodated a reduction of £103,000 in the DEFRA contribution to the core budget. However, in 2016 the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the funding in real terms for AONB partnerships (and National Park Authorities) would be protected for the four years until the end of the year 2019/20. This decision has provided welcome stability over the last four years. Over the same period all but one of the local authority partners on the JAC have maintained their contributions to the core budget, albeit without an increase in line with inflation.
- 2.3 Appendix A at the end of this report is a summary of the AONB partnership's sources of income for each financial year between 2009 and 2018. The figures show the total amount of income derived from four main sources – grant, project funding, commercial, and philanthropic.
- 2.4 The government has yet to announce its intentions for the future short- and longer-term funding for AONB Partnerships but there is no doubt that local authority financial contributions to the core business of the JAC will remain under pressure. There is also a significant risk the Chancellor of the Exchequer may choose not to re-new a stable and predictable funding settlement for AONB partnerships from April 2020.
- 2.4 **Retirement – JAC members and AONB Unit staff.** The High Weald Partnership has been stable and largely consistent for 20 years and this has allowed the development and implementation of long-term plans and work programmes and also a broad and deep knowledge of the landscape, rural economy, land use, and communities of the High Weald. This stability has also ensured the AONB Partnership has a confident and consistent approach to the management of the High Weald, particularly given that that the issues facing the area are long-term and complex.
- 2.5 During the period 2019 – 2024 the current and long standing membership of the High Weald Partnership will change owing to the retirement of JAC members and AONB Unit staff and this will have an impact on the stability and current levels of knowledge and experience of the Partnership.
- 3.0 Focus for the 2019 – 2024 business strategy
- 3.1 The strategy will focus on the following key areas:
- (i) There is a need to build on the work to date to ensure the AONB Partnership remains stable and resilient and committed to the High Weald landscape and the AONB Partnership. We need to prepare for the loss of long-standing and experienced members of both the JAC and the AONB Unit and identify those with the potential to develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities to assume the role of a JAC member and to fill the staff leadership posts in the future. We will also continue to ensure the AONB Unit's staff competence across a range of disciplines through recruitment, placements, mentoring and training.
- (ii) For many years we have undertaken innovative research into the High Weald landscape (its formative processes, land-use, rural economy, and settlement patterns) and this has been a major part of our work. By researching and understanding the area's natural inheritance and, especially, the human use of the High Weald, we have been able to draw a range of significant conclusions of direct relevance to the current and future management of the High Weald: it is this knowledge that underpins the AONB management plan.

Our knowledge and understanding of the High Weald is not fixed and there will be a need to undertake further research from time to time. However, the focus for this business plan period is instead on the interpretation and communication of this knowledge and evidence to our existing partners and contacts and also to new networks (e.g. farm clusters, deer management partnerships, built design groups, the Landscape Institute) to encourage and support the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.

- (iii) There is an increasing need for demonstration projects to inspire and inform others. Demonstration projects provide real-world data and by making an idea tangible and visible they can be invaluable as a means of learning for all involved. Given this, we will build on our existing work to support and promote a range of projects as case studies to inspire and guide others (e.g. Soils for Life farm to promote regenerative agriculture and agroforestry, Rother and Dudwell Farm Cluster, which demonstrates collaborative work by land managers at a landscape- scale, key Sussex Lund projects to highlight the small-scale actions a wide range of stakeholders can take, and 'best practice' neighbourhood plans that take into account and are guided by the High Weald's landscape character).
- (iv) For 20 years we have stressed the need to apply a range of techniques and principles that restore the function of the High Weald and we have encouraged others to adopt a fully integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to the landscape. This approach is now more widely accepted as a way to enhance the resilience of an area's natural assets (geology, soil, water, air, biodiversity) and from which society derives many environmental, social, and economic services.

National and local policy and decision makers need to have a better understanding of (and make a greater provision for) the role the High Weald landscape (particularly the woodland and grassland) can play mitigating climate change, contributing to a low carbon economy, and developing adaptable land management systems.

By building on our earlier work, we will support our partners by sharing our experience of an integrated approach, encouraging high quality integrated assessments of the services the High Weald landscape provides – the most obvious services include the food we eat, the water we drink, and the plant materials we use for fuel, building materials, and medicines and also those that are less obvious such as the climate regulation and natural flood defences provided by woodlands, the many tonnes of carbon stored by grasslands, the pollination of crops by insects, and the inspiration we take from wildlife and the natural environment.

- (v) The High Weald's predominately rural character and its status as one of England's finest landscapes means its countryside, towns, and villages are a very popular attraction for local residents and a high quality tourist destination for visitors. Also there is an increasing recognition of the contribution the countryside can have tackling poor physical and mental health and stress.

Residents and visitors gain considerable enjoyment from an appreciation of the High Weald's landscape, the outstanding public rights of way network, and the role the countryside plays hosting a wide range of activities such as walking, visiting historic houses and villages, cycling, field sports, horse riding, nature watching, painting, arts and crafts, music and dance, visiting farm shops and pubs and staying in rural accommodation.

Inevitably more people engaging in countryside recreation can cause a range of problems (e.g. livestock worrying, disturbance to wildlife, traffic congestion, and greater visitor pressure at key 'honey pot' sites) and this creates a dilemma for the conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's countryside. We will prioritize a visitor and local community outreach programme on access to the countryside and visitor behaviour to help respond to this problem and increase the understanding of the needs of those earning a living from the countryside and also of the wildlife in the area.

4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 4.1 The end of the last business strategy period left the High Weald JAC as a strong and influential partnership supported by a small dedicated staff unit providing specialist technical advice and support to conserve and enhance this nationally designated landscape.
- 4.2 It is our intention to ensure this remains the case for the next five years and beyond. We have in place an appropriate organisational structure to manage projects implementing AONB Management Plan objectives and we will continue to develop income generating activities. Despite current uncertainties we will continue to ensure we retain the capacity and the ability to respond to opportunities whenever they arise for securing new resources and facilitating new partnerships in order to deliver AONB management objectives and to add value to the work of others in the AONB.

Contact: JD Lavender AONB Co-Director j.lavender@highweald.org

Appendix A

Sources of income		2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Grant	TOTAL	-443835	-417700	-370974	-387858	-361540	-340288	-341217	-355949	-367629
	Core Grant	-356160	-329700	-287023	-300908	-276840	-255588	-255588	-271250	-282929
	Local Authority Grant (AONBs only)	-87675	-88000	-83951	-86950	-84700	-84700	-85629	-84699	-84700
Project funding	TOTAL	-619119	-823200	-764215	-157626	-61957	-18560	-69634	-57298	-296637
	Project funding - UK public sector	-76623	-267619	-102041	-16602	-16689	-9107	-38824	-40648	-23200
	Project funding - EU	16023	-11809	2317	-3783	0	0	0	0	0
	Project Funding - Lottery funding / HLG	-512141	-472697	-610800	-77920	-30268	-4613	10	0	0
	Project funding from other non-exchequer sources (please	-46378	-71075	-53690	-59321	-15000	-4840	-30820	-16650	-273437
Commercial	TOTAL	-39452	-78650	-43845	-4652	-10873	-10377	1919	-8302	-49783
	Revenue raised from chargeable activities: planning fees									
	Revenue raised from chargeable activities: parking charges									
	Revenue raised from chargeable activities: navigation fees									
	Revenue raised from other chargeable activities, include details	-39452	-78650	-43845	-4652	-10873	-10377	1919	-8302	-49783
	Other commercial income (e.g. information centre sales, concessions to businesses, leasing property or land, business sponsorships)									
Philanthropic	TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Funding from dedicated philanthropic sources (i.e. charities dedicated to National Park/AONB)									
	Other philanthropic sources (eg, direct public giving)									
TOTAL	-1102406	-1319550	-1179034	-550136	-434370	-369225	-408932	-421549	-714048	

Sources of income for each financial year since 2009/2010. The figures show the total amount of income derived from four main sources – grant, project funding, commercial, and philanthropic.

Agenda Item: 9

Committee: High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee

Date: 27 March 2019

Title of Report: Revenue Budget 2019/20

By: Treasurer to the Joint Advisory Committee

Purpose of Report: To approve the Revenue Budget 2019/20

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Advisory Committee is recommended to approve:

1. approved the Revenue Budget for 2019/20;
2. thank Defra and partner authorities for maintaining their contributions.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report sets out the budget for 2019/20 following a consultation approved by this committee in November 2018.
- 1.2 The budget supports the High Weald AONB Work Plan 2019/20 which sets out how the High Weald AONB Unit will deliver its core functions and review and enable implementation of the new High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019/24.

2. FINANCIAL APPRAISAL

- 2.1 Appendix A summarises the forecast out-turn for 2018/19, the proposed budget for 2019/20 and the indicative budget for 2020/21. Appendix B summarises the project budgets.
- 2.2 The Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) contribution for 2019/20 includes an inflationary increase of £4000 and is forecast to be £273,600.
- 2.3 Other income of £9,800 and an allocation of 85% of the Defra single pot contribution to core activities has achieved a balanced budget for 2019/20.

3. BUDGET 2018/19

- 3.1 The High Weald core budget is forecast to have a surplus of £12,300 in 2018/19 arising primarily from a rate reduction and additional income. The forecast reserve at 31 March 2019 is £151,800

4. BUDGET 2019/20

Core Budget – Expenditure

- 4.1 The budget for 2019/20 is presented in Appendix A. It is based on the 2018/19 figures with inflation at the ESCC applied rate of 2% for salaries and 0% for other costs. The budget allows for:
- (i) Staff costs: a budget for a core team of 5.1 FTE staff which has increased to accommodate incremental progression, contributions to the pension fund of 17.85% (a reduced rate to reflect the ESCC decision to increase the lump sum contribution to the pension fund) and incremental progression.
 - (ii) and estimated inflation of 2% for Single Status and LMG salaries. Should the pay award be settled at more than 1% increase, it will need to be funded from reserves.
 - (iii) Accommodation/office equipment costs: a standstill budget for office rent, rates, office equipment, office maintenance and running costs.
 - (iv) Partnership running costs: a standstill budget that covers NAAONB membership fees, JAC meetings, representing the partnership at regional and national forums, producing the annual review and miscellaneous public relations costs.
 - (v) Support services: East Sussex County Council's charges for IT, personnel and financial support which includes an increase of £4400 to cover the increased lump sum contribution payment into the pension fund.

Core Budget – Income

Defra

- 4.2 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).
- 4.3 Following the last Comprehensive Spending Review Defra advised that National Parks and AONB budgets will be protected in real terms. The contribution to the High Weald will increase by £4000 to £273,600 in 2019/20.
- 4.4 The 2018/19 contribution of £269,000 was allocated as follows: £222,200 to Core and £46,800 to Projects.
- 4.5 Defra's total contribution for 2019/20 is shown in appendix A. It shows the contribution of £273,600 allocated as £232,500 to Core and £41,100 to Projects.

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 2018/19 levels.

Self-funding projects

- 4.8 JAC expenditure on self-funding projects is presented at Appendix B and is estimated to be £346,400 in 2019/20. Appendix B indicates contributions from local authority partners to projects, including High Weald Heroes.
- 4.9 It is proposed to allocate £41,100 from the Defra 'single pot' to Projects.
- 4.10 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.
- 4.11 Successful grant applications, and inclusion of the Sussex Lund as a new programme, has resulted in a significant increase in expenditure on self-funding projects.

5. FINANCIAL ISSUES 2019/20 AND BEYOND

- 5.1 Maintenance of the Defra contribution to the JAC in real terms until 2020 continues to be very welcome. Support from Defra beyond 2020 will be subject to outcome of the Glover Review and the CSR.
- 5.2 External contributions towards the management of the Landscape Enhancement Programme continues to ensure that the Other Income target for core costs is met, enabling a balanced core budget in 2019/20.
- 5.3 The project budget is sufficient for delivering the Management Plan Evidence and Guidance Programme, the JAC's Outreach Programme including High Weald Heroes (supported by an 0.6 FTE) and the Landscape Enhancement Programme (supported by 1.6 FTE) and for new project development.
- 5.4 No new expenditure pressures for 2020/21 and beyond are currently forecast.
- 5.5 Most of the estimated reserves at 31 March 2020 of £151,800 will be required in a worst case scenario of all staff being made redundant.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The 2019/20 core budget is a balanced budget which provides the JAC with the capacity to deliver its core functions.
- 6.2 The project budget reflects inclusion of two large-scale grant schemes, Sussex Lund and the National Grid's Landscape Enhancement Initiative.
- 6.3 On this basis the JAC is recommended to agree the budget.



Jill Fisher, Treasurer to the High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee

£'000	2018/19		2019/20				2020/21	
	Budget	Forecast	Original	Budget			Indicative	
			Budget	Inflation	Pressures	Other	Budget	
Actual	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Core Budget								
Expenditure								
236.0	239.7	233.8	239.7	4.2	7.4	0.0	251.3	250.8
35.4	37.2	32.5	37.2	0.0	0.0	(5.7)	31.5	32.1
11.2	11.5	8.3	11.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.5	11.7
27.3	27.3	31.7	27.3	0.0	0.0	4.4	31.7	31.7
309.9	315.7	306.3	315.7	4.2	7.4	(1.3)	326.0	326.3
Income								
222.2	(222.2)	(222.2)	(222.2)	(4.6)	0.0	(5.7)	(232.5)	(234.7)
22.4	(22.4)	(22.4)	(22.4)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(22.4)	(22.4)
10.0	(10.0)	(9.0)	(9.0)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(9.0)	(9.0)
9.3	(9.3)	(9.3)	(9.3)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(9.3)	(9.3)
2.9	(2.9)	(2.9)	(2.9)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(2.9)	(2.9)
7.2	(7.2)	(7.2)	(7.2)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(7.2)	(7.2)
7.2	(7.2)	(7.2)	(7.2)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(7.2)	(7.2)
5.6	(5.6)	(5.6)	(5.6)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(5.6)	(5.6)
6.7	(6.7)	(6.7)	(6.7)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(6.7)	(6.7)
4.7	(4.7)	(4.7)	(4.7)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(4.7)	(4.7)
3.6	(3.6)	(3.6)	(3.6)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(3.6)	(3.6)
0.8	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.8)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(0.8)	(0.8)
1.5	(1.5)	(1.5)	(1.5)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(1.5)	(1.5)
2.2	(2.2)	(2.2)	(2.2)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(2.2)	(2.2)
0.3	(0.3)	(0.3)	(0.3)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(0.3)	(0.3)
0.3	(0.3)	(0.3)	(0.3)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(0.3)	(0.3)
17.5	(8.8)	(12.7)	(9.8)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(9.8)	(7.9)
324.4	(315.7)	(318.6)	(315.7)	(4.6)	0.0	(5.7)	(326.0)	(326.3)
14.5	0.0	12.3	0.0	0.4	(7.4)	7.0	0.0	(0.0)
0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Self Funding Projects

See Appendix C for detail

150.3	419.2	428.6	346.4				346.4	432.1
61.0	(46.8)	(46.8)	(41.1)				(41.1)	(41.1)
	(33.2)	(22.6)	(45.1)				(45.1)	
	(339.2)	(359.2)	(260.2)				(260.2)	(391.0)
211.3	0.0	(0.0)	0.0				0.0	0.0

Total High Weald JAC

535.7	734.9	734.9	662.1	4.2	7.4	(1.3)	672.4	758.4
535.7	(734.9)	(747.2)	(662.1)	(4.6)	0.0	(5.7)	(672.4)	(758.4)
0.0	0.0	(12.3)	0.0	(0.4)	7.4	(7.0)	(0.0)	0.0

Defra Funding

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Reserves	£000
	£000	£000	£000		
Defra funding on core budget	(222.2)	(232.5)	(234.7)	Reserves at 1 April 2018	139.5
Defra funding on projects budget	(46.8)	(41.1)	(41.1)	Transfer to/(from) reserves 2018/19	12.3
Total Defra Funding	(269.0)	(273.6)	(275.8)	Transfer to/(from) reserves 2019/20	0.0
				Reserves at 31 March 2020	151.8

HIGH WEALD AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SELF FUNDING PROJECTS OUTTURN 2018/19 & INDICATIVE BUDGET 2019/20

Appendix B

	Budget 2018/19			Forecast 2018/19			Indicative Budget 2019/20		
	Exp £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000	Exp £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000	Exp £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000
1 Community Outreach									
JAC expenditure	4.7			3.1			10.3		
Defra		(3.7)			(2.2)			(8.9)	
Local authorities		0.0			0.0			(0.7)	
Other		(1.0)	(0.0)		(0.9)	0.0		(0.7)	0.0
High Weald Heroes									
JAC expenditure	26.2			24.0			25.9		
Defra		(13.1)			(24.3)			(12.9)	
Local authorities		(13.1)			0.3			(13.0)	
Other		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0
2 Management Plan Evidence and Guidance									
JAC expenditure	20.0			5.9			10.0		
Defra		(20.0)			(5.9)			(10.0)	
Other		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0
3 Landscape Enhancement									
JAC expenditure	358.3			223.7			290.2		
Defra		0.0			(11.0)			(9.3)	
Environment Agency		0.0			(6.5)			(10.0)	
Water Catchment Partnership (KWT)		0.0			(6.0)			0.0	
Local authorities		(20.1)			(0.9)			(21.4)	
Other		0.0			(0.6)			0.0	
Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund		(21.5)			(37.2)			(30.8)	
National Grid		(102.2)			(39.4)			(93.7)	
Sussex Lund (Charities Aid Foundation)		(214.5)	0.0		(122.1)	0.0		(125.0)	0.0
4 Project Development									
JAC expenditure	10.0			16.7			10.0		
Defra		(10.0)			0.0			0.0	
Natural England		0.0			(16.7)			0.0	
Local authorities		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0		(10.0)	0.0
JAC expenditure (to Appendix A)	419.2			273.4			346.4		
Expenditure funded by Defra (to Appendix A)		(46.8)			(43.4)			(41.1)	
Expenditure funded by LAs (to Appendix A)		(33.2)			(0.6)			(45.1)	
Expenditure funded by Other (to Appendix A)		(339.2)			(229.4)			(260.2)	
TOTAL JAC expenditure/income	419.2	(419.2)	0.0	273.4	(273.4)	0.0	346.4	(346.4)	0.0

Agenda Item No. 10

Committee: High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee

Date: 27 March 2019

Title of Report: Anniversary Celebrations

By: AONB Business Manager

Purpose: To consider Anniversary plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Advisory Committee is recommended to note:

1. plans to celebrate 70 years of protected landscape designation and 30 years of the AONB Partnership.
-

Supporting information

1. Background

- 1.1 This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The act created the mechanism for designating national parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty, amongst a range of other measures including introducing the concept of nature reserves and sites of special scientific interest and requirements to produce definitive maps of public rights of way.
- 1.2 It is also the thirtieth anniversary of the AONB Partnership, which was established in 1989 six years after the AONB's designation.

2. Anniversary Celebrations Proposal

- 2.1 We have planned a series of events to celebrate these anniversaries with the wide range of individuals and organisations that we routinely work with as a Partnership.

Communities

- 2.2 We will launch the AONB Management Plan at an event for parish council representatives and community groups. This event will be an opportunity to meet the AONB team and find out more about the High Weald, how to use the Management Plan and the guidance and other support that we offer.
- 2.3 The annual celebration of the Sussex Lund grant awards will take place in September. This event provides an opportunity for the many and wide ranging of grant recipients to share their experiences of practical projects and inspire others to undertake similar projects.

Planners and developers

- 2.4 A consultation event, focused on the draft High Weald Design Guide, will form part of a wider consultation on the Guide and will be an opportunity to highlight the unique character of the High Weald's settlement amongst officers and developers.

Residents and visitors

- 2.5 A regional 70th Anniversary Travel Campaign, working with other protected landscapes in the South East and public transport companies including Southern and Stagecoach, is planned. The campaign will be led by the South Downs NPA and Surrey Hills AONB Partnership and supported by the other protected landscape partnerships.
- 2.6 We are already planning and promoting the second High Weald Walks Festival working with The Ramblers. We are increasing the range of themed walks to broaden the Festival's variety and appeal. Also new for 2019 will be a launch and a finale event offering multiple walks from one location, to be held this year at Ashdown Forest and Bodiam respectively.

Land managers

- 2.7 Two events will be held for land managers, one will be a 'Meadows Question Time' featuring a Panel of grassland experts, and the other a farming-focused event, which will have some key national speakers presenting opportunities for innovation and change.

Schools

- 2.8 This event for teachers will be part of our very successful High Weald Heroes Education Programme. We will present ideas on developing school grounds for environmental education and using the High Weald countryside as a resource for outdoor learning.

Key partners

- 2.9 We will hold our first High Weald Awards event, which will be a celebration with JAC members and key organisations and individuals that we have worked closely with over the last 30 years, as well as those we might like to work with over the next few years. A handful of awards will be made to a number of individuals, recognising the outstanding contribution they have made to the High Weald's promotion and conservation.

3. Conclusions and reasons for recommendations

- 3.1 The indicative timescale for the events is as follows.

2/3/4 June	Meadows question time
June	High Weald Design Guide consultation
2 July	Parish Council event
July	Outdoor learning in the High Weald
July	70 th Anniversary Travel Campaign launch at Waterloo Station
19 September	Sussex Lund celebration
14-22 September	High Weald Walks Festival
25 October	Farming event
27 November	Awards ceremony

- 3.2 There is a risk that the programme will stretch the team's resources and events may need to be modified or rescheduled for a later date if reactive work has to take precedence.
- 3.3 The celebration proposals are being well received and we are planning according to the timetable.

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Agenda Item: 11

Committee: High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee

Date: 27th March 2019

Title of Report: Risk Management

By: AONB Director

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to:

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

1.0 Background

1.1 The JAC is a strong partnership supported by the AONB Unit, a small specialist team providing advice and guidance on the conservation and enhancement of a nationally important landscape. The work of the JAC relies on three things: partnership contributions to the core budget; success raising external funds to the project budget and; retaining/recruiting staff with the appropriate skills and experience to do this work. Given this, the most significant risks to the work of the JAC remain the constraints on both the financial and personnel resources of the AONB Unit.

2.0 Key risks 2019/20 and beyond

2.1 Towards the end of January 2016 the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the funding in real terms for Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty partnerships (and National Park Authorities) would be protected for the four years until the end of the year 2019/20.

2.2 This decision was welcomed at the time but as we approach the final year of the protected funding period and given the increasing uncertainty owing to a number of factors, it should be noted that local authority contributions towards the core business of the JAC are going to remain under pressure during this period. Also there is a significant risk the Chancellor of the Exchequer may choose not to re-new a stable and predictable funding settlement for AONB partnerships from April 2020.

2.3 Members are aware that in May 2018 the Secretary for State for the Environment announced an independent review of England's National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and until this review's findings are announced its significance to the work of the AONB Partnership remains unknown.

2.4 The key risks to the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) are set out in Appendix A.

3.0 Risk mitigation

- 3.1 The High Weald AONB Unit's business strategy 2019 – 2024 will respond to the risks to the work of the JAC caused by the constraints on both the financial and personnel resources of the AONB Unit and the findings of the Glover Review. This strategy will be tailored to the local circumstances and specific needs of the High Weald and the High Weald AONB partnership.

4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 4.1 Risk management systems are in place and conform to the appropriate East Sussex County Council policy.
- 4.2 It's clear that 2019-20 will continue to be characterised by constraints on both the financial and personnel resources of the AONB Unit and this remains the most significant risk to the core work of the JAC. Given that the findings of the Glover Review are not expected until the end of 2019, they are unlikely to have a significant influence on the work of the AONB partnership until 2020 – 2021 and beyond.
- 4.3 The measures in the forthcoming business strategy for 2019 – 2024 will ensure the JAC remains a strong partnership supported by a small dedicated team providing specialist technical advice to conserve and promote the value of this nationally protected landscape. An appropriate organisational structure has been established to manage self-funded projects supporting AONB Management Plan objectives, and develop income generating activities.

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Risk Log

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

Likelihood	5					
	4					
	3					
	2					
	1					
		1	2	3	4	5
		Consequence				

Control Rating	
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												
	1	Reduced activity/service due to declining budgets. 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	4	4	Red	Unit to continue 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 without adversely affecting on service explored. Planned change in scope of JAC's core 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. Without commitment from 'local' partners, bids for external funds are rarely 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	Partnership organizations and others 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 & remit 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	2	2	3	Amber
4	Loss of grant aid owing 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	2	2	Green	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	2	2	2	Green
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	Continue the close 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	2	2	3	Amber
6	Future possibility that what is being implemented and coordinated by the AONB Partnership is not valued by DEFRA and/or the current Secretary of State. National Elections and/or Cabinet re-shuffles resulting in the loss of supportive DEFRA Secretary of State & Ministers.	Total loss or severe reduction of national government funding and commitment to AONB Partnerships.	AONB Director	3	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 S of S & Ministers directly and in conjunction with NAAONB and SEEPL. Active engagement of High Weald AONB Patrons and supportive High Weald	AONB Director	2	3	5	Red

