



**Cannock Chase AONB Partnership  
Meeting of the Joint Committee  
Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 10.00 AM  
To be held at the Rising Brook Community Church, Burton Square,  
Stafford ST17 9LT**

**(please park behind the church and not in front of the shops – thank you)**

Members of the public are welcome to attend in person. Social distancing rules may apply.

No	Item	Item for	Page
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6	<b>AONB Annual Conference</b> <i>To consider the proposed theme and format for an AONB Annual Conference in March 2022</i> Report of the AONB Development Officer	DECISION	<a href="#">19</a>
7	<b>Planning update</b> <i>To update members on AONB input to planning matters:</i> <i>(a) Development management and planning policy</i> <i>(b) High Speed Rail (HS2) Phase 2a</i> <i>(c) Dark Skies project</i> Report of the AONB Landscape Planning Officer	INFORMATION	<a href="#">22</a>
8	<b>Farming in Protected Landscapes programme</b> <i>To update members on progress to deliver the programme in Cannock Chase AONB</i> Report of the Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer	INFORMATION	<a href="#">28</a>
9	<b>AONB Business Plan 2021-23</b>	INFORMATION / DECISION	<a href="#">31</a>

	<p><i>To update members on progress against year 1 activities and consider and approve the proposed year 2 work programme including project priorities</i></p> <p>Report of the AONB Development Officer</p>		
10	<p><b>Financial report – Revenue Budget 2021/22 and 2022/23</b></p> <p><i>(a) To note progress on the current net revenue budget for 2021/22</i></p> <p><i>(b) To consider and approve a draft budget for 2022-23</i></p> <p><i>(c) To note spend on the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme</i></p> <p>Report of the Treasurer to the Joint Committee</p>	INFORMATION / DECISION	<a href="#">52</a>
11	<p><b>Art in the Landscape Strategy: connecting people to nature through art and culture</b></p> <p><i>To consider the strategy for adoption, and participation in national and local action</i></p> <p>Report of the AONB Landscape Planning Officer</p>	DECISION	<a href="#">59</a>
12	<p><b>NAAONB Collaboration Group on Climate Change</b></p> <p><i>To update Members on the work of the Group and the role of Cannock Chase AONB in response to climate change</i></p> <p>Report of the AONB Development Officer</p>	INFORMATION	<a href="#">65</a>
13	<p><b>Date, time and venue of next meeting</b></p> <p><i>To confirm dates for 2022 meetings</i></p>	DECISION	<a href="#">71</a>

<b>Item 3</b>	<b>Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021</b>
<b>Item for:</b>	Approval
<b>Author:</b>	Julia Banbury, AONB Landscape Planning Officer
<b>Financial implications:</b>	None
<b>Recommendations:</b>	The Committee approves the minutes of the meeting and considers any matters arising.



**Cannock Chase AONB Partnership  
AGM and meeting of the Joint Committee  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 11.00 AM**

**Held at the Rising Brook Community Church, Burton Square, Stafford ST17 9LT**

(Draft) minutes

**Attendees**

**Members present**

Cllr Frances Beatty  
Cllr Len Bates  
Cllr Adrienne Fitzgerald  
Cllr Iain Eadie  
Cllr Victoria Wilson

**Representing**

Stafford Borough Council  
South Staffordshire District Council  
Cannock Chase District Council  
Lichfield District Council  
Staffordshire County Council

**Officers**

Ian Marshall  
Julia Banbury  
John Rowe  
Nikola Mihajlovic  
Sarah Bentley  
Patrick Walker  
Helena Horton  
Andrew Harvey Coggins  
Gary Kelsey  
James Benton

AONB Unit  
AONB Unit  
Staffordshire County Council  
Staffordshire County Council  
Staffordshire County Council  
South Staffordshire District Council  
Lichfield District Council  
Forestry England  
Forestry England  
SAC Partnership

### **Advisers**

Mary Cope  
Thomas Cox  
Wendy Bannerman  
Sarah Burgess

Beaudesert Park Farm  
Cemex  
British Horse Society  
CPRE Staffordshire

### **Public**

Norma Squire  
Johnathan Howe

Member of the public  
Member of the public

## **1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

- 1.1 Cllr Beatty opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the AGM of the AONB Partnership Joint Committee.
- 1.2 The election of Chair and Vice-Chair for the next 12 months was overseen by John Rowe, Honorary Secretary of the AONB Joint Committee
- 1.3 A call for nominations of Chair was made. Cllr Len Bates complemented Cllr Frances Beatty on the excellent work she had done last year as Chair of the Joint Committee and proposed her re-election for the next 12 months. This was seconded by Cllr Iain Eadie. A vote was then taken on the nomination of Cllr Frances Beatty to be appointed as Chair for the next 12 months.
- 1.4 **Resolved:**  
**That Councillor Frances Beatty is appointed Chair of the AONB Joint Committee for the next 12 months.**
- 1.5 A call for nominations for Vice-Chair was made. Cllr Beatty nominated Cllr Len Bates to be appointed as Vice-Chair for the next 12 Months. Councillor Heath seconded the proposal. No further nominations were received. A vote was then taken on the nomination of Cllr Len Bates to be appointed as Vice-Chair for the next 12 Months.
- 1.6 **Resolved:**  
**That Councillor Len Bates is appointed Vice-Chair of the AONB Joint Committee for the next 12 months.**

## **2. Welcome and introductions**

- 2.1 Cllr Beatty opened the meeting and welcomed everyone including members of the public to the meeting of the AONB Partnership Joint Committee.

## **3. Apologies for absence**

- 3.1 Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Justin Johnson  
deputising)

Cannock Chase Council (Cllr Adrienne Fitzgerald

Janene Cox	Staffordshire County Council
Jeff Sim	Staffordshire Wildlife Trust
Hayley Mival	National Trust
Steven Stray	Lichfield District Council
Pat Ancell	Staffordshire Association of Parish Councils
Bill Waller	Staffordshire Borough Council
Richard Harris	AONB Unit

#### **4. Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

- 4.1 Ian Marshall reported that it has now been made clear on the AONB website how to subscribe to the enewsletter (paragraph 5.7 of the minutes refers).
- 4.2 Previous minutes of the meeting held on 15 March had resolved to bring back the Heritage Strategy to the July Committee meeting. Ian Marshall explained that it has taken longer than anticipated to finalise the draft Strategy. The intention is to desktop publish with visuals. Officers feel strongly that the document needs to inspire funding organisations when taking forward proposals for project development the need to ensure that It was resolved to bring back this project to the next Joint Committee meeting for approval
- 4.3 **Resolved:**  
**The minutes of the previous meeting are agreed as a correct record and are approved.**

#### **5. Public Questions**

- 5.1 Ian Marshall explained that this was the first meeting where members of the public were able to put questions the AONB Joint Committee. The protocol agreed by members at the March 2021 Joint Committee meeting requires that questions are received in writing up to 3 days prior to the Committee Meeting to give officers and officials time to respond.
- 5.2 The questions received are both in the province of Staffordshire County Council and therefore Cllr Victoria Wilson will respond:
- 5.3 Q1 I have noticed large areas of Cannock Chase where there are many silver birch trees growing on the moorland areas. They were removed from the Kingsley wood Road area. In many other areas they are already about 5ft tall. Are there any plans to remove them? If so when?

Cllr Wilson responded that there are plans to remove birch and improve health habitat. This is a little behind schedule, but work is planned for autumn/winter 2021/22, using both contractors and volunteers. Volunteers interested in assisting would be most welcome.

- 5.4 Q2 What practical action is the County Council planning to take to stop illegal biking and the digging of trails in Brocton Coppice? There is a lot of damage from something like 20-30 bike tracks created over the last 10-15 years, probably 4-5 kms in total, and in an area about one kilometre square. I appreciate that there is discussion about an engagement strategy and educating bikers by publicity but without physically blocking these paths then this is likely to be ignored by numbers of go-anywhere bikers. The questioner additionally explained that he had encountered and has been monitoring tracks made by bikers and these often involve significant construction and damage to habitats. He knows of 20 -30 tracks in Brocton Coppice. He was concerned that bikers think they have free rein and aren't aware where they can and cannot go. Brocton Coppice needs to be protected and bikers encouraged to move into Forestry England land. What are the County Council going to do to stop the problem?

Cllr Wilson responded that it is very important for the County Council to prevent harm to the local environment. They are working with Forestry England and the SAC Partnership to promote responsible riding. The proposals to reduce the problem fall into four areas:

- Education: Improved signage providing interpretation and explaining the dangers to natural habitats
- Rangers and marshals to have a greater presence on the ground and advise users of the issues
- Information in the press and social media
- Considering the use of fencing to protect certain areas

- 5.5 Cllr Frances Beatty thanked the questioner for raising this as she is very aware this is a big problem, along with night-time bike riding. Cllr Beatty added that it is very important to set these systems going as the problem is likely to recur after the Commonwealth Games mountain biking event on the Chase. She is concerned that there will be a positive legacy from the Commonwealth Games.

## **6. Financial report**

- 6.1 A report was presented by Nikola Mihajlovic.
- 6.2 The total budget is £199,720. The final net outturn spend is £199,720 resulting in a breakeven position for the AONB budget for 2020/21.
- 6.3 The breakeven position includes an underspend of £7,685 on the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) which was re-allocated to AONB Projects as well as an overspend of £1,224 on the AONB projects after the transfer from the SDF.
- 6.4 Sustainable Development Fund projects approved amounted to £4,078 with admin fees of £1,307 (transferred to the AONB reserve). Due to the impacts of Covid and ineligibility of some expressions of interest, the SDF has been underspent. Consequently, £7,685 has been reallocated to AONB projects.

- 6.5 The budget for 2021/22 is £192,510.
- 6.6 Ian Marshall reported that 5 applications have been received for the Sustainable Development Fund for 2021/22. One project has been approved: one in principle approval with a request for further detailed costings and another with a request for costings. A further round of applications is planned in August with the hope to be able to allocate all the funding. Cllr Beatty encouraged reminding Parish Councils of the next window for applications
- 6.7 **Resolved:**  
**(a) That the Committee approved the Financial outturn 2020/21**  
**(b) That the Committee notes the closing balance held on the AONB reserve for 2020/21**  
**(c) That the Committee notes progress on the current net revenue spend and the current balance held on the AONB Reserve**

## **7. Cannock Chase AONB Annual Review 2020/21**

- 7.1 Members received the report of the AONB Development Officer presenting the Annual Review 2020/21.
- 7.2 The AONB annual review was sent round with the papers and is a digital publication. It is a report that gives a snapshot to DEFRA of delivery with the year's headline achievements. It demonstrates the overall spend and £57K funding brought in from other funders, such as the SAC Partnership.
- 7.3 The Annual Review only mentions Farming in Protected Landscapes in passing. This is the topic in item 10 in the Agenda. Ian Marshall explained briefly that this is a 3 year programme funded by DEFRA. The announcement for the scheme was made by the Secretary of State for the Environment in a Ministerial Statement. There is also the potential for a new National Landscape Service for National Parks and AONBs, but this is still under consultation and awaiting ministerial steer.
- 7.4 Cllr Beatty added that she understood the Secretary of State is very committed to taking the National Landscape Service (NLS) forward, though work has not yet begun in earnest on this. Cllr Beatty reported that she has expressed concern regarding the proposal and was keen to get Lord Benyon up here. Cannock Chase is very different from other AONBs as it is small and subject to a great deal of visitor pressure. The Secretary of State made it clear that the local role will not change, and the NLS will add an additional national service. Government does recognise how poorly funded AONBs are in comparison to National Parks.
- 7.5 Cllr Beatty requested the Annual Review be circulated to Local Authority members and departments
- 7.6 **Resolved:**  
**That the Committee approved the Annual Review**

## **8. AONB activities progress report 2021-22**

- 8.1 Members received a report from the AONB Development Officer providing an update on current activities under each of the following areas:

Landscape Character and Planning  
Wildlife and Nature  
Historic Environment and Culture  
Experience and enjoyment  
Communities and Business  
Governance and Communication

- 8.2 Cllr Frances Beatty thanked the team for their hard work and invited any comments from partners.

- 8.3 Cllr Len Bates suggested it is important for the AONB to have a Climate Change Strategy, citing that South Staffordshire District Council have such a strategy. Ian Marshall responded that 2 years ago the AONB family signed the Colchester Declaration which made a commitment to make improvements for nature and tackle climate change. By default locally the AONB is already contributing to the aims of the Declaration through carbon capture via semi natural habitats. We need to consider what else we could do locally, and how. For example, the AONB receives 3 million visitors annually and 80% arrive by car: how do we instigate a fundamental change there? Cllr Bates requested this as an item for the Agenda at the next meeting.

- 8.4 **Resolved:**  
**That Committee notes progress on the delivery of current AONB activities.**

## **9 Commonwealth Games 2022**

- 9.1 A report was presented by Andrew Harvey Coggins, District Recreation Manager for Forestry England (FE).

- 9.2 There is a lot of interest and concern regarding the Commonwealth Games (CG) Mountain biking event. Andrew Harvey Coggins understands these concerns but believes there will be a benefit to FE, the AONB and the wider community. FE were approached in 2017 to use the site as a CG venue and they originally declined as the scale of the proposal was unclear and they did not want to add further pressure to the area. FE were encouraged to work to develop a proposal.

- 9.3 FE has a vision for the biking provision on the Chase to provide benefits for health and wellbeing in the natural environment. Their provision includes graded trails. Multiple Green trails (easy). A Blue trail, which currently goes into the SAC and is not fit for purpose as it doesn't provide for progression. It is graded as Blue mainly due to length. Red trails are very congested and don't provide the challenges users are seeking, hence they are creating their own routes. FE wants to develop trails away from the SAC and SSSI and to a technical level that will fulfil users – right challenge,



right place. From gathering information from users FE identified a gap in middle range provision, to help improve cycling skills. To deliver new route provision and take these away from the SAC was estimated at £1.1million. The Commonwealth Games provides the catalyst to implement but they have also been working with Sport England and British Cycling. Funding comes from British Cycling, Sport England Staffordshire County Council, Cannock Chase District Council, Birmingham City Council, FE. The new Blue Trail, located deep in the forest, was completed last month using local materials so that it will weather in. 10,000 riders used it the first weekend it was opened. Official launch will be 17/18 September 2021 – renamed Perry Trail (reference to the Commonwealth Games mascot). The new Perry Trail is 4km long, no more than 2km away from Birches Valley car park. In the next few weeks, the old Blue trail will be removed, including way markers.

- 9.4 A full impact assessment has been done for the replacement Blue route, including Habitats Regulations Assessment working with Natural England, landscape impact and mitigation. FE is working on education and awareness of the sensitivities of the SAC. FE have a robust process for closing wild trails and is working in partnership with SCC on this.
- 9.5 FE have a Responsible Riding campaign which includes setting out where to ride and are determined this will be effective. It includes the Cannock Chase Place Brand so there will be consistent messages where trails start. They also have a programme of community engagement working with Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles.
- 9.6 A new kids trail is being developed for 3 – 11 year olds. This will focus on different skills to help new riders learn skills such as cornering, braking etc.
- 9.7 The event next year needs to be carefully managed. The Commonwealth Games Organising committee is responsible for the event, not FE. HRA is being undertaken. There will be 80 competitors, 3000 ticketed spectators and a further 7000 un-ticketed spectators are expected though numbers could be more or less. Organisers are looking to recruit 400 volunteers to help at this event. The competition route will include 99% of the new Perry Trail plus an extra upgraded section which FE want subsequently removed. Regarding spectator management they are working on walking routes from Rugeley; park and walk will be available from Marquis Drive and Four Oaks Farm (near Birches Valley). There will be vehicle checks and road closures, security and ecological controls.
- 9.8 Cllr Len Bates thanked Andrew Harvey Coggins for the presentation and asked if the AONB logo would be included on any material, and asked if arrival by train to Penkridge (West Coast Mainline) had been considered? Andrew Harvey Coggins said the Cannock Chase Place Brand was being used. A bus connection between the event and Penkridge train station is being considered – Transport for West Midlands and SCC are working on this. Cllr Frances Beatty welcomed the update.
- 9.9 **Resolved:**  
**That Committee noted the report.**

## **10. Farming in Protected Landscapes**

- 10.1 Members received a report of the AONB Development Officer on the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme.
- 10.2 Members will be aware from the March Committee meeting that there were delays to the announcement of the programme. The window for applications opened on 1<sup>st</sup> July. Farming in Protected Landscapes is one of the programmes in the Government's agricultural transition plan and will lay the groundwork for the new Environmental Land Management Scheme. Farming in Protected Landscapes will see money coming to AONBs and National Parks for one off projects. Cannock Chase AONB has a year 1 allocation of approximately £320,000 (including administration and management costs). It is a 3 year programme running until 2024.
- 10.3 The grant fund is for farmers and land managers within or outside the AONB who are eligible as long as there is a benefit to the protected area. There are 4 outcomes to satisfy: mitigating climate change, nature recovery, access and inclusivity, and place. Projects must also support priorities in the AONB's Management Plan.
- 10.4 The AONB is welcoming expressions of interest via their dedicated webpage, where there is also guidance and application forms. It is advisable to discuss possible projects with us first. The window for applications closes on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022, and money will be allocated on a first come first served basis. The next window will be from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. Multi year projects must end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The AONB is drawing together a Panel to review applications and allocate funds, and a nationally agreed scoring system will be used.
- 10.5 Staffordshire County Council Comms Team has been assisting the AONB in promoting the programme. We have approached a variety of organisations to assist in spreading the word to the farming community and will be attending the Staffordshire County Show and have 2 webinars arranged for late July. The AONB will be advertising for a dedicated officer to engage with farmers and administer the programme. In the interim we have engaged agri-environment consultants Arbor Vitae to assist us.
- 10.6 Cllr Len Bates asked if the webinars are open to all and whether Teddesley Park would be in the remit. Ian Marshall confirmed that is the case to both.
- 10.7 Cllr Victoria Wilson congratulated the team on the success of putting these arrangements in place in such a short period of time, and asked what kind of uptake might be expected? Ian Marshall responded that uptake is unknown though we had already had 13-14 expressions of interest, though potentially not all would come to an application. This scheme is for one – off projects, reducing bureaucracy and committing the landowner to only 3 years, and we aim to be efficient and quick in administering. Nationally the Protected Landscapes want to make this a success to aim to get further funding.

10.8 Mary Cope complimented the Team on the excellent presentation and proactive approach, particularly in view of the paucity of information available.

10.9 **Resolved:**  
**Members noted the report and progress made.**

#### 11. Planning update

11.1 A report on planning matters was circulated prior to the meeting and presented by J Banbury.

11.2 **Planning** – Summarising from the Planning Report, 30 applications were reviewed, of which 7 were for consultations for amended applications in response to previous objections. 11 applications did not need a full response as there were no concerns to raise.

11.3 In addition to the cases referred to in the Planning Report, a representation is being made by the AONB to the Planning Inspectorate regarding an appeal against enforcement for unauthorised development off Sandy Lane in South Staffordshire. This small area of the AONB is at high risk of unsympathetic development affecting the integrity and special qualities of the AONB. The unauthorised development includes built structures.

11.4 **HS2** - The Environmental Enhancement Plan has been approved and supported by HS2 and submitted Secretary of State for approval. The Group anticipates hearing the outcome shortly. Further consultation has been taking place on Early Environmental Works, but there has been no consultation as yet on the main design proposals.

11.5 Julia Banbury met with a few of the Fixed Point Photography volunteers to establish locations that could be included in the Project to monitor the impact of HS2 on the AONB during construction and operation.

11.6 **Dark Skies Project update** – A Sky Quality Survey was carried out by volunteers across the AONB during March. The AONB is grateful to partners for assistance, including SCC, FE, and the National Trust. The darkest skies were recorded in Shugborough Park. Some locations in the core of the Chase provided readings that indicated lighter skies than might be expected. In some cases, this appeared to be due to poorly adjusted security lighting.

11.7 The AONB Good Lighting Guide has been drafted and sent to Local Authorities for comment. Members will be aware that this guide is aimed at raising awareness of how light pollution affects the AONB and encourage positive action to reduce unnecessary light spillage.

11.8 **Undergrounding** The undergrounding of overhead cables at Shugborough Park has now been completed, enhancing the park and gardens for visitors to enjoy.

11.9 **Resolved:**

**That the Committee noted progress on planning matters and the Dark Skies project.**

**12. Date, time and venue of next meeting**

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021, 10AM – 12 noon. Venue to be confirmed.

**Item 4****Public questions**

<b>Item for:</b>	Questions received (in advance) from members of the public
<b>Author:</b>	None
<b>Financial implications:</b>	None
<b>Recommendations:</b>	The Committee notes the questions and is invited to respond.

**Item 5** **AONB project proposal**

Item for:	Decision
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**Author:** Ian Marshall, AONB Development Officer

**Financial implications:** Allocation of £10,000 from AONB core budget, over 2 financial years

**Recommendations:**

1. To authorise officers to work with the SAC Partnership to deliver a joint proposal to raise awareness of Cannock Chase amongst young people.

2. To allocate resources to enable delivery.

## Background

1. The Cannock Chase SAC and AONB Partnerships both want to raise young people's awareness of the importance of Cannock Chase and the need to protect it for our social, economic and environmental wellbeing.
2. A joint proposal is therefore being put forward for the approval of both the AONB and SAC Partnerships with the aim of reminding our youngsters that not only do they live in or close to a precious place but that they are responsible for its care. Our youngsters are the '*Future Guardians of Cannock Chase*'.
3. The cost for an awareness programme is estimated IRO of £20,000. It is proposed that it is funded equally between the SAC and AONB Partnerships, and delivered over two financial years (21/22 and 22/23).
4. The proposal was presented to the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership Project Group on 11 November and supported in principle.

## Awareness programme

5. The programme will comprise the development of 3 projects (to be let as one contract) for children and young people to access and use with their families, library staff, guiding and scouting leaders and DofE instructors:
- ***Library resources pack*** (target group KS2, ages 7-11 years), comprising:
    - Teachers' guide
    - Interactive materials (for example, discussion cards, fact sheets, activity sheets)
  - ***Cannock Chase guiding and scouting 'I Love Cannock Chase' Challenge Badge*** (target group - Brownies 7-10, Cub Scouts 8-10.5, Guides 10-14, Scouts 10.5-14, Rangers 14-18, Explorers 14-18), comprising:
    - Scouting/guiding leaders' guide
    - Activity sheets
    - Challenge badge
  - ***Duke of Edinburgh Expedition Pack (target group ages 14-25 years)***, comprising:
    - Expedition pack (for participants, teachers and course leaders)

- Activity ideas

- The content will inform, explain and inspire about the international importance of the SAC and wider AONB, the special qualities that define the area and its sense of place (natural heritage, cultural heritage, landscape character and scenic qualities, tranquillity and wildness), its vulnerabilities, and how we can all get involved to look after it. Potential topics might include:
  - Habitats and their associated wildlife
  - The Chase Through Time (The thrill of the Chase, Home is where the heath is, Making a Living, The Chase at War)
  - Dark skies (and peace and tranquillity)
  - Our Chase, Our Future (covering the ecosystems services the Chase provides, the need to look after it, and the Cannock Chase code)
- The scope of works to be undertaken for each of the projects is broadly similar and includes:
  - Familiarisation and advice from partners such as, local authority Library Services, Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme West Midlands, and local Scouting and Guiding District Commissioners
  - Preparation of materials
  - Artwork, production of digital material
  - Printing of packs
  - Production of uniform group badges
  - Distribution and promotion of materials

### Costs and procurement

- The combined cost for the research, preparation and production of products and materials for these 3 projects is estimated to be IRO of £20,000.
- The costs of the work can be broken down as follows:

Description	Cost (£)
Familiarisation (2 days)	800
Preparation of materials (28 days)	11,200
Artwork, production of digital materials (10 days)	4,000
Printing of packs	2,000
Production of uniform badges	800
Project management meetings (combined total of 3 days)	1,200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,000</b>

- It is proposed that the programme would be let as a single contract, spread over two financial years. Staffordshire County Council procurement rules require sourcing three quotations for a contract of this value.

11. It is proposed that the SAC and AONB Partnerships share equally the costs of this commission.

### Timeline

	FY 2021/22					FY 2022/23									
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
SAC approval	◊														
AONB approval		◊													
Prepare and issue procurement documentation			◊												
Award contract			◊												
Commission delivery				◊											
Project management meetings		◊	◊	◊	◊	◊	◊	◊	◊	◊	◊	◊			
Commission conclusion												◊			
Promotion and distribution															

### Project management

12. The commission will be let and managed on a day-to-day basis by the Cannock Chase AONB Team.
13. A programme working group will be established comprising officers from the AONB and SAC Teams that will meet regularly during the programme lifetime.
14. External advisers will be engaged as required during the programme lifetime.

### Project risks and mitigation

15. Project risks and proposed mitigation are as follows:
  - Project work packages not achievable within budget (MITIGATION: regular budget reporting processes in place, seek best costs, communicate to funder, use contingency, find other income)
  - Project is delayed due to impacts of COVID 19, eg, further lockdowns result in staff having to work from home or being furloughed. (MITIGATION: Alter project plan to comply with latest Covid-19 guidance. Hold project management meetings virtually. Extend delivery timetable).
  - Digital content is not accessible (MITIGATION: Digital accessibility will be built into the design process and products will be tested for accessibility with appropriate groups).
  - Limited interest and take up of materials. (MITIGATION: Direct involvement with libraries and support of Libraries and Arts Service and Education Service, DofE West Midlands Team and Scouting and Guiding groups will maximise chances of 'buy-in').



## Strategic fit

16. The proposal will deliver core objectives of both the Cannock Chase SAC and AONB Partnerships.

### *Cannock Chase Site User Detailed Implementation Plan (DiP)*

17. Education is one of a series of recommendations to raise awareness about the vulnerabilities of the Chase and the unintended consequences of recreation and people's behaviours. A range of specific groups and demographics are identified as being important to work with including key stage 1 and 2, key stage 3 and 4, and Duke of Edinburgh.
18. The SAC Partnership is already working with the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust in order to deliver education material to school children in the region. However, there is currently no programme in place to reach other school aged children who highly likely to visit the Chase (e.g. DoE, Scouts and Girls Guides. These groups will require tailored engagement for their needs.

### *Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan*

19. Experience and Enjoyment is one of 5 themes which together form the framework for the AONB Partnership to meet its statutory purpose to conserve and enhance natural beauty. The theme includes policies and accompanying actions to work with others to coordinate, develop and promote educational opportunities that allow every child to understand, experience and explore the natural benefits that the AONB has to offer.

### *Added value*

20. Pooling their resources and working together on this project will enable the SAC and AONB Partnerships to obtain 'added value' than working independently. Money spent will have amplified impact and enable a greater reach with young children, with more positive long-term effects. The AONB is offering to lead on the project, supported by the SAC, thereby enabling the SAC Engagement Officer to devote more of their time to deliver other projects in the DiPs.

## Who will benefit from the proposal

21. The primary audience for this project are the children and young people living on and around Cannock Chase AONB and within the wider SAC 15km zone of influence. Its reach will also extend to parents, teachers, DoE instructors, library staff and guide and scout leaders.
22. An indication of the potential reach of the project can be gauged from the following numbers:
  - **Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme** –the 1,400 participants that visit Cannock Chase AONB each year as part of their expedition section (mainly from Staffordshire, but also Wolverhampton, Birmingham, Dudley and Sandwell) will benefit by getting more out of their visit from improved knowledge about the

special qualities of the Chase, ideas for expedition aims, as well as what the area offers in terms of facilities. DoE instructors will also learn more about the Chase and what it offers.

- **Girlguiding and Scouts** - the combined 20,000+ members of will benefit from a new I love Cannock Chase challenge pack and badge that will teach young people about the AONB and what makes it special and how they can help to protect it.
- **Libraries** – the 16 libraries in the catchment comprising 500+ classes and families with young children that visit them each year will benefit from creative resource packs and activities for children and young people so that they see Cannock Chase as a vital resource for wellbeing, and learn how to look after it.

## Outcomes

23. Our desired outcomes for the programme are:

- Raised awareness and appreciation in children and young people of the special qualities of Cannock Chase; its fragility and benefits
- Stronger emotional connections with the area and a greater sense of place and pride
- Enhanced knowledge and awareness of the desired environmentally friendly behaviours on the Chase
- Greater willingness to take responsibility and help to look after the Chase
- Improved health and wellbeing through encouraging children and young people to get outdoors and experience the Chase for themselves

## Legacy

24. The project will leave a lasting legacy that will be sustained by the AONB Partnership and its partners through the delivery of the AONB Management Plan and incorporation into partners' business plans.
25. Outputs such as resources packs, expedition packs and activities will continue to be available for libraries and DoFE Award Scheme participants, instructors and library staff to use after the project ends. The value of these outputs and need for any refresh will be reviewed at regular intervals through the AONB Management Plan.
26. The I Love Cannock Chase challenge pack and badge will continue to be offered by Girlguiding and Scouting groups to their members after the project ends.
27. The AONB Partnership plans to establish a Cannock Chase Landscape Foundation CIC for voluntary and corporate giving, whose primary focus will be supporting activities and programmes for children and young people on Cannock Chase AONB.

## Recommendations

28. (1) To authorise officers to work with the SAC Partnership to deliver a joint proposal to raise awareness of Cannock Chase amongst young people.
- (2) To allocate resources to enable delivery.

**Item 6** **AONB Annual Conference**

Item for:	Decision
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**Author:** Ian Marshall, AONB Development Officer

**Financial implications:** The AONB budget includes an allocation of £2,000 for the AONB Annual Conference.

**Recommendations:** The Joint Committee is requested to approve the proposals set out for the 2021/22 AONB Annual Conference.

## Background

1. The governance arrangements for Cannock Chase AONB include a commitment to hold an annual conference to discuss AONB activities and issues.
2. An annual conference did not take place during 2020/21 due to the COVID pandemic and the uncertainty and requirements surrounding social distancing. The last AONB annual conference was held in October 2019 at Brocton Golf club, with the theme of “Changing views – heathland management on Cannock Chase”.
3. A proposal for a virtual conference for 2021/22 is set out, to take place in the first week of March 2022. The proposed theme for the conference is ‘Changing perceptions and behaviours’.

## Conference theme

4. Balancing the needs of conservation with recreational demands is an ongoing challenge for all protected landscapes, but is particularly acute on Cannock Chase due to its small size, location to a large population catchment and popularity. The response to the coronavirus pandemic has shown us how much we need and value places like Cannock Chase for inspiration, raising our spirits and physical exercise. During the national lockdowns the number of people coming to the Chase soared, reaching unprecedented levels and placing significant demands on landowners, local authorities and emergency services.
5. Many new as well as repeat visitors are unaware of the special importance of Cannock Chase and take it for granted. A flipside of people's recreational use of Cannock Chase are the unintended consequences including erosion, damage to wildlife habitats and cultural heritage, disturbance to wildlife, wildfires, litter, anti-social behaviour and a general loss of the sense of peace and tranquillity.
6. The 2019 Glover Review of England's Protected Landscapes is also encouraging our national landscapes to be healthier, greener, more beautiful places and open to everyone.
7. In the face of these challenges, the proposed theme for the 2021/22 AONB Annual Conference is 'Changing perceptions and behaviours'. After a review of the achievements of the past year the Conference will look at what is being done to change the perceptions of the 3 million annual visitors to Cannock Chase and

influence positive behaviours to ensure that one of England's finest landscapes stays special for this and future generations to come.

### Conference programme

8. This will be a virtual, one-day event split into two 2-hour sessions – one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The target audience is primarily local comprising AONB partners, stakeholders and the public. The date for the event is provisionally earmarked for the first week of March 2022 (2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>).
9. Presentations will focus on a range of initiatives underway or planned on Cannock Chase including: using sense of place, messaging and communication strategies, behavioural change campaigns, education and the use of the arts and culture to connect people to nature. National context and perspectives will also be presented. Opportunities for questions to speakers are built in throughout both morning and afternoon sessions.
10. The provisional programme for the event is set out below.

AM	10.00-10.05	CONFERENCE WELCOME and opening remarks
	10.05-10.30	Review of the year
	10.30-11.00	Q&A
	11.00-11.20	Responsible recreation in England's protected landscapes and balancing the needs of conservation
	11.20-11.40	UK solutions to tackling the issues
	11.40-12:00	Q&A
		LUNCH
PM	14.00-14.15	Using sense of place to develop emotional connections with landscape – the Cannock Chase place brand
	14.15-14.30	Delivering behavioural change campaigns: the Cannock Chase Ride with Respect Campaign
	14.30 -14:50	Q&A
	14:50-15.05	Connecting people to nature through arts and culture
	15.05-15.20	Learning through landscapes: the role of education in protecting Cannock Chase.
	15.20-15.40	Q&A
	15.40-16.00	Closing remarks and CONFERENCE CLOSE

### Event management

11. An experienced event manager is being engaged through the National Association for AONBs to collaborate with the AONB Team and provide event management support for the conference.
12. Cannock Chase AONB Team will be responsible for the programme content and promotion. The conference will be promoted from early January through local media, the AONB website and direct to AONB newsletter subscribers.

13. The conference platform will be Zoom Webinar. The event will be recorded and available after the conference. Delegate participation will be free and by online registration.

**Event costs**

14. The anticipated costs for the event comprise:
- £1,500 for event management fees
  - Two months of Zoom Webinar costs at £64 per month for up to 500 concurrent attendees (total of £128).
15. Keynote speaker fees may need to be added to these costs, but are as yet unknown.

**Recommendation**

16. The Committee is requested to approve the proposed arrangements for the 2021/22 AONB Annual Conference.

## **Item 7**

### **Planning update**

- (a) Development management and planning policy
- (b) High Speed Rail (HS2) Phase 2a
- (c) Dark Skies Project

**Item for:**

Part (a): Information

Part (b): Information

Part (c): Information

**Author:**

Julia Banbury, AONB Landscape Planning Officer

**Financial implications:**

None

**Recommendations:**

1. The Joint Committee notes progress made on planning matters since the last meeting
2. Members to note the update on High Speed Rail (HS2) Phase 2a
3. Members to note the update on the Dark Skies Project

#### **Part (a) Development management and planning policy**

1. Between July and November, the Landscape Planning Officer reviewed 55 planning applications, and 2 Planning Inspectorate Appeals. Four applications were classified as major development: 2 for solar farms within the setting of the AONB, and two associated with retail and housing development in Cannock and Lichfield respectively. Ten consultations related to amended applications in response to previous objections. Twenty-two applications did not need a full response as there were no concerns to raise.
2. The table below indicates applications reported on previously that have now been decided, and consultations from July where an objection was made, along with the outcomes to date. Full responses are available from the AONB Landscape Planning Officer.

	Planning inspectorate Application /Appeal			Major application	
	Planning policy			Other consultation (eg. Felling license)	
<b>Authority area</b>	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Site and Description</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Response date</b>	<b>LPA decision</b>
Cannock Chase	CH/21/0180	Crawford House, Beaudesert Park, Cannock Wood Lawful Development Certificate	Objection	12.05.21	Refused 23.09.21
Cannock Chase	CH/21/0055	Silver Trees Caravan And Chalet Park, Stafford Brook Road	Objection  Objection removed	21.05.21	Refused 18.08.21
Cannock Chase	CH/20/381	Land used as a pony paddock, Rawnsley Road, Cannock Residential - 60 houses	Objection	27.05.21	Awaiting decision
South Staffordshire	21/00381/FUL	Church Farm, Church Lane Hatherton Agricultural building	Conditional objection	12.05.21	Approve 23.06.21 with landscape condition
South Staffordshire	21/00255/FUL	Land north of the White House, Sandy La, Hatherton Change of use for keeping horses & as residential caravan site for 3 gypsy families, each with 2 caravans and 1 static caravan/mobile home, hardstanding, 3 amenity buildings	Objection  The introduction of residential permanent / semi-permanent caravans, buildings and hardstanding would introduce urban features that would detract from the natural beauty and tranquillity, and the openness of the Green Belt	24.06.21	Refused 03.11.21

South Staffordshire	21/00644/FUL 21/00645/FUL 21/00646/FUL	Coppice Farm, Cannock Rd, Bednall Applications for equestrian arena, stable blocks	Objection Requires landscape mitigation strategy to mitigate AONB setting	14.07.21 15.07.21 22.07.21 09.08.21	Approved 10.09.21 With conditions (landscape)
Stafford Borough	20/33463/FUL	182 The Paddock, Milford	Application amended; mitigation acceptable	13.05.21	Approved 22.07.21 No lighting to manège
Lichfield	21/01178/FUL	Windy Ridge, Commonside, Gentleshaw Vary 20/01085/FUL -change to layout	Advice - Conditions requested	09.07.21	Approved 27.09.21 with conditions
South Staffordshire	PINS reference 21/3274332 21/3274333 21/3274334	Planning Appeal against enforcement notice Land at Dovelelys Farm Sandy Lane	Support LPA enforcement action. Urbanising features would result in detrimental impacts. In the context of approved development 19/00701/FUL, would risk concerning cumulative impact.	02.08.21	Awaiting decision
South Staffordshire	21/00040/FUL	Springslade Works Cannock Road Bednall Redevelopment - 5 new dwellings - Amended	Amended plans with additional tree retention Objection removed, advice and request for conditions unchanged.	23.04.21 03.08.21	Awaiting decision
Lichfield	21.01097FUL	Caligari Lower Way Upper Longdon Alterations and minor extension	Request clarity on tree retention	04.08.21	
Stafford	20/33151/FUL	Casa de Lune, 32 Pool Lane, Brocton Garage with living over	Proposal set back from boundary similar to original approved application. Request conditions	11.08.21	Awaiting decision
Stafford	21/33764/COU	Osborne House 190B Main Road Milford Change of use to garden	Objection - development outside the settlement boundary and in the setting of the AONB	19.08.21	Refused 22.10.21
Lichfield	21/01069/FUL	Tara House, School Lane, Gentleshaw Outdoor covered manège	Objection – Potentially widely visible due to landform. A large steel structure would infill green space between scattered dwellings, adversely affecting character. Strongly	31.08.21	Awaiting decision



			recommend Landscape and Visual Appraisal to inform decision and mitigation.		
Lichfield	21/01401/FUL	Land adjacent to 6 Malthouses, Malthouse Lane Erection of 1 dwelling	Objection Infill green space between scattered dwellings would adversely affect the character and openness of the AONB setting.	31.08.21	Refused 19.10.21
Cannock Chase	CH/21/0260	Aldene, 7, Stafford Brook Road Change of use of garden to use exg static caravan for holiday let	Objection  Over-development	09.09.21	Refused 29.09.21
Stafford	21/34563/COU	Brocton Park Farm Change of use of agricultural field to supplying telegraph poles, storage and modular office buildings	Objection Located at junction of several ROW. Views of the development from footpaths accessing AONB, and from higher ground within the AONB. The proposal would introduce urbanising elements in the AONB setting and detract from the approach.	02.09.21	Awaiting decision
Forestry Commission	015/2788/2021	Birches Valley Car Park Felling License – felling diseased trees	Mitigation strategy discussed with FE	14.09.21	
Lichfield	21/00359/FULM	Land at Colton Mill Farm and Carwaden Springs Farm  Soalr Farm	Conditional Objection - Located 2km from AONB with Rugeley in the foreground. Enhanced mitigation requested to minimise visibility of larger structures. Enhanced mitigation submitted; concerns addressed	08.04.21 15.09.21	Approved 01.11.21
Staffordshire County Council	CH.20/04/709 M	Rugeley Quarry Vary conditions – phasing	Seek enhanced restoration. Request conditions for details of areas for trialling landform enhancements and phased habitat restoration.	15.09.21	Awaiting decision
Cannock Chase	CH/21/0383	30 Rugeley Road, Hazelslade Demolition of bungalow 3 new detached houses	Objection 3 properties would reduce the perceived green space between the centre of Hazelslade and the outlying properties.	04.10.21	Awaiting decision
Stafford	21/33668/COU	Land adj Bower Lane, Etchingham	Objection - Proposal, in a prominent location, would introduce detracting	25.10.21	Awaiting decision

		Change of Use from agricultural land to dog exercise area with track and parking area	urbanising elements. Potential impact on trees.		
South Staffordshire	21/00396/FUL  Appeal ref W/21/3281030	Shore Croft West Wing Sandy Lane Hatherton Extension to stable block to include further stables, hay store, grooming, feed, tack and rugs room together with construction of a manège	Support LPA refusal due to detrimental impact on AONB and openness of Green Belt. Proposal would considerably increase the mass of built forms and introduce detracting features, fragmenting the landscape of the designated area.	21.10.21	Awaiting decision
Lichfield	21/01620/FULM	Land to west of Stoneyford Lane, Blithbury  Solar Farm	Objection Located 3.5km from AONB with Rugeley in the foreground. Seek enhanced mitigation for views of larger structures. Concerns regarding cumulative impact of this proposal and 21/00359/FULM.	28.10.21	Awaiting decision
Cannock Chase	CH/21/0402	Cannock Chase Forest Centre Temporary use of area for Commonwealth Games 2022 Mountain Biking event	Objection Inadequate consideration of: Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Potential impacts from spectators and traffic on event days and training days, and the absence of a Local Area Traffic Management Plan Long term effects of increased human pressure as a legacy of the event	29.10.21	Awaiting decision

### **Part (b) High Speed Rail (HS2) Phase 2a**

5. In March, progress on the Environmental Enhancement plan to date was reported to the Joint Committee. The Environmental Enhancement Plan has now been approved by the Secretary of State. Projects are now finalising their funding agreements with SCC, and these should all be agreed and signed off shortly. Projects are expected to commence from January 2022 (though different projects will have different start times). Members can expect to see the commencement of the projects being publicised in early 2022.

### **Part (c) Dark Skies project**

6. The draft Good Lighting Guide has been circulated to local authority partners for comment and is being finalised. Permissions are being sought to use illustrative material.

### **Recommendations**

7. (1) The Joint Committee notes progress made on planning matters since the last meeting.  
  
(2) Members to note the update on High Speed Rail (HS2) Phase 2a.  
  
(3) Members to note progress on the Dark Skies project

<b>Item 8</b>	<b>Farming in Protected Landscapes programme</b>
<b>Item for:</b>	Information
<b>Author:</b>	Colin Manning, Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer
<b>Financial implications:</b>	Funding for the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme is provided by Defra and is additional funding on top of the annual core grant that the AONB receives.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	The Committee is requested to note the progress that has taken place to deliver the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme in the Cannock Chase AONB and is invited to ask questions.

### Background

1. This report updates members on progress to deliver the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme in Cannock Chase AONB.
2. The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme is part of Defra's Agricultural Transition Plan that sets out the Government's changes to agricultural policy in England from 1 January 2021. It offers funding to farmers and land managers in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), National Parks and the Broads for projects that:
  - support nature recovery
  - mitigate the impacts of climate change
  - provide opportunities for people to discover, enjoy and understand the landscape and its cultural heritage
  - support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses
3. The programme opened in July 2021 and will run until March 2024.

### Funding allocation

4. Each Protected Landscape in England has been allocated a budget using a funding formula including criteria for farm holdings, level of disadvantage and population measures. The original provisional allocation for Cannock Chase AONB was as follows:

Financial year	Overall allocation	Admin	Advice/guidance	Project grants
2021/22	£320,833	(max) £25,290	(max) £42,993	(min) £252,550

5. The maximum spend on advice and guidance and administration will remain constant across the three years of the programme.
6. Funding for the Farming in Protected Landscape Programme is additional funding on top of the annual core grant that the AONB receives from Defra.

## **Budget re-profile**

7. In October 2021 Defra gave all Protected Landscapes a one-off opportunity to re-profile their budgets given the delayed start to the programme, the challenges faced in local delivery and the short length of time left in the financial year to develop and assess applications and for farmers to deliver and complete projects.
8. We have therefore presented to Defra a re-profiled budget that offers a realistic spend for the current financial year (based on the number and value of applications in the pipeline) and transfers a smaller proportion of the difference between our original and proposed year 1 allocation to year 2 and the greater proportion to year 3. Our request has been approved by Defra.

## **Cannock Chase AONB delivery approach**

9. During July and August we promoted the programme locally through:
  - Local media release (to complement the national launch announced by Defra)
  - Individual letters and emails to each of the 180+ farmers and landowners within the AONB and a 1km buffer around the designated area
  - Email and advisor packs distributed by Staffordshire NFU, Staffordshire CLA, British Horse Society (Midland's region), Staffordshire Smallholders' Association, Staffordshire Young Farmers Club to their respective memberships
  - Attendance at the Staffordshire Show, 25/26 August
10. A FiPL webpage on the AONB website has been set up as the to 'go to' source of information about the programme for farmers and land managers in the AONB where they can download guidance and an application form.
11. We have recruited a full-time Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer, who started on 25 October. They will provide advice and guidance to farmers and other land managers, support grant applicants, support an assessment panel who will judge applications, and carry out general administration and monitoring activities to ensure the efficient running of the programme.
12. Between July and October, we engaged the services of an agri-environment consultant to provide advice and guidance to farmers until such time as the full-time officer had been recruited.
13. In accordance with Defra's requirements a Local Assessment Panel has been set up to consider and decide on applications for projects (above £5,000) submitted to the programme. The standing members of the Cannock Chase AONB Local Assessment Panel comprise:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Cllr Frances Beatty	Chair, Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee
Cllr Len Bates	Vice-Chair, Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee
Helen Dale	Staffordshire Countryside Landowners' Association

Sarah Faulkner	Staffordshire National Farmers' Union
Wendy Bannerman	British Horse Society
Mary Cope	Beaudesert Park Farm
Jaclyn Lake	Natural England
Jeff Sim	Staffordshire Wildlife Trust
AONB Officers	Cannock Chase AONB

14. The Panel met for an induction meeting on 7 September 2021, at which Mary Cope was elected Chair. The first regular meeting of the Panel is arranged for 30<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **Interest received to date**

15. The promotion campaign has generated nearly 30 expressions of interest in the Programme. At around 16% of all eligible farmers and other land managers in our catchment, this compares similarly with the levels of interest in the programme experienced by other Protected Landscapes.
16. Upon examination, approximately half of the expressions of interest received were not eligible or appropriate for funding.
17. Four applications have been received and are awaiting decision. Proposed project activities are primarily related to nature recovery outcomes and include:
- Fencing and gates for stock management
  - Pond construction
  - Crayfish habitat enhancement
  - Winter bird food planting and maintenance
  - Tree and shrub planting
  - Bird and bat boxes
  - Grassland enhancement

#### **Next steps**

18. The immediate priority is to progress those applications which have been received or are in preparation and to award grants (where approved) and issue grant agreements.
19. Attention will then turn to having more detailed conversations with those farmers who have submitted expressions of interest that have the greatest potential to be developed as applications.
20. Further local promotion of the programme is planned for February/March 2022.

#### **Recommendation**

21. The Committee is requested to note the progress that has taken place to deliver the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme in the Cannock Chase AONB and is invited to ask questions.

## Item 9 AONB Business Plan 2021-23

**Item for:** Part (1) Information

## Part (2) Decision

**Author:** Ian Marshall, AONB Development Officer

**Financial implications:** The proposed AONB budget for 2022/23 has been kept at its existing (2021/22) level, until we have further information of any future Defra grant settlement

**Recommendations:** That members:

(1) note progress achieved against year 1 (2021/22 activities

(2) approve the proposed activities for year 2 (2022/23) including the projects identified as priorities for AONB funding, with any amendments made at the meeting

## Background

1. At the meeting of the AONB Joint Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2020 members approved a new two year AONB Business Plan for the period 2021-23. This report updates members on progress to deliver year 1 activities of that plan and to consider the activities proposed for year 2.
2. Our Business Plan details how the AONB Partnership itself, notably through its dedicated staff team, operates to deliver its contract with Defra and the commitments in our AONB Management Plan 2019-24.
3. Its priorities have been determined through a combination of:
  - The progress we have made over the previous two years (2019-21) to deliver commitments in our statutory Management Plan, and what remains to be done
  - The input of partners through the AONB Task and Finish Groups and Officer Working Group
  - The dynamic operating context
  - The collective national aspirations for designated landscapes

## Part 1. Progress against Year 1 (2021/22) Work Programme

4. The appended Work Programme from the Business Plan has been updated to show progress that has been achieved against the actions set out around our five themes - Landscape Character and Planning, Wildlife and Nature, Historic Environment, Experience and Enjoyment, Communities and Business, as well as measures to ensure effective Governance and Communication.
5. Progress against actions as at December 2021 is described and traffic lighted. An indication of our general progress against each of the themes can be gauged from the table below.

Theme	Nos of actions in Business Plan	Green	Amber	Red	No planned activity in yr 1
Landscape Character and Planning	12	8.5	2.5	0	1
Wildlife and Nature	18	8	1	5	4
Historic Environment and Culture	5	0	1	4	0
Experience and Enjoyment	13	6	0.5	6.5	0
Communities and Business	13	6.5	1	2.5	3
Governance	14	9	3	0	2
Communications	15	5	1	9	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>

6. The general picture is a favourable one, with over half of the 90 actions contained in the two-year Business Plan on track or generally on track to being delivered. There are, however, a sizeable number (27) that it has not been possible to start for a number of reasons, notably:

- A prolonged period of illness within the AONB Team has reduced our capacity to deliver a number of actions, particularly in the Wildlife and Nature Theme. This has made it necessary to seek alternative organisational leads for some of the actions, or to defer others to 2022-23 when hopefully we will back to full strength.
- Considerable time has been required to put in place arrangements for the Farming in Protected Landscape programme, diverting staff resources from (and delaying) other planned activities.
- COVID has severely curtailed volunteering activities, for example, surveying historic environment assets and welcoming visitors to the Great War Hut or disrupted preparations for activities like the AONB Annual Conference, Walk and Ride Festival and poetry anthology, walks and workshops. Some of these actions have been deferred to 2022-23.
- Several actions planned to improve the AONB's external communications have not transpired due to lack of internal capacity and skills. These have been deferred to 2022-23, and may require pursuing alternative means of delivery if delays persist.

## Part 2. Proposed Year 2 (2022/23) Work Programme

7. Year two activities set out in the Work Programme will ensure that the AONB Partnership continues to conserve and enhance Cannock Chase through targeted deployment of financial and staff resources and building on the strong links with local people and groups.



8. An assumption has been made that AONB core funding comprising 75% from Defra and 25% from constituent local authorities will continue at current levels.
9. Whilst many of the actions identified in the work programme can be delivered within the existing budget and resources of the AONB additional funding will be required if some are to proceed. Wherever possible, therefore, the AONB will develop actions collaboratively with partners and pool resources where aims are shared and this will lead to mutual benefits.
10. The current Business Plan (Annex 3) includes a schedule of major AONB projects that could be undertaken in pursuit of the AONB Management Plan but, in many cases, will require additional, external funding if they are to proceed.
11. Some of these projects will be delivered (or started) during the current financial year (2021/22):
  - Collaboration with Cannock Chase Local Education Partnership to develop local arts programme with young people (£5,000 contribution in 2021/22 and 2022/23 approved by Joint Committee on 15 March 2021)
  - Collaboration with the SAC Partnership to raise awareness of Cannock Chase with young people (£5,000 contribution pending Joint Committee approval on 6 December 2021)
  - Dark Skies project (joint project delivered with Staffordshire CPRE)
  - 2022 Cannock Chase Bird Survey (stage 1)
  - Woodland Local Wildlife Sites survey
  - Refresh of AONB promoted walking leaflets
  - RAF Hednesford interpretation refresh
12. Of the other projects that are listed the following have been identified as priorities for AONB funding and targets for external funding/sponsorship for 2022/23:
  - AONB souvenir guidebook (£6,000)
  - Audio-visual presentation that celebrates Cannock Chase (£8,000)
  - Walk and ride festival (£5,000)
  - Development of local arts programme in partnership with local art groups and artists (costs not yet known)
  - Adder survey (£10,000)
  - Study to understand engagement with under-represented groups (£5,000)
  - Consolidation works to surviving trig points (£2,500)
  - Landscape visualisations of options for future landscape change (6 visualisations) (£6,000)
  - Review the draft AONB Interpretation Strategy (draft 2016-2021), and finalise (£6,000)

13. Other scheduled projects may be eligible for funding through the new Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, and these will be discussed with relevant landowners and land managers. These include:

- Conservation improvements for key species
- Wetland restoration programme
- Key invertebrate survey
- Early successional species survey

### **Recommendations**

14. The Committee is requested to
- (1) note progress achieved against year 1 (2021/22) activities
  - (2) approve the proposed work programme for year 2 (2022/23) including the projects identified as priorities for AONB funding, with any amendments made at the meeting

## Work programme

The following table outlines progress achieved against our work programme annexed to our latest Business Plan 2021-23.

Actions are arranged by the themes of the AONB Management Plan 2019-24 and referenced against AONB Management Plan policy and action numbers.

Actions led by the AONB Unit and/or Task and Finish Group leads are identified (HE – Historic Environment, LM – Land Management and Biodiversity, LP – Landscape and Planning, VM – Visitor Management).







Lead AONB Officers are identified for each action (DO – Development Officer, LMO – Land Management Officer, LPO – Landscape Planning Officer).

Progress at December 2021 is described and traffic lighted 😊 = activity COMPLETED or ON TRACK, 😐 = GENERALLY ON TRACK BUT WITH SOME MINOR ISSUES, 😞 = OFF TRACK, activity not yet started and/or at risk of not being able to proceed or be completed.

Proposed activities for 2022/23 are indicated.

<b>Landscape Character and Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain quality and distinctiveness</li> <li>• Enhance the landscape setting</li> </ul>								
Priorities	Action	Key milestones	AONB policy / action Nos.	T&F Group Lead	AONB Team Lead	By when	2021-22 progress	2022-23 activities
Encourage landscape-led development	Monitor the effectiveness of our planning protocol with local planning authorities	Report to Joint Committee	LCP1	LP	LPO	Annually	Report to JC in March 2022	Report to JC in March 2023
	Input landscape advice to planning policy and development management	Responses to consultations	LCP1	LP	LPO	As required	😊 Planning advice ongoing	Input will continue as required
	Promote and disseminate AONB Design and Views and Setting guidance amongst elected members, officers and developers	Training events held	LCP1, A1, A15	LP	LPO	Annually	😊 Chairs of all LPA planning committees have been contacted	Guidance will underpin planning responses and other advice
	Represent the AONB in discussions around the Commonwealth Games to ensure that impacts are minimised, and the legacy is maximised	Engagement in meetings. Response to consultations	LCP1	LP	LPO	As required	😊 Input to trail construction, event, and legacy of Commonwealth Games ongoing	Input will continue as required

	Provide landscape design input to HS2 enabling works	Responses to consultations	LCP1	LP	LPO	As required	😊 Input to HS2 ongoing	Input will continue as required
Reduce traffic and highways impacts	Work with SCC Highways to update the AONB Highways Design Guide 2005	Refreshed Design Guide published and distributed to relevant partners and contractors	LCP2, B1	LP	LPO	2021-22, Q2	😊 Text for Design Guide drafted. Illustrations sourced to enable artwork and design to begin.	Guidance will underpin planning responses and other advice
Improve the quality and experience of the night skies	Work with CPRE Staffordshire and Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to develop a Dark Skies Project	Project approved  Light pollution assessment undertaken  Good lighting guide produced  Star count undertaken by volunteers	LCP1, LCP9, A1	LP	LPO	2021-22, Q1	😊 Light pollution assessment undertaken by volunteers  😊 Star count undertaken by volunteers  😊 Text for Good Lighting Guide drafted. Illustrations to be sourced to enable artwork and design to begin.	Guidance will underpin planning responses and other advice  The importance of Dark Skies will be promoted in interpretation and awareness-raising projects
Protect and enhance views within and from the AONB	Work with statutory undertakers to explore opportunities for undergrounding powerlines in the AONB	Removal of a kilometre of overhead lines at Shugborough Estate to restore the historic character of this iconic Grade I listed park  Further opportunities identified	LCP8	LP	LPO	Ongoing	😊 Undergrounding at Shugborough completed  😊 Feasibility work commenced for possible future schemes.	Possible further schemes will be investigated
Encourage and support agricultural land management that contributes to the	Continue to foster links with the farmer network and encourage uptake of Countryside Stewardship following the conclusion of the Environmental Land Management Scheme National	Network meetings  Funding applications submitted	LCP4, LCP5, A12	LP LM	LPO, LMO	Ongoing	😊 FiPL programme launched on 1 July 2021	Administer the FiPL programme to deliver outcomes for nature, access, climate change and place.

special qualities of the AONB	Landscapes advocacy project (2020-21), and during the Farming in Protected Landscapes theme of the Government's new farming policy (2021-24)						 Local promotion campaign delivered July and August 2021  Farm adviser recruited and started 25 <sup>th</sup> October 2021  Nearly 30 expressions of interest received by December 2021, of which 4 have been developed as applications	Continue to build relationships with farmers and land managers through the delivery of the FiPL programme
Monitor the condition of the landscape	Support Fixed Point Photography volunteers to monitor 56 key views twice a year, and upload the results onto the AONB website	Photos taken and uploaded	LCP1-10	LP	LPO	Biannually	 Volunteers have been able to take photographs Sept/Oct	Website photo update planned for February 2022
	Hold an interim review with volunteers	Review meeting held	LCP1-10	LP	LPO	Annually	 Virtual meeting held.	Planning face to face event early spring 2022
	Work with partners to prepare landscape visualisations of options for future landscape change	Visualisations prepared.	LCP1-10	LP, LM, HE, VM	LPO, DO, LMO	2021-22, Q2	 Discussions held with National Trust to prepare visualisations for wood-pasture re-establishment. Potential fixed point photography monitoring locations discussed.	Visualisations planned for 2022/23. Consider including monitoring locations as part of Fixed Point Photography.
<b>Wildlife and Nature</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve conditions for nature</li> <li>• Enlarge and connect habitats</li> </ul>								
Priorities	Action	Key milestones	AONB policy / action Nos.	T&F Group Lead	AONB Team Lead	By when	2021-22 progress	2022-23 activities

Priority habitat recovery (woodland)	Work with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and landowners to deliver recommended conservation measures arising from assessment of woodland County Wildlife Sites carried out in 2020-21	All landowners advised, and conservation measures implemented	WN2, A2	LM	LMO	2021-22, Q3	😊 Woodland sites surveyed, and report awaited	Activity completed
Priority habitat recovery (wood pasture)	Work with Natural England, partners and landowners to deliver Midlands Heathland Heartland Initiative (Project 1 Wood pasturescape)	Delivery programmes underway	WN8, WN9, B7, A13	LM	LMO, LPO, DO	Ongoing	😊 National Trust Shugborough Wood Pasture Development Plan in preparation	Support will continue as required
Priority habitat recovery (heathland)	Work with Natural England, partners and landowners to deliver Midlands Heathland Heartland Initiative (including project 2 Public Forest Estate Land Exchange)	Delivery programmes underway	WN8, WN9, B7, A13	LM	LMO, LPO, DO	Ongoing	😞 Any possibility of heathland restoration project on hold, dependent on compensation for Forestry England for loss of timber production	No planned activity
	Monitor delivery of habitat and access improvements on Gentleshaw Common SSSI through the National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative	Receipt of monitoring reports	WN3, A2	LM	LMO	Ongoing	😞 Monitoring accounts and reports overdue	Receive monitoring accounts and report October 2022
	Work with landowners and Natural England to reintroduce livestock grazing to key sites, promoting the reasons and benefits to local communities	Grazing reintroduced at key sites, including Connecting Cannock Chase corridors	WN3, B4	LM	DO, LMO, LPO	Ongoing	😊 Discussions underway between Forestry England and Staffs Wildlife Trust for reinstatement of management of Connecting Cannock Chase corridors  😊 Staffordshire County Council grazing trial underway at Moors Gorse	Support for grazing initiatives ongoing including possible grants from FiPL programme
Priority habitat recovery (wetlands)	Develop and implement wetland restoration programme including Cannock Chase springs audit, peatland inventory, Sher Brook restoration	Programme developed and funded.	WN2, WN4, A2	LM	LMO	2022-23, Q4	No planned activity	Requirements to be agreed with Land Management group

	programme, Sher Brook hydrological monitoring							
Priority habitat recovery (grasslands)	Develop and implement grassland inventory	Preparation of inventory identifying all remaining unimproved grasslands	WN2, A2	LM	LMO	2022-23, Q4	No planned activity	Requirements to be agreed with Land Management group
Priority species recovery	Support the West Midland Bird Club to carry out the 2022 Cannock Chase Bird Survey	Publication of quinquennial bird survey	WN2, A2	LM	LMO	2021-22, Q4	😊 Grant for stage 1 of the survey awarded through the Sustainable Development Fund	Support stage 2 - publication
	Work with partners and landowners to deliver recommended conservation improvements arising from past surveys and audits for:  Crayfish Bats Invertebrate groups Nightjars Long-eared owls	All landowners advised, and conservation measures implemented	WN2, A2	LM	LMO	2021-22, Q4	😊 Report of nightjar surveys (2019,20 and 21) in preparation  😊 Conservation measures for crayfish continuing  😞 Activities for other fauna groups not started	Further requirements to be agreed with Land Management group
	Develop and implement Adder survey	Publication of survey findings	WN2, A2	LM	LMO	2021-22, Q4	😊 Requirements to be agreed with Land Management group	Commission and carry out adder survey
	Develop and implement key invertebrate surveys	Publication of survey findings	WN2, A2	LM	LMO	2022-23, Q4	No planned activity	Requirements to be agreed with Land Management group
	Development and implement early successional species survey	Publication of survey findings	WN2, A2	LM	LMO	2022-23, Q4	No planned activity	Requirements to be agreed with Land Management group
	Survey remaining woodland County Wildlife Sites not surveyed in 2019-20	Sites surveyed	WN2, A2	LM	LMO	2021-22, Q1	😊 Woodland sites surveyed, and report awaited	Activity completed
	Work with Woodland Trust and volunteers to improve our knowledge and understanding of veteran trees	Veteran tree records	WN2, A2	LM, LP, HE	LMO, LPO	From 2021-22	😊 Veteran tree training day for countryside officers held 21 Sept 2021	Work with private parkland landowners through the FiPL programme







							😊 Arrangements for additional training with private parkland landowners and promoting veteran tree surveys under discussion with Woodland Trust	Promote veteran tree survey
Balance the needs of a healthy deer population, with habitats, property owners and the public	Work with landowners to prepare a deer management strategy and action plan	Publication of deer management strategy and action plan	WN6, B5	LM	LMO	2021-22, Q2	😞 Activity deferred to 2022/23	Discuss alternative organisational lead with partners if delays persist
Control invasive species	Prepare an audit of invasive weeds, pests and diseases	Audit completed	WN5, B6	LM	LMO	2021-22, Q3	😞 Activity deferred to 2022/23	Discuss alternative organisational lead with partners if delays persist
	Share information with landowners to inform land management decisions and support development of collaborative approaches	Information shared	WN5, B6	LM	LMO	2021-22, Q4	😞 Activity deferred to 2022/23 pending completion of audit	Discuss alternative organisational lead with partners if delays persist
Raise awareness and appreciation of Local Geological Sites	Work with partners and landowners to deliver recommended conservation measures arising from assessment of Local Geological sites carried out in 2020-21	All landowners advised, and conservation measures implemented	WN7, B19	LM	LMO	2021-22, Q2	😊 Assessment carried out November 2021 and report awaited	Assessment reported to Land Management group  Recommendations for any conservation measures to be discussed with landowners
<b>Historic Environment and Culture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve the Chase's historic environment</li> <li>• Connect communities with the Chase's history and culture</li> </ul>								
<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Key milestones</b>	<b>AONB policy / action Nos.</b>	<b>T&amp;F Group Lead</b>	<b>AONB Team Lead</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>2021-22 progress</b>	<b>2022-23 activities</b>









Improve the condition of heritage assets	Work with landowners and Historic England to develop and implement conservation and enhancement measures arising from the Chase Through Time strategy (2020)	All landowners advised, and conservation measures implemented	HC2, B17	HE	LMO	From 2021-22	🟡 Draft strategy being reviewed and due to be brought back to Joint Committee when ready	Discuss with Historic Environment group and explore the delivery of recommended themes and suggested projects and bring back to Joint Committee
	Work with landowners to consolidate surviving OS trig points	Trig points consolidated	HC2, B17	HE	LMO	2021-22, Q4	🔴 Activity deferred to 2022-23	Discuss requirements with landowners
Raise awareness and understanding of the Chase's history and culture	Work with landowners, Historic England and visitor centres/hubs/attractions to celebrate the AONB's cultural heritage through improved access and interpretation measures arising from the Chase Through Time strategy (2020)	Funding secured and measures implemented	HC3, B9	HE	LMO	From 2021-22	🔴 Activity deferred pending completion of heritage strategy	Progress following discussion with Historic Environment group
Monitor the condition of the historic environment	Work with Historic England to support, co-ordinate volunteer activity to locate and assess the condition of the 7 Scheduled Monuments in the AONB	Number of monuments assessed  Recommended management actions communicated to landowners	HC1, B16	HE	LMO	Ongoing	🔴 All volunteer activity suspended due to COVID	Kick-start in 2022-23, beginning with training event
	Work with the National Trust to support, co-ordinate volunteer activity to locate and assess the condition of priority non-designated heritage assets in the AONB	Number of heritage assets assessed  Recommended management actions communicated to landowners	HC1, A14	HE	LMO	Ongoing	🔴 All volunteer activity suspended due to COVID	Kick-start in 2022-23, beginning with training event
<b>Experience and enjoyment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Treading lightly in the Chase</li> <li>A greener experience</li> </ul>								

Priorities	Action	Key milestones	AONB policy / action Nos.	T&F Group Lead	AONB Team Lead	By when	2021-22 progress	2022-23 activities
Connect people with the landscape, heritage and wildlife of Cannock Chase	Organise and run an annual Cannock Chase Walk and Ride Festival	Festival held	EE3, EE5	VM	DO	Annually	🚫 Activity cancelled for 2021 due to COVID and uncertainties surrounding social gatherings	Possible 2022 Festival to be discussed with Visitor Management group
	Work with the Ramblers and SAC Partnership to review and refresh AONB promoted walking routes (X9)	Leaflets re-published	EE4, EE5	VM	DO	2021-22, Q4	😊 Revised text drafted for two leaflets	Distribute printed leaflets to visitor centres/hubs.
	Work with the British Horse Society to review and refresh AONB promoted horse riding routes (X2)	Leaflets re-published	EE4, EE5	VM	DO	2021-22, Q4	😊 Staffordshire County Council undertaking review of all bridleways across Cannock Chase. This will inform existing promoted routes and the need for any refresh.	Activity possibly rolled over to 2022-23 if leaflets need refreshing.
	Prepare and publish with partners Explore Cannock Chase leaflet	Leaflet published	EE4, EE5	VM	DO	2021-22, Q2	😊 Welcome leaflet in preparation, targeted at first-time visitors	Distribute printed leaflets to visitor centres/hubs.  Discuss distribution at mountain biking event with Commonwealth Games Organising Committee
	Work with SCC and SAC Partnership to refresh RAF Hednesford Interpretation panels, leaflet and digital information	Panels and leaflets refreshed and installed	EE4, EE5	VM	DO	2021-22, Q4	😊 Interpretation panels in preparation  🚫 Leaflets still to be prepared	Activity completed
	Develop and distribute audio-visual presentation	Presentation produced and used in key locations	EE4, EE5	VM	DO	2021-22, Q4	🚫 Activity deferred to 2022-23	Requirements to be agreed with Visitor Management group, and video produced by July 2022

	Develop and distribute through retail an AONB souvenir guidebook	Guidebook published and for sale in retail outlets	EE4, EE5	VM	DO	2021-22, Q4	😊 Scope of guidebook in early stages of planning.	Publish and distribute printed guidebook to visitor/centre hubs.  Discuss distribution at mountain biking event with Commonwealth Games Organising Committee
Encourage visitors to Cannock Chase to travel more sustainably	Utilising the Cannock Chase place brand design work with train operators, local councils and SAC Partnership to install artwork for totems and posters located at train stations, introducing visitors to the AONB and the network of trails for walkers and cyclists from each station (Stafford, Rugeley, Hednesford and Cannock)	Totems installed	EE6, B12	VM	DO	Ongoing	😞 Issue has been raised, but no opportunities have materialised	No planned activity
Improve the visitor experience of Cannock Chase	Support the SAC Partnership to implement car park and site user implementation plans including improvements to car parks, interpretation provision, highways infrastructure such as welcome and gateway signage, reducing sign-clutter, and improvements to the roadside environment	Improvements implemented	EE1, EE4, A10	VM	DO, LPO	As required	😊 Input to implementation of plans ongoing including discussions around Punchbowl car park re-design, education programme and promotional routes.  😊 Cannock Chase code agreed and endorsed by all local authorities, major landowners and emergency services	Input and joint working with SAC Partnership will continue as required  The use of the Cannock Chase code will be promoted as opportunities arise
	Review the draft AONB Interpretation Strategy (draft 2016-2021), and finalise	Strategy reviewed and published	EE4, A8	VM		2021-22, Q2	😞 Activity deferred to 2022-23	Requirements to be agreed with Visitor Management group
Connect people to nature and	Adopt the National AONB Arts strategy and develop a local action plan in	Strategy adopted.	EE5	VM	DO	2021-22	😞 National AONB Arts Strategy taken to Joint Committee for	Continue input to 'Local Cultural Place Makers, Global

landscape through the arts	partnership with local art groups and artists	Local Action Plan adopted					adoption 6 December 2021  AONB is a partner in 'Local Cultural Place Makers, Global Change Makers' local arts programme with young people	Change Makers' local arts programme with young people
	Prepare and publish an anthology of poetry inspired by Cannock Chase	Anthology published	EE5	VM	DO	2021-22	 Activity deferred to 2022-23	Reassess opportunities as part of local arts programme to be developed for the AONB
	Organise poetry walks and workshops with Staffordshire Poet Laureate	Walks and workshops held	EE5	VM	DO	Annually	 Activity cancelled for 2021 due to COVID and uncertainties surrounding social gatherings	Reassess opportunities as part of local arts plan to be developed for the AONB
<b>Communities and Business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural benefits for the community</li> <li>Supporting the special qualities</li> </ul>								
<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Key milestones</b>	<b>AONB policy / action Nos.</b>	<b>T&amp;F Group Lead</b>	<b>AONB Team Lead</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>2021-22 progress</b>	<b>2022-23 activities</b>
Strengthen our volunteer base	Draft a volunteer policy, ensuring that we are compliant with all appropriate H&S, and equality and diversity legislation	Policy published	CB3, A6	AONB Unit	LMO	2021-22, Q1	 Activity deferred to 2022-23	Draft policy
	Provide ongoing support to volunteers engaged with Great War Hut, Fixed Point Photography, and Historic Environment surveys	Training and social sessions.	CB3, A6	AONB Unit	LMO	Ongoing	 All volunteer activity ceased during lockdown.   The Great War Hut re-opened on 28 August 2021.	Support for volunteers will continue as required

							 Historic environment surveys have not re-started.   Fixed point photography activity continuing	
	Identify additional volunteer roles and recruit	Roles identified and volunteers recruited	CB3, A6	AONB Unit	LMO, DO, LPO	As required	None has been identified	Pursue volunteer roles as necessary
Promote volunteering opportunities across the Chase	Support and engage with Cannock Chase Council Chase Up! Green Volunteer Network	Volunteers signposted to Chase Up!	CB3, A6	AONB Unit	LMO, DO, LPO	Ongoing	 Enquiries for volunteering opportunities on Cannock Chase are signposted to the Green Volunteer Network	Continue to signpost enquiries through the Green Volunteer Network
Inspire young people to appreciate and look after Cannock Chase	Develop a resources pack to be used in schools and libraries, based on the Cannock Chase Code	Resources pack published	CB1, B20	AONB Unit	DO	2022-23	 Joint funding proposal with the SAC Partnership to raise awareness awaiting approval	Commission and deliver project
	Explore with outdoor education providers the scope for providing every child in Staffordshire to experience a 'night under the stars'	Outdoor education providers contacted	CB1, B20	AONB Unit	DO	2022-23	No planned activity	Pursue opportunities through the FiPL programme and any other funding programmes
	Improve links with Duke of Edinburgh, Scouts and Guides, and outdoor activity and education providers, and develop informatives about the value of the AONB	Informatives produced	CB1, B20	AONB Unit	DO	2021-22, Q4	 Joint funding proposal with the SAC Partnership to raise awareness awaiting approval	Commission and deliver project
Raise awareness and understanding of Cannock Chase and the AONB	Publicise Cannock Chase e-learning training courses with key audiences (volunteers, public bodies and businesses), and seek use as part of staff induction	Number of participants completing the course	CB1, CB2, B11	VM	DO	Ongoing	 Release of e-learning courses delayed pending further development work	Revisit the e-learning courses once other visitor welcome/experience material has been prepared

Build more sustainable and empowering relationships with local businesses by improving their awareness of Cannock Chase and embedding the AONB in their products, services and ethos.	Invite all known businesses on and in close proximity to Cannock Chase to register to use the sense of place toolkit	Businesses registered	CB4	AONB Unit	DO	2021-22, Q1	🟡 8 businesses registered to date. More work is needed to promote the toolkit	Further promote the toolkit
	Support registered businesses	Businesses supported	CB4	AONB Unit	DO	Ongoing	🟢 Support provided on request	Provide support as requested
	Encourage businesses to apply for the Staffordshire Environmental Quality Mark award	Businesses signposted to SEQM	CB4, B14	AONB Unit	DO	Ongoing	🟢 Support provided on request	Provide support as requested
We will reach out and connect to all parts of society, especially those who currently fail to benefit from Cannock Chase.	Prepare a targeted plan to spread our key messages to 'missing audiences'	Study commissioned	CB2	AONB Unit	DO	April 2022	No planned activity	Requirements to be agreed with Visitor Management group
	Promote the AONB Sustainable Development Fund, support applications where required and coordinate funding panel; management of claims etc.	Applications supported, and grant fully committed	CB2	AONB Unit	LMO	Call for EOI biannual	🟢 Four projects have been awarded grants this year.	Issue calls for new rounds of funding opportunities
<b>Governance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having the systems and processes in place to ensure we are operating effectively</li> <li>• Raising resources – ensuring we can do what we want to do</li> </ul>								
<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Key milestones</b>	<b>AONB policy / action Nos.</b>	<b>T&amp;F Group Lead</b>	<b>AONB Team Lead</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>2021-22 progress</b>	<b>2022-23 activities</b>
Support effective governance and management of the AONB Partnership	Organise and support meetings of the Joint Committee	Minimum of 3 meetings each year (March, July (AGM) and December)	All	AONB Unit	DO	March, July, Dec	🟢 March meeting held remotely. July and December meetings held in person.	Hold meetings in July and December 2022 and March 2023
	Organise and support meetings of the Officers Working Group	Minimum of 3 meetings each year (March, July and December)	All	AONB Unit	DO	March, July, Dec	🟢 March and July meetings held remotely	Hold meetings in July and December 2022 and March 2023
	Organise and support meetings of Task and Finish Groups, currently: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape &amp; Planning</li> <li>• Land Management</li> </ul>	Meetings held as and when required	All	AONB Unit	DO, LMO, LPO	As required	🟢 Meetings held remotely	Hold meetings as required

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic Environment</li> <li>• Visitor Management</li> </ul>				AONB Unit			
	Provide an annual report for the Joint Committee on progress of the Business Plan	Progress reported annually (Q4) against the Business Plan	All	AONB Unit	DO	Q4 annually	😊 Report presented to Joint Committee 6 December 2021	Present report to Joint Committee December 2022
	Submit regular claims to Defra for core grant	Interim claim (75%) submitted September Final claim (25%) submitted March	All	AONB Unit	DO	Q2 and Q4 annually	😊 Mid-year claim made 30 September 2021  Submit final claim March 2022	Submit interim (Sept 2022) and final (Mar 2023) claims
	Maintain and update risk register	Register updated	All	AONB Unit	DO	Annually	To be prepared for March 2022 Joint Committee meeting	Prepare for March 2023 Joint Committee
Raise the profile of the AONB and articulate the value of what we do	Organise and run the Annual AONB Conference	Annual conference held	CB2, A7	AONB Unit	DO	As required	😊 Annual Conference planned for March 2022	Prepare AONB Annual Conference March 2023
	Produce an annual report on AONB activity, showcasing the positive outcomes from AONB Partnership work	Annual report published	All	AONB Unit	DO	Q2 annually	😊 2020-21 Annual Review published and distributed	Publish 2021-22 Annual Review June 2022
	Report to the NAAONB performance statistics for Cannock Chase AONB against key metrics	Annual performance statistics returned by August each year	All	AONB Unit	DO	August annually	😊 Performance statistics for 2020-21 submitted October 2021	Submit performance statistics for 2021-22 by October 2022
Play an active role in national AONB family activity	Contribute to the activities of the NAAONB including annual conference, AONB Chairmen's conference and AONB Lead Officer meetings as appropriate	Attendance at meetings	All	AONB Unit	DO, LMO, LPO	As required	😊 Attended NAAONB Annual Conference 7-8 July 2021  😊 Attended AONB Lead Officer workshops 27 September 2021  😊 Attended AONB Chairman's conference 18 November 2021	Attend meetings as required

Develop our relationship with regional protected landscapes	Attend meetings of the West Midlands Protected Landscapes Group	Attendance at meetings	All	AONB Unit	DO, LMO, LPO	As and when required	😊 Attended regional meeting on 4 March 2021	Attend meetings as required
Raise resources	Establish the Cannock Chase Foundation (charitable incorporated organisation) to support AONB delivery	Agreed constitution.  Agreed MoU with AONB Partnership.  Establishment of CIO.  Recruitment and appointment of Trustees	CB1, A4	AONB Unit	DO	Pending the Government's response to the review of Designated Landscapes	😞 On hold pending announcement of the Government's response to the review	Bring report to the Joint Committee once the Government's response has been announced
Respond to the Government's recommendations of the Designated Landscape Review	Adopt and implement recommendations from the Glover Review and encourage implementation of actions led by others	Recommendations implemented	All	AONB Unit	DO	As required	😞 On hold pending announcement of the Government's response to the Review	Bring report to the Joint Committee once the Government's response has been announced
Prepare for the update of the AONB Management Plan	Set out a timetable and resource provision for an updated State of the AONB report 2023 and updated AONB Management Plan 2024-2029	Timetable agreed.  Budgetary provision agreed	All	AONB Unit	DO	2022-23, Q4	Activity not due yet	Prepare report for Joint Committee meeting December 2022
<b>Communication</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raising profile – telling others what we do and why we do it</li> <li>Inspiring people to look after Cannock Chase through greater awareness and understanding</li> </ul>								
<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Key milestones</b>	<b>AONB policy / action Nos.</b>	<b>T&amp;F Group Lead</b>	<b>AONB Team Lead</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>2021-22 progress</b>	<b>2022-23 activities</b>
Implement the Cannock Chase place brand	Apply the identity to websites, social media, posters and other publicity, signage and interpretation	Place brand adopted	CB1, CB2	VM	DO	Ongoing	😊 The Cannock Chase place brand is being applied as opportunities arise, eg, RAF Hednesford	Continue to seek opportunities to promote the place brand



							panels, Brindley Heath panels, Ride with Respect Campaign, Gentleshaw Common panels	
	Encourage visitor centres/hubs/attractions to use the Cannock Chase place brand and communicate consistent messaging about the special qualities of the nationally important landscape	Place brand promoted at all sites	CB1, CB2	VM	DO	Ongoing from 2021-22	😊 The Cannock Chase place brand is being incorporated into revised visitor welcome and interpretation at Cannock Chase Visitor Centre and Cannock Chase Forest	Continue to seek opportunities to incorporate the place brand at visitor centres / hubs
	Provide targeted training for front of house staff at visitor centres/hubs	Training sessions held	CB1, CB2	VM	DO	2021-22, Q2	😞 Activity deferred to 2022/23	Requirements to be agreed with Visitor Centre group
	Develop promotional merchandise to disseminate the place brand	Merchandise produced and sold in retail outlets	CB1, CB2	VM	DO	2021-22, Q4	😞 Activity deferred to 2022/23	Requirements to be discussed and agreed with Visitor Management group and Visitor Centre group
Sustain regular communication channels to all partners within the AONB Partnership and with our key stakeholders	Keep partners and subscribers updated with news, events and activities through our newsletter	Minimum 4 newsletters published each year	CB2	AONB Unit	DO	Ongoing	😊 Enewsletters published on 15 April, 20 April, 30 June, 29 July, 13 August, 23 August, 6 October  😊 1,400 subscribers on 20 September 2021  😊 1,520 subscribers on 15 November 2021	Continue to post news items and increase number of subscribers
	Review the effectiveness of our newsletter and gauge how well our objectives have been understood	Survey undertaken	CB2	AONB Unit	DO	July 2021	😞 Activity deferred to 2022/23	Undertake survey in July 2022 (2 year anniversary of launch of newsletter)

Engage with the online community	Post on our social media channels at least once every two weeks	Minimum 2 posts each week	CB2	AONB Unit	DO, LPO, LMO	Ongoing	🚫 AONB social media channels remain inactive. Activity deferred to 2022/23	Pursue alternative means of delivery if delays persist
	Using our Cannock Chase network, we will encourage our partners to share our social media posts on their pages to increase its reach.	Social media posts shared	CB2	AONB Unit	DO, LPO, LMO	Ongoing	🚫 AONB social media channels remain inactive. Activity deferred to 2022/23	Pursue alternative means of delivery if delays persist
Raise awareness of Cannock Chase and the benefits it provides through co-ordinated public awareness campaigns across our partnership network	Work with our partners to deliver a calendar of awareness campaigns to share co-ordinated messages on our social media platforms, websites and other appropriate platforms, including Landscapes 4 Life week	Minimum 6 campaigns each year	CB2	VM	DO	Annually	🚫 Activity deferred to 2022/23	Pursue alternative means of delivery if delays persist
	Support Forestry England and other landowners to promote the Ride with Respect campaign	Campaign launched	CB2	VM	DO	As required	😊 Ongoing support being provided	Continue to support and promote the campaign
Maintain the AONB website as the focus for information about the AONB and the work of the AONB Partnership	Keep the AONB website up to date, and aim to post news items at least once every two weeks	Minimum of one news item posted every two weeks	CB2	AONB Unit	DO, LPO, LMO	Ongoing	😞 AONB website is being kept up to date, but posting of news items is less than target of once every two weeks (15 April, 20 April, 30 June, 13 July, 29 July, 13 August, 23 August and 6 October)	Keep AONB website up to date and continue to post news items
	Using our Cannock Chase network, we will encourage our partners to share news items on their websites to increase their reach	News items shared	CB2	VM	DO, LPO, LMO	Ongoing	🚫 Activity deferred to 2022/23	Requirements to be discussed and agreed with Visitor Management group and Visitor Centre group
Gain local press and media coverage to raise awareness of Cannock chase and the	Work across the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership, SAC Partnership and Visitor Centres/hubs to find stories that we can develop into press and media releases on a bi-monthly basis.	Release 6 media stories annually	CB2	VM	DO, LPO, LMO	Ongoing	🚫 Activity deferred to 2022/23	Requirements to be discussed and agreed with Visitor Management group and Visitor Centre group

importance of protecting and conserving it	Update these stories on our website and ask our partners to share the press release with their contacts in the media	Media releases shared	CB2	VM	DO, LPO, LMO	Ongoing	🚫 Activity deferred to 2022/23	Requirements to be discussed and agreed with Visitor Management group and Visitor Centre group
Raise Cannock Chase AONB's profile nationally, and work with the National Association for AONBs and AONB family to shape the national agenda and drive forward our collective ambition for designated landscapes	With the National Association for AONB's and the AONB family, we will contribute towards national press, research, papers and advocacy to promote Cannock Chase and help deliver the outcomes of the Glover Review.	Number of outcomes	CB2	AONB Unit	DO, LPO, LMO	Ongoing	😊 Input provided as requested	Continue to input as requested

## Item 10 Finance report – Revenue Budget 2021/22 and 2022/23

**Item for:** Noting and Decision

**Author:** Nikki Mihajlovic, Senior Finance Business Partner

**Financial implications:** The Joint Committee in its role under the AONB Partnership Agreement is responsible for the management of the core funding from Defra and the co-ordination of partner projects.

**Recommendations:**

1. That progress on the current net revenue budget for 2021/22 and its current forecast outturn position is noted.
2. The approval of the net revenue budget for 2022/23 is recommended to the Joint Committee.
3. That progress on spend for the Farming in Protected Landscapes is noted

## Background

1. The Joint Committee in its role under the AONB Partnership Agreement is responsible for the management of the core funding from DEFRA and the co-ordination of the partner projects.
2. This paper sets out progress on the current net revenue budget for 2021/22 and its current forecast outturn position, and presents a net revenue budget for 2022/23. The recommendations represent an effective way to continue to carry forward the implementation of the Management Plan for the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership.
3. Between 2021-24 the AONB Partnership has been allocated additional funding by Defra on top of its annual core grant to support farmers and land managers to deliver the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme. This paper also reports progress on programme spend.

## Revenue Budget Update 2021/22

4. The forecast financial position for the Core and Action Projects Budget is set out in Appendix 1 which shows the nominal net spend to date of £95,632 together with the outturn currently predicted for the year. The predicted outturn for the end of the financial year totals £192,510, giving an anticipated overall breakeven forecast for the year.
5. The latest position available for the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) for 2021/22 is set out in Appendix 2, with projects approved to date currently amounting to £4,240 in total. After the administration fee earned by the AONB Unit of £1,000 is deducted, this leaves a balance of £4,760, which has been re-allocated to AONB Projects.
6. The latest position available for the AONB Projects for 2021/22 is set out in Appendix 3 with projects approved to date currently amounting to £19,910 in total, which gave rise to a projected overspend of £4,760, before the transfer of funds from the SDF projects. This is now forecast to breakeven.

## **Revenue Budget 2022/23**

7. The draft net revenue budget for 2022/23 is set out in Appendix 4.
8. The level of core grant support from DEFRA for national landscapes for 2022/23 has yet to be announced, as has the Government's response to the 'Glover' review of Protected Landscapes which included a recommendation for increased resources for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In light of the tight spending context and until such time as the Government publishes its response to the Glover Review, the net revenue budget for 2022/23 core AONB costs has been kept at its existing (2021/22) funding level of £192,510, of which expected funding contributions to be confirmed from DEFRA total £150,670. Local authority funding contributions are also unchanged.
9. The level of funding proposed for the Sustainable Development Fund and AONB projects has been kept at 2021/22 budget levels.
10. The 2022/23 net revenue budget, subject to approval by the AONB Joint Committee at today's meeting, will form the basis of the annual grant submission to Defra in January 2021.

## **Reserve**

11. The balance on the Cannock Chase AONB Reserve currently stands at £62,944 for 2021/22. A summary of the Reserve is attached as Appendix 5.
12. It has previously been recommended that the priorities for the use of the Reserve Fund should be as follows:
  - Income from sales, donations and consultancy work should be available to supplement the delivery of projects within the Annual Action Plans and to provide 'matched funding' for any major grant applications and;
  - The remaining funds should be earmarked to enable the AONB unit to respond to the implications of any potential future reductions in funding.
13. These priorities are reviewed annually in December of each year.
14. It is anticipated that the balance on this reserve at the end of 2021/22 will be £62,944.

## **Farming in Protected Landscapes programme**

15. Since July 2020 the AONB has been delivering the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme collaborating with farmers and land managers. Funding for the programme is provided by Defra and is additional funding on top of the annual core grant that the AONB receives.
16. A summary of the budget position for the programme is attached as Appendix 6. The predicted outturn for the programme at the end of the financial year is £80,000. This figure is significantly lower than the original provisional allocation from Defra for year 1 spend in the AONB due to the delayed start to the programme and the short amount of

time available to develop and assess applications and for farmers to deliver and complete projects and claim spend.

17. In recognition of these challenges, Defra has given all Protected Landscapes a one-off opportunity to re-profile their budgets. More information on this and progress delivering the programme in Cannock Chase is presented in Agenda item 8.

### **Equalities Implications**

18. This report has been prepared in accordance with the Equal Opportunities policies of the County Council.

### **Legal Implications**

19. Actions recommended in this report are in accordance with the provisions of the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership Agreement.

### **Resource and Value for Money Implications**

20. This report recommends actions to ensure the continued efficient delivery of the Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan and reflects the principles set out in the Partnership Agreements.

### **Risk Implications**

21. If continuity of funding and spend are not continued as recommended to the Joint Committee, then the five authorities involved in the current Partnership will need to seek other methods of fulfilling their statutory obligations for the AONB under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

### **Recommendations**

22. The following recommendations are made to the Joint Committee:
  - (1) That progress on the current net revenue budget for 2021/22 and its current forecast outturn position is noted.
  - (2) The approval of the net revenue budget for 2022/23 is recommended to the Joint Committee.
  - (3) That progress on spend for the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme is noted.

## Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee

## Cannock Chase AONB Core &amp; Project Costs

## Forecast for 2021/2022

	Budget	2021 Actuals	Predicted Outturn	Variation
	£	£	£	£
<b>Core Budget</b>				
Salaries	136,260	79,056	138,850	2,590
Training Expenses	1,510	320	1,020	-490
Travel and Subsistence	2,200	126	500	-1,700
<b>Staff and Associated Costs</b>	<b>139,970</b>	<b>79,502</b>	<b>140,370</b>	<b>400</b>
Office Equipment	2,600	2,256	2,600	0
Annual Audit	400	0	0	-400
Volunteer Costs	500	0	500	0
National Liaison	3,160	3,156	3,160	0
Print & Publicity	5,000	1,514	5,000	0
AONB Website	0	0	0	0
Annual Conference	2,000	0	2,000	0
Core Activity (including monitoring, community involvement, etc)	4,730	0	4,730	0
Partnership Running Costs	9,000	9,000	9,000	0
<b>Core Budget Subtotal</b>	<b>167,360</b>	<b>95,427</b>	<b>167,360</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Sustainable Development Fund</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,240</b>	<b>-4,760</b>
<b>AONB Projects</b>	<b>15,150</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>19,910</b>	<b>4,760</b>
<b>Total Budget/Initial Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>192,510</b>	<b>95,632</b>	<b>192,510</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>New Projects to be developed</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Anticipated Forecast Outturn as at 31 March 2022</b>	<b>192,510</b>	<b>95,632</b>	<b>192,510</b>	<b>0</b>

<b>Funded By:</b>				
<b>DEFRA Grant</b>				
Core	-125,520	0	-125,520	0
Sustainable Development Fund	-10,000	0	-10,000	0
AONB Projects	-15,150	0	-15,150	0
<b>DEFRA Grant Subtotal</b>	<b>-150,670</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-150,670</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Local Authority Contributions</b>				
Lichfield District Council	-2,090	-2,090	-2,090	0
South Staffordshire District Council	-2,090	-2,090	-2,090	0
Cannock Chase District Council	-8,370	-8,370	-8,370	0
Stafford Borough Council	-8,370	0	-8,370	0
Staffordshire County Council	-20,920	-20,920	-20,920	0
<b>Local Authority Contributions Subtotal</b>	<b>-41,840</b>	<b>-33,470</b>	<b>-41,840</b>	<b>0</b>
Sales and Donations	0	0	0	0
Membership Fee Income	0	0	0	0
<b>Funding from(+)/to reserve(-)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>-192,510</b>	<b>-33,470</b>	<b>-192,510</b>	<b>0</b>

## Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee

## Sustainable Development Fund

## Budget Update for 2021/22

	Budget	Spent or Committed to Date	Predicted Outturn	Variation
	£	£	£	£
<b>Approved Projects</b>				
Apples on the Chase: a Chase Through Time legacy project	500	0	500	0
Gentleshaw Common interpretation panels	2,913	0	2,913	0
Quinquennial breeding bird survey for Cannock Chase (phase 1)	569	0	569	0
Nature in Brocton Park	258	0	258	0
<b>Approved Projects Total</b>	<b>4,240</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,240</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Admin Fees</b>	1,000	1,000	1,000	0
<b>Re-allocation of Funds to AONB Projects</b>	4,760	0	0	-4,760
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>5,240</b>	<b>-4,760</b>

## Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee

## AONB Projects

## Budget Update for 2021/2022

	Budget	Spent or Committed to Date	Predicted Outturn	Variation
	£	£	£	£
<b>Approved Projects</b>				
Contribution to Art in the Landscape programme	5,000	5,000	5,000	0
Contribution to awareness programme for young people	5,000	0	5,000	0
Report of nightjar surveys (2019-2021)	3,000	0	3,000	0
Assessment of local geological sites	500	0	500	0
Adder genetics study	260	260	260	0
Great War Hut visitor welcome (sign, flags and interpretation panel)	3,000	0	3,000	0
AONB visitor welcome (design and artwork for AONB map, welcome leaflet, promoted walking routes)	3,150	0	3,150	0
<b>Approved Projects Total</b>	<b>19,910</b>	<b>5,260</b>	<b>19,910</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Original Budget</b>	15,150	5,260	19,910	4,760
<b>Re-allocation of Funds from SDF Projects</b>	4,760	0	0	-4,760
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,910</b>	<b>5,260</b>	<b>19,910</b>	<b>0</b>



## Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee

### Cannock Chase AONB Core & Project Costs

### Draft Cannock Chase AONB Budget 2022-23

	Total Budget £	Defra Grant £
<b>AONB Core Budget</b>		
Staff Salaries and Associated costs	147,950	110,963
Office Equipment	1,300	975
Annual Audit	0	0
Volunteers	500	375
National Liaison	3,160	2,370
Print & Publicity	1,730	1,298
Partnership Running Costs	9,000	6,750
AONB Website	0	0
Annual Conference	2,000	1,500
Core Activity (including monitoring, community involvement, etc)	1,720	1,290
<b>Core Budget Subtotal</b>	<b>167,360</b>	<b>125,520</b>
Sustainable Development Fund	10,000	10,000
AONB Projects	15,150	15,150
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>192,510</b>	<b>150,670</b>

	Total	% of Expenditure
<b>Funded By:</b>		
<b>DEFRA Grant</b>		
Core	125,520	75.00%
Sustainable Development Fund	10,000	100.00%
AONB Projects	15,150	100.00%
<b>DEFRA Grant Subtotal</b>	<b>150,670</b>	
<b>Local Authority Contributions</b>		
Cannock Chase Council	8,370	5.00%
Stafford Borough Council	8,370	5.00%
Lichfield District Council	2,090	1.25%
South Staffordshire Council	2,090	1.25%
Staffordshire County Council	20,920	12.50%
<b>Local Authority Contributions Subtotal</b>	<b>41,840</b>	<b>25.00%</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>192,510</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## Cannock Chase AONB Reserve

Financial Year	Opening Balance	Income/ Donations	Membership Fees	Visitor Survey Work	Admin Fees	Transfer to/from Reserve	Balance of Admin Fees / Underspends	Interest	Closing Balance
	£	£		£	£	£	£	£	£
2007/2008	10,214					-1,766	-1,766		8,448
2008/2009	8,448	572			9,303	-1,590	7,713		16,733
2009/2010	16,733	1,326			6,166	-371	5,795		23,854
2010/2011	23,854	896	525	9,564	4,744	-921	3,823		38,662
2011/2012	38,662	1,240	1,367	17,845	3,983	-4,204	-221		58,893
2012/2013	58,893	387	1,108		3,218	-533	2,685	195	63,270
2013/2014	63,270	1,001	1,675		2,459		2,459	249	68,654
2014/2015	68,654	596	1,720		1,327	-54	1,273	289	72,532
2015/2016	72,532		569		500	-2,383	-1,883	293	71,512
2016/2017	71,512	1,475	553		1,565	-108	1,457	132	75,129
2017/2018	75,129	1,471	52		1,809	30,703	32,512	189	109,353
2018/2019	109,353	169	104		2,056	34,361	36,417	685	146,728
2019/2020	146,728				2,307	-94,792	-92,485	577	54,819
2020/2021	54,819				1,307		1,307	78	56,204
2021/2022	56,204	5,740			1,000				62,944
		14,875	7,673	27,409	41,744	-41,658	87	2,687	62,944

## Farming in Protected Landscapes Grant

## Forecast for 2021/2022

	Budget *	2021 Actuals	Predicted Outturn	Variation
	£	£	£	£
<b>Farming in Protected Landscapes Expenditure:</b>				
Programme Administration	0	10,507	20,000	20,000
Programme Advice & Guidance	0	156	5,000	5,000
Project Spend	0	0	55,000	55,000
<b>Total Budget/Initial Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10,663</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>
Farming in Protected Landscapes Grant	0	-106,837	-80,000	-80,000
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-96,174</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<b>Item 11</b>	<b>Art in the Landscape Strategy: connecting people to nature through art and culture</b>
<b>Item for:</b>	Decision
<b>Author:</b>	Julia Banbury, AONB Landscape Planning Officer
<b>Financial implications:</b>	Future voluntary contributions may be requested by NAAONB
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>(1). To adopt the national Arts in the Landscape Strategy and participate in coordinated national and local action resulting from the Strategy.</p> <p>(2). To invite a person from the arts and culture sector to become a member of the Joint Committee with a specific brief to help both the board and staff team to develop their engagement with the arts.</p> <p>(3). To agree to consider at a future date, if requested, a possible future contribution to the collective national Arts in Landscape fund, in particular the proposed 5-year national post that will provide a resource to all AONBs.</p> <p>(4). To use arts to help join up the AONB’s climate change mitigation and adaptation, and nature recovery work.</p>

## Background

- Members will recall previous reports regarding a national strategy that has been created by the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) to galvanise action that enables people to experience a deeper connection to the natural beauty of the landscape through the arts. The Art in The Landscape Strategy was formally adopted at the NAAONB Annual General Meeting in November 2020 and all AONBs are invited to adopt the Strategy and participate in coordinated national and local action resulting from it. The Strategy helps the AONB Network achieve its Colchester Declaration aims, and those of Glover’s National Landscape Review around:
  - Engaging with a wider and more diverse audience
  - Helping people to create deeper connections to nature, place and landscape
  - Inspiring pro-environmental behaviour to tackle the conjoined ecological and climate emergency
- The Art in the Landscape Strategy helps focus future delivery of art activity, collectively within the AONB family as well as locally. It also shows Arts Council England and other funders that the NAAONB and the AONB Network are committing to broaden and deepen our work with arts and culture in order to better connect people to nature.
- Cannock Chase AONB’s Special Qualities include the rich legacy of cultural associations with place. Such cultural associations past, present and future, offer a source of inspiration to us all and may help develop new ways of understanding and managing

the AONB. Although there are no specific policies relating to the Arts in the Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan, relevant policies include:

- Policy HC3: Engage and inspire local communities and visitors to enjoy and appreciate the AONB's historic environment through education, interpretation and events.
  - Policy EE5: Increase awareness and encourage visitors to play a positive role in conserving and enhancing the AONB and to be 'good environmental ambassadors'.
  - Policy CB1: Ways should be developed to ensure that the natural benefits that the AONB delivers are fully taken advantage of by local communities and help meet the needs of all members of those communities, whilst conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the AONB.
4. Cannock Chase AONB has very limited experience of working with artists and arts organisations and engaging the community with the landscape and sees this as a gap in encouraging greater understanding and emotional attachment to the AONB. The AONB therefore welcomed the opportunity to work with Cannock Chase Local Education Partnership (CCLEP) on a programme of arts development for young people from Cannock (reported to members in March 2021). The development of the NAAONB Art in the Landscape Strategy, and this partnership with CCLEP provides a unique opportunity to build on the national strategy and local expertise and develop arts engagement with the local community.

#### **Development of the national Art in the Landscape Strategy**

5. The 'National Moment' in 2019, supported by Poet Laureate Simon Armitage with ['Fugitives'](#), presented the NAAONB with a high-profile stage to make an ambitious ['Art in the Landscape Statement of Intent'](#) - a commitment to engaging people with nature through the arts. In this statement, Howard Davies (Chief Exec, NAAONB) states, *"The creative exploration of place, through music, painting, poetry, and dance opens up the experience of landscape beyond the world of science and policy and helps us better understand our place in the world. With better understanding comes better stewardship; the basis of a more sustainable future."*
6. On the back of the Statement of Intent, NAAONB resourced the development of a strategy with grant support from Arts Council England (ACE) and contributions from the AONB network. A national steering group was set up and Activate Performing Arts were commissioned to:
- Consult with AONB teams with different levels of experience in delivering arts and culture projects, importantly hearing from those who have not yet delivered major projects.
  - Research good practice from the three land guardians: National Trust, Forestry England and Canal & Rivers Trust who have Memorandums of Understanding with Arts Council England.
  - Consult with senior officers from Arts Council England and other agencies.
  - Deliver a training programme for the AONB members to offer insight into working with the arts and develop confidence in the teams.

- Produce the Arts in the Landscape Strategy to provide direction for the NAAONB and AONB Network
7. A summary of the Aims and Recommendations of the Strategy are detailed below, the full Strategy can be found [on the NAAONB website](#).

### **Art in the Landscape Strategy: Visions and Aims**

8. People experience a deeper connection to the natural beauty of the landscape through the arts. The aims of the Strategy are:
- **To connect** people to nature and the natural beauty of the AONBs – increasing creativity, wellbeing and pro-environmental behaviour.
  - **To challenge** perceptions of access to the landscape in order to diversify engagement.
  - **To broker** new trusted relationships with the arts and cultural sector to co- create new programmes.
  - **To celebrate** the existing creativity in the AONB teams and the local community.
  - **To work with** arts and culture to understand and directly address the climate emergency and nature recovery.
  - **To welcome** provocations and questions in exploring ways that arts can change perceptions.
  - **To inspire** ambition by sharing exemplary projects of all scales.
  - **To capture** the public’s imagination through engaging them in creative responses to the landscape.
  - **To raise** the profile of the landscape and the AONBs and the purpose of the AONB teams.
  - **To lever in resources and relationships** at all levels for an ambitious programme.

### **Art in the Landscape Strategy: Summary of Recommendations**

#### **Adopt the National Arts Strategy**

9. The process of developing the Strategy was grounded in the consultation across the network. A nationally and locally endorsed strategy will have strong currency in discussions with external agencies, both national agencies such as government and funders and locally with partners, arts and cultural organisations.
10. The Strategy recommends that each AONB circulate, present and discuss the Strategy at the partnership board proposing its adoption by each AONB. The partnership board /Joint Committee is also requested to agree an in principal commitment to invest in the proposed National resource.
11. The NAAONB will be drawing up a national action plan (relating to Recommendation 8), to be endorsed by the National Steering Group and adopted by the NAAONB.

12. Recognising the unique sense of place each AONB has, the Strategy recommends each AONB develop a local action plan of how the strategy can be implemented in their area within their Management Plan and relating to the national plan.
13. Members will note that the AONB has already actively progressed some elements of the vision and aims of the Strategy: to connect young people with nature and encourage pro-environmental behaviour through working with CCLEP on the Local Cultural Place Makers, Global Change Makers programme. Through this collaboration we will potentially be able to initiate links with local artists, and have support to examine the feasibility of developing a local arts action plan for the AONB.

#### **Deliver a National Creative Projects Programme**

14. Consultation responses advocated for national creative projects to be clustered around specific themes eg., dark skies, landscapes and hill forts. The national creative projects need a simple artistic provocation at the centre. The national projects offer the opportunity for all AONBs to be involved; to share good practice and encourage peer to peer support; to create stories and images that can be used as inspiration for future projects; and for collaboration with other national organisations.

#### **Widen the welcome**

15. Arts and culture are an excellent way to broaden the reach of the work of the AONB, helping people feel connected to nature and wanting to be proactive in their tendency to nature conservation. The Strategy recommends that AONBs work through arts and culture programmes to establish meaningful connections and visits with communities with higher levels of people from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. A target for new arts and culture projects that at least 50% of the commissioned lead artists are from D/deaf and disabled, BAMER and lower socio-economic backgrounds. Equally, this should also be reflected in the teams brought in to work on the project and those participating in the work. The Strategy also recommends that National lead will support the identifying of a cohort of interested artists that AONBs could then work with on creative projects.

#### **Develop the Governance**

16. The Strategy recommends positive recruitment of at least one person from the culture sector to become a member of AONB governance groups with a specific brief to help both the board and staff team to develop their engagement with the arts and to adopt the Strategy.
17. It also recommends relationships with artists, arts and cultural organisations that either are located in or near the AONBs are developed.

#### **Sustain and expand the National Arts and Culture Steering Group and develop an understanding between NAAONB, AONBs and Arts Council England**

18. At a national level the Strategy recommends the Steering Group is strengthened and widened to bring in wider viewpoints and engagement. The NAAONB will seek to develop a trial period of joint working with Arts Council England to increase arts and

culture engagement within AONBs, with artists and organisations for people based both within and without them.

**Create a core national resource and a training and professional development programme**

19. Create a new national role based within the NAAONB to bring expertise, to encourage and support and advocate for arts and culture within the sector and beyond. This should be resourced for a medium-term period of five years, with a delivery budget.
20. Create training and capacity building through case studies, providing resources such as project toolkits and budgeting advice, and through mutual learning and support and collaboration.

**Outcomes for Cannock Chase AONB**

21. Adoption of the national Art in the Landscape Strategy offers benefits for Cannock Chase AONB, including:
  - Participating in a national art and cultural project with the AONB family, raising wider public awareness with diverse audiences and encouraging better understanding and emotional connection with the natural environment.
  - Delivering management plan objectives around enjoyment, understanding, increasing creativity, wellbeing and pro-environmental behaviour, and celebrating what makes Cannock Chase special.
  - National support with resources, training and best practice in arts and culture. Levering in resources – through investment and expertise.
  - Opportunities to strengthen relationships with the arts and cultural sector nationally and locally
22. In response to the Strategy's recommendations and to support and enhance the AONB's engagement with the arts, and development of an arts action plan, officers advise:
  - Inviting an arts and culture representative to join the Joint Committee with a specific brief to help both the board and staff team to develop their engagement with the arts; and
  - Create an Arts Task and Finish Group with remit to develop an arts action plan, establish links with arts and cultural organisations located in or around the AONB.

**Recommendations**

23. (1) To adopt the national Arts in the Landscape Strategy and participate in coordinated national and local action resulting from the Strategy.  
  
(2) To invite a person from the arts and culture sector to become a member of the Joint Committee with a specific brief to help both the board and staff team to develop their engagement with the arts.

(3) To agree to consider at a future date, if requested, a possible contribution of funds to the collective national Arts in Landscape fund, in particular the proposed 5-year national post that will provide a resource to all AONBs.

(4) To use arts to help join up the AONB's climate change mitigation and adaptation, and nature recovery work.



## Item 12 NAAONB Collaboration Group on Climate Change

**Item for:** Information

**Author:** Ian Marshall, AONB Development Officer

**Financial implications:** Cannock Chase AONB contributed £500 in FY2021/22 to this collaboration programme.

Additional resources and expertise will be required to support the AONB Partnership and examine the changes needed to address the climate change challenge and how best to achieve them.

**Recommendations:** The Committee notes the report and is invited to make comments.

## Background

1. Climate Change, alongside the nature crisis, represents the biggest threat facing humanity and the planet. In May 2019 the UK Government declared a climate change emergency, and has subsequently committed to be carbon net zero by 2050.
2. The impacts of our changing climate are already being felt in National Parks and AONBs with events such as wildfires, flooding and droughts. Extreme weather events, along with other consequences of warming temperatures such as extended visitor seasons are likely to have progressively more noticeable effects on the landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage of our Protected Landscapes and the communities that live and work in them as well as the organisations and agencies that care for them.
3. The UK's Protected Landscapes are a national asset in the fight against climate change. This was recognised in the Landscapes Review by Julian Glover, which stated that they should be at the forefront of our national response to climate change.
4. This paper informs Committee about the collaborative work on climate change being undertaken by the National Association for AONBs, and begins a conversation on the impacts of climate change for Cannock Chase AONB and how it might respond to the challenge whilst at the same time delivering our statutory duty to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

## NAAONB Collaborative Climate Change Action Programme

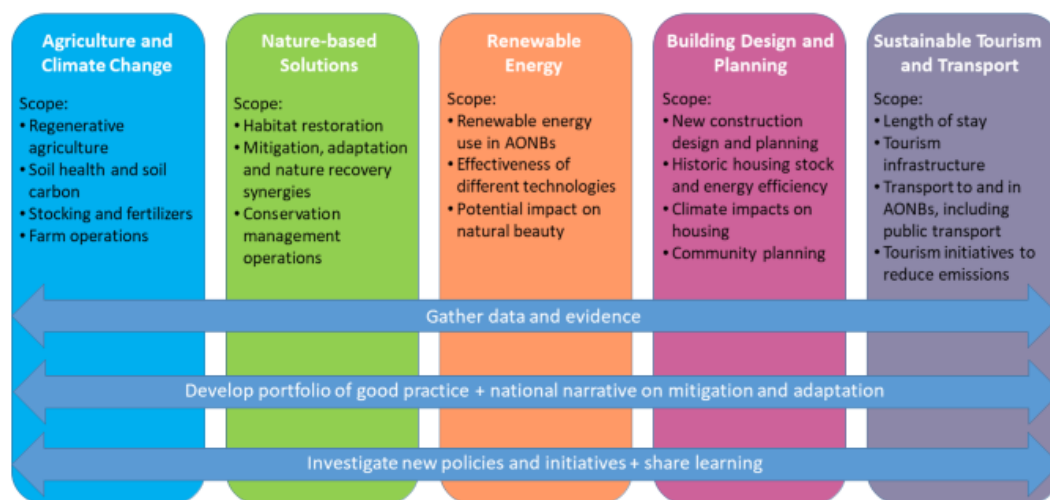
5. The National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAAONB) wants to ensure that AONBs are full equipped to meet the challenges posed by the changing climate, and can play a leading role through adaptation, mitigation and influencing. The NAAONB has therefore put together the Collaborative Climate Change Action Programme with the aims of:
  - Developing a greater, data-based understanding of climate change and its impacts on AONBs and people, enabling decision and action

- Generating a strong evidence base for an AONB 'offer' and narrative on the inter-connected climate and ecological emergencies
  - Generating tangible outputs at a national and local level
6. Individual AONBs have contributed financially to support the collaborative working and enable specific pieces of work to be commissioned so that all AONBs are equipped with the right data and tools to take action.

## Progress

7. Five key workstreams have been defined to tackle climate change issues in AONBs, and are being developed by sub-groups comprising AONB officers and external experts:

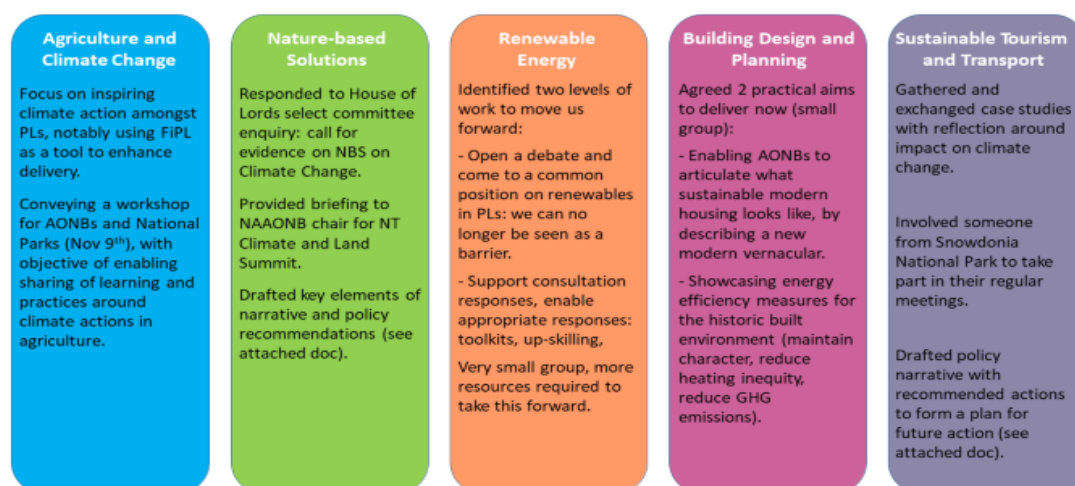
## The Collaborative Climate Change Action Programme: Five sub-groups



8. The five sub-groups were brought together in June 2021 and are undertaking the following general tasks:
- Sense check scope, research work already going on in topic area
  - Obtain evidence-base
  - Create portfolio of good-practice, tools, data
  - Develop an evidence-based narrative to influence decision-making
  - Make recommendations on relevant policies

- Enable learning for the AONB network

## The five sub-groups: work to date (Oct 2021)



## Outputs

- Any guidance and tangible outputs will emerge and be shared during 2022. Generally speaking, the outputs will fall into two categories, across all of the 5 sub-groups: knowledge building and sharing (in the form of data, toolkits, evidence) and policy / communication (narratives and recommendations).
- On the back of these outputs all AONBs will be asked to sign a Joint Statement with the National Association of AONBs as a declaration of intent to combat climate change.

## The role of Cannock Chase AONB in response to climate change

### Policies

- All of the five constituent local authorities that comprise Cannock Chase AONB have declared climate change emergencies and have, (or are in the process of), prepared strategies and action plans to deliver net zero emissions.
- Their work in this regard has been supported through a baseline study to quantify current energy and greenhouse gas emissions and an evidence base for proposed policy interventions. The latter includes:
  - Reducing CO2 emissions in the built environment
  - Holistic interventions in development
  - Sustainable transport
  - Low and Zero carbon technologies
  - Carbon sequestration and natural capital
  - Climate risk and adaptation
- The Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan (2019-24) highlights climate change as a major challenge and pressure on our habitats and species. Whilst it doesn't include specific policies or actions on climate change, a number will contribute towards delivering climate change adaptation and mitigation, for example:

LCP1 – Development proposals...minimising their carbon footprint and negative impacts on the local environment

Policy LCP2 – Reducing the impacts of traffic and highways management in the AONB ...by encouraging alternative routes and by reducing speed, noise and air pollution

Policy WN9 - ...build connected networks of wildlife sites beyond the AONB and improve landscape permeability as a means of enhancing the resilience and viability of wildlife populations

Policy EE6 – The use of alternative means of transport by visitors to the Chase should be explored and actively promoted.

### **Impacts of climate change and climate change policies on the natural beauty of Cannock Chase AONB**

14. The potential impacts of climate change on the natural beauty of Cannock Chase are multiple and complex. Possible solutions to tackling climate change proposed in adaptation and mitigation plans may also have an effect.
- Climate change is likely to force significant changes to the landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage of the AONB, the way that land is used and managed, and the amount and seasonality of recreational activity.
  - Shifting species ranges in concert with direct changes to the physical environment arising from warming temperatures and changing precipitation patterns and water availability may lead to a landscape that looks and feels very different from that experienced today.
  - Extreme weather events may increase incidents of wildfires, flooding and droughts, leaving vegetation and wildlife vulnerable and causing erosion.
  - Historic assets and historic landscapes will be affected by the changing climate and extreme weather events. Pests and diseases, drying and shrinking clay soils, high winds and storms can all impact on historic buildings. Warmer temperatures can desiccate soils and expose archaeological remains to the elements.
  - The increase in temperature and atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels may cause physiological changes in plants making them more vulnerable to diseases. New diseases not present in the area may also emerge.
  - Warming temperatures will extend the visitor season and may increase visitor impacts, requiring changes to visitor management and infrastructure. The effects of temperature on the comfort and experience of visitors may affect their recreational decisions and behaviours whilst visiting the AONB.
  - Climate change will affect crop and livestock production systems as well as the choice of timber species that are grown.
  - Responses to adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change could have potential implications for the AONB and the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty. For example, projects for renewable energy can impact on landscape character, tree planting can affect landscape character and impact negatively on open habitats and wildlife, and conservation management options for land of value for nature conservation may need to change in order to meet net zero targets.

## Responding to the climate change challenge

15. The Cannock Chase AONB provides a range of ecosystem services and can also contribute to alleviating climate change causes and effects through mitigation and adaptation measures in its management:
- The AONB itself plays a critical role in **capturing and storing carbon** by means of its extensive areas of semi-natural vegetation and forests which help to absorb CO<sub>2</sub> and potentially harmful gases from the air and release oxygen. It also provides food, timber, minerals, stores water and regulates water flow, conserves biodiversity and provides a range of cultural services (recreation, cultural and spiritual inspiration). It needs to be protected and managed to ensure these functions continue to be delivered.
  - The AONB Partnership can demonstrate **climate leadership**, working collectively with its constituent authorities to identify measures to address the impacts of climate change and propose climate change adaptation and mitigation plans. This will need to be informed by a calculation of the carbon footprint of the designated area as a baseline to highlight areas for action, and from which targets can be set and performance monitored.
  - Whilst the AONB Partnership as a body doesn't own land within the designated area, a number of its constituent bodies do. Some 64% of the AONB is owned by just 7 public landowners and charitable bodies. The new Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme offers an opportunity to engage with farmers and other land managers. The AONB Partnership is well placed to work with public and private landowners and other key stakeholders to secure changes through **land management practices**.
  - Whilst climate change is not a statutory purpose of the AONB, the AONB Management Plan could be strengthened to **integrate climate change adaptation and mitigation in its policies**. The next revision of the AONB Management Plan is not due until 2024. In the meantime, the AONB Partnership could introduce measures to ensure that members **take account of climate impacts in their decision-making**, for example, include climate change implications in all Joint Committee reports.
  - Although the AONB Partnership does not have any planning powers it can seek to ensure that climate change and its impacts on the AONB, including any mitigation measures, are considered in the planning policies and decisions of local authorities through its **advice and guidance**.
  - The AONB Partnership is involved in planning for and **delivering a range of nature-based solutions** which provide both climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as nature benefits. The preparation of nature recovery networks as part of the statutory Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Staffordshire will expand and connect areas for nature allowing species to adapt and move within the landscape and be more resilient to cope with the impacts of climate change. The new Farming in Protected Landscapes programme is a tool to support farmers and land managers to deliver outcomes for climate change and nature.
  - Central to the appeal of the AONB is the ability for people to experience and enjoy it. Most visitors to the AONB travel by car, in the process consuming hydrocarbons and emitting significant amounts of nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide and other pollution. The AONB Partnership working together with the SAC Partnership with

its plans to reduce visitor impacts on the SAC can help to **address visitor travel** through infrastructure provision and management and behavioural change.

- Through our communications, resources for local businesses, and measures to improve the visitor welcome the AONB Partnership can **raise awareness about the impacts of climate change** and how everyone can help to reduce its effects.
- A number of Protected Landscapes have now identified ways of **reducing the carbon emissions of their own activities**. The Cannock Chase AONB does not own land, building or vehicles and its carbon emissions are, therefore, restricted to things like staff commuting and business travel, paper usage, printing and purchasing decisions such as materials, equipment and clothing.

### **Concluding remarks**

16. The outputs from the NAAONB Collaborative Climate Change Programme and the Joint Statement of Intent will help inform and drive measures for tackling climate change in the Cannock Chase AONB.
17. The AONB Partnership acknowledges the challenge presented by climate change. The impacts of these challenges, and the actions that will be needed, cut across many parts of our AONB Management Plan. A number of measures are already planned or being implemented which will help the AONB adapt to the effects of climate change.
18. A better understanding is required of the full impacts of climate change on the AONB as well as potential adaptation and mitigation measures and their consequences on our core statutory purpose to conserve and enhance natural beauty.
19. Through its collaborative approach to managing and delivering change in the AONB and its power to convene, the AONB Partnership is well placed to lead and co-ordinate collective action to implement the necessary changes.
20. Additional resources and expertise will be required to support the AONB Partnership and examine the changes needed to address the climate change challenge and how best to achieve them.

### **Recommendation**

21. The Committee notes the report and is invited to make any comments.

## **Item 13**                                      **Date, time and venue of next meeting**

**Item for:**                                      Decision

**Author:**                                      Ian Marshall, AONB Development Officer

**Financial implications:**                None

**Recommendations:**                    The Committee is invited to confirm dates for 2022 meetings

### **Background**

1.        The Standing Orders of the Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee set out the following requirements for meetings:
  - To hold an annual meeting as soon as practicable after 1 June in each year
  - To meet between each annual meeting at intervals of four months or on such other occasions or greater frequency as they may agree ...provided that a meeting shall be held as soon as practicable after November of each year for the purpose of considering the Joint Committee's budget for the following year.
2.        Meetings of the Joint Committee have regular been held during March, July (AGM) and December of each year.
3.        Meetings are required to be held in person in accordance with the requirements of public bodies.

### **Recommendations**

4.        The Committee is invited to confirm dates for 2022 meetings. The following dates are proposed:
  - Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March
  - Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July
  - Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December