

Item 8. AONB Management Plan review

1. Summary

This paper seeks to move on the next stage of the Plan review - discussion of Plan review priorities and identifying the main areas requiring update or new work.

2. Background

The Partnership meeting of 14th November included ten presentations by partner organisations on their priorities for the AONB for the next five years. The write-up of this has been circulated to the Partnership.

The following are emerging as some of the key areas which the Management Plan Review needs to focus, and which need to be stronger in the next Plan:

- NAAONB aspiration/ offer to Defra that the new Management Plans are used as the basis of targeting of post Brexit agri-environment/ land management support schemes. This may mean more detail in sections of the plan for sub-areas of the AONB.
- Take forward themes from Feb 17 Shropshire Hills Uplands Forum, and look at implications for future of upland farming, especially post-Brexit, including supporting types of diversification or new farm enterprises which are more in keeping with the landscape. Opportunity to develop some more specific landscape and land management guidance, as some other AONBs have.
- Reaffirming planning protection of the AONB – where possible a tightening of words and trying to be more specific on planning and development, including issues such as poultry sheds, solar farms and housing.
- Applying concepts of natural capital and ecosystem services and using these to underpin arguments for looking after the landscape and environment as an asset to the economy. Promoting environment and heritage led regeneration as an economic model for the area.
- Applying the 'Lawton principles' of bigger, better and joined up habitat networks at a landscape scale. Also applying catchment management principles.
- Integrating themes and priorities from the new Shropshire Hills Sustainable Tourism Strategy, including spreading visitors to reduce impacts and spread economic benefit, managing visitor pressure at 'hotspots' and further improving collaboration.
- Harnessing more voluntary effort and increasing fund-raising as funding continues to be constrained or more competitive, while making the case for ongoing core funding.
- Distinguishing the AONB from the rest of the county, while showing how it contributes to the county's economy and people's wellbeing.
- Engaging more people and people more, including young people.
- Making the strategic case for priority actions which need to be developed as projects.

3. RECOMMENDATION:

The Transition Board is recommended to comment on the main areas identified above for the Management Plan review.

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